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ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER (REVIEW SERVICES)



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Collaborative Audit of the Passport Program for Official Travel

November 2019

1259-5-009 (ADM(RS))

Canada



Acronyms and Abbreviations

CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
DND	Department of National Defence
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
OUTCAN	Out-of-Canada
RBAP	Risk-based Audit Plan
VCDS	Vice Chief of the Defence Staff



Objective

- Present the results from the collaborative audit with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) on the Passport Program for Official Travel.



Overview

- Results in Brief
- Context
- Key Findings
- Conclusion
- Annexes



Results in Brief

- No major concerns with respect to the retention, safekeeping and tracking of the special passports within the Department of National Defence/Canadian Armed Forces (DND/CAF) were identified.
- There were some minor situations of non-compliance noted; these were addressed by the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff (VCDS)/OUTCAN (Out-of-Canada) during the course of the audit.



Context

- IRCC included in its Risk-based Audit Plan (RBAP) an audit of the Passport Program for Official Travel.
 - In undertaking this audit, IRCC requested involvement from DND/CAF and three other organizations.
 - IRCC’s objective was to assess whether controls were in place to effectively manage the IRCC Passport Program for Official Travel.
 - Further information on the IRCC objective, criteria and findings are provided in Annexes A and B.
- While not originally included in the DND/CAF RBAP for 2019/20, ADM(RS) benefited from the opportunity to collaborate with IRCC.
 - The objective of the work undertaken within DND/CAF was to ensure the Department is exercising proper stewardship on behalf of IRCC with respect to the management of special passports.
 - Further information on the DND/CAF scope and methodology objective is provided in Annexes C and D.



Context – Roles and Responsibilities

- Approximately 39 authorized DND/CAF units hold more than 18,000 special passports.
- Table 1 provides a high-level overview of IRCC and DND/CAF responsibilities with respect to passports for official travel (special passports).

IRCC	DND/CAF	
	Base/Wing/Unit	VCDS/OUTCAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for Passport Program effective July 2, 2013. • Establish and maintain safekeeping requirements for special passports. • Special passports are stored by Official Travel division at IRCC, unless base/wing/unit has entered into a safekeeping Memorandum of Understanding with IRCC. • Initiate audits, as required, to assess organizational units' safekeeping of special passports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When approved by IRCC, responsible for the stewardship of special passports as outlined in the Safekeeping, Monitoring and Reporting Responsibilities for Special Passports. • Monitor special passport expiry dates. • Coordination/communication with IRCC Official Travel regarding special passports for which they are responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DND Liaison Officer to the IRCC Official Travel Division. • Develop and coordinate the DND/CAF specific Retention and Safekeeping of Special Passports program. • Monitoring and oversight of special passport data included within Guardian (tracking system).

Table 1. IRCC and DND/CAF Passport Responsibilities. This table outlines IRCC and DND/CAF responsibilities with respect to passports for official travel.



Key DND/CAF Findings

- IRCC currently has individual agreements with approximately 39 units authorized to retain special passports.
- Of the ten units visited, one has a current signed “Agreement on the Retention and Safekeeping of Special Passports.” This updated agreement contains additional safeguarding measures.
- As a result, some of the additional safeguarding measures (e.g., inventory and transaction records must be stored in separate containers) were not in place in some of the units.
 - Despite this fact, no major concerns with respect to the actual safeguarding and tracking of the special passports were identified throughout the course of the audit.
 - VCDS OUTCAN has since advised all units of the additional measures.
- IRCC is aiming to sign one agreement between IRCC and DND/CAF, as opposed to one per unit, which will promote consistency and create efficiencies.



Key DND/CAF Findings (p.2)

- Walkthroughs and file reviews¹ demonstrated that special passports are effectively tracked and safeguarded.
 - All units visited had implemented varied procedures/tools to monitor the status of special passports retained at their unit.
- To promote and ensure consistency, OUTCAN recently modified Guardian (an electronic database) to allow for tracking special passports across the organization.
 - This new approach will provide OUTCAN with passport information from all units that have the authority to hold special passports allowing for greater monitoring and oversight.

¹Additional information regarding file review results included in Annex E.



Conclusion

Although there were some situations of non-compliance related to the new safety measures for inventory records and transactions records, no concerns with respect to the actual safeguarding and tracking of the special passports were identified.

In addition, having a single agreement, coupled with the tracking and VCDS/OUTCAN monitoring of information within Guardian, will minimize the risk of future non-compliance.



Annexes



Annex A – IRCC Audit Scope

The audit focused on the controls in place within IRCC's Passport Program for Official Travel for the purpose of maintaining the effectiveness of the program.

The IRCC audit covered the period from April 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018 and included an examination of the following:

1. The process of issuing the special diplomatic passports;
2. Monitoring of usage and safekeeping of passports for official travel;² and
3. Reporting on the performance of the IRCC Passport Program for Official Travel.

²DND/CAF and three other organizations included audit work focused on item number 2.



Annex B – IRCC’s High Level Finding

IRCC’s overarching finding, as a result of their audit work and the work of the included departments, is as follows:

- Examination of selected passports and review of safekeeping practices in these Departments and the Agency identified that, in the absence of reporting requirements and oversight by IRCC, each of the Departments’ and the Agency’s internal controls, such as inventory records and activity logs, were in place within the organizations.



Annex C – DND/CAF Audit Scope

- The work undertaken within DND/CAF covered the period from April 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018 and included an examination of monitoring the usage and safekeeping of passports for official travel.
- Examination work took place at National Defence Headquarters as well as at various CAF organizational units that retain special passports issued to DND/CAF personnel.

OTTAWA	KINGSTON	PETAWAWA
CFS Leitrim	JTFX	1 RCR
SJS	1st Cdn Div HQ	450THS
CF MP Gp HQ	CFJSR	CSOR
		2 Fd Amb

Table 2. CAF Organizational Units with Special Passports. This table lists the CAF organizational units that retain special passports issued to DND/CAF personnel.



Annex D – Methodology

- The audit methodology included the following:
 - Reviewing applicable legislation and policy documents;
 - Reviewing key supporting documents and relevant background documentation;
 - Conducting tests and examining steps of key processes, procedures and systems; and
 - Conducting interviews with key personnel.
- The findings and conclusions contained in this report are based on sufficient and appropriate evidence gathered in accordance with procedures that meet the Institute of Internal Auditors' *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*. The audit engagement thus conforms to the Institute of Internal Auditors' *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* as supported by the results of the quality assurance and improvement program. The opinions expressed in this report are based on conditions as they existed at the time of the advisory engagement and apply only to the consulted entity.



Annex E – File Review Results

- The 10 units included within the scope were responsible for 2,398 special passports.
- As requested by IRCC, a sample of 20 special passports was selected from each unit (with the exception of one unit where all 39 special passports for which they were responsible were reviewed); thus, 219 special passports were selected for file review.
 - This non-representative sample allowed the auditors to gain an understanding of the safekeeping, retention and tracking processes for special passports.
- There were 143 special passports available for file review during the site visits. The remainder were either with a deployed member or with IRCC Official Travel for passport renewal or visa application.
- Tracking records were reviewed for the passports that were off site and in all instances records indicated the date the passport was either sent out or picked up by a member and the expected return date (when known).