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Xxxxx Xxxxxx  
[XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX@XXXXX.XXX](mailto:XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX@XXXXX.XXX)

Reference: FOICR 20232/11

2 November 2011

Dear Xxxxx

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 5 October. Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I can confirm that the Identity and Passport Service (IPS) holds some of the information you request. Please see the attached Annex. I would like to assure you that we have provided you with all relevant information that IPS holds.

In keeping with the Freedom of Information Act, we assume that all information can be released to the public unless it is exempt. In line with normal practice we are therefore releasing the information which you requested via the Home Office website.

I hope that this information meets your requirements. However, if you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of any aspect of our handling of your application by submitting your complaint to the address below and quoting the reference FOICR 20232/11:

Information Access Team  
Home Office  
Ground Floor, Seacole Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF  
Email: [info.access@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.access@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

During the internal review the department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by members of staff who were not involved in providing you with this response.

Should you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you will have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the FOI Act.

Yours sincerely,

**Xxxx Xxxxxxx**

**Head of Parliamentary and Correspondence Management Team**

## Annex

### Freedom of Information Request 20232

#### 1. I would like to know when the “new” style passports were introduced.

The latest format UK passport was introduced on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2010.

#### 2. I would like to know why new design passports are only laminated on one side whereas previous editions were laminated on both making them vulnerable to damage from the reverse of the page.

The previous version of the UK passport is very different in format. The chip was moved into the cover because this was proved to offer greater protection from accidental damage. The method of printing the holder's details onto the personal information page was changed to a more secure process and the lamination was changed to one that makes this passport model considerably more secure against forgery.

#### 3. I would like to know what the different causes of “damaged” passports including water damage are reported since these new edition passports have been issued. I would like to know numbers for each cause and how these compare with previous issues where photo ID were double laminated.

Since October 2010, the Identity and Passport Service (IPS) has issued in excess of 4.5 million new format UK passports. Customer returns are split into two principal categories which enable us to pursue a continuous improvement programme with our supplier - these are manufacturing faults (problems in the production of the passport booklet) and personalisation faults (e.g faulty image, blurred or smudged text, incorrect data, etc). Of the 4.5 million+ passports issued to date there have been 44 manufacturing faults and 19 personalisation faults of which 6 have been related to water damage.

#### 4. I would like to know what quality assurance levels & tests are carried out on the passports before they leave the printing venue. I would know what audit results there have been about standards for said quality control and how these compare with the previous five years of old style double laminated passports.

Passport components are quality checked at each stage in the production and printing process and are subject to final inspection before shipping. The supplier is required to operate an ISO9000 quality system, and is subject to regular external audit. The results of these audits have been that the supplier has retained its ISO accreditation at each audit. IPS does not have a comparison of the quality of previous passports with the current passport; the difference in design does not make this a useful exercise.

**5. I would like to know the number of complaints of intrinsic damage ( failure of the materials used in creating the passports as opposed to extrinsic causes being due to the owner exposing the document to inappropriate environments) to passports have been upheld over the last five years.**

**6. I would like to know how many of the above complainants had new passports issued at no further cost to themselves**

**7. I would like to know how many of the above complainants had new passports issued with a shared cost with IPS.**

Information not held. IPS does not gather statistical information on this specific complaint type.

**8. I would like to know as a consequence of the above, what changes and why have been made to the production process for new passports.**

IPS requires its suppliers to maintain a continuous improvement programme so that our customers receive the most secure and durable passports. We have made no changes to the passport design itself. Only minor changes have been made to the production process to date and these have been aimed at achieving productivity improvement within the manufacturing process. The latest format UK passport is being produced by a different supplier from that which produced the last type.