



Home Office

Identity & Passport Service

Xxxxx XXXXX

XXXXXX@XXXXX.XXX

Reference: FOICR 19301/11

25 July 2011

Dear XXXXX

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your e-mail of 10 July, in which you ask for information on passports. Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am able to disclose the information as set out in the enclosed Annex.

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. I would like to assure you that we have provided you with all relevant information that the Identity and Passport Service (IPS) holds.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference FOICR 19301/11. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Access Team
Home Office
Ground Floor, Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
e-mail: FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Headquarters
Identity and Passport Service
Parliamentary & Correspondence
Management Team
4th Floor, Peel Building, SE
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Tel (020) 7752 7362

Fax (0870) 336 9175

Email hqenquiries@ips.gsi.gov.uk

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk/ips

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

X Xxxxx

Parliamentary & Correspondence Management Team

Freedom of Information request from Xxxxx Xxxxx (reference FOICR 19301)

Information requested and the IPS response set out below

I was given the understanding that the place of birth printed on newly issued passport document will only indicate the name for each country which is officially recognised by the UK government.

The place of birth printed on the passport will be the town of birth of the applicant unless only a country of birth was shown on their originating documents, in which case the country of birth will be shown in this field. This is not a common practice and a town of birth should be shown in the vast majority of cases. Where a country of birth is shown in this field, it will be the country name which is officially recognised by the UK government.

Previous policy guidance explained that where a country of birth was shown on the passport, this must be the most recent version of the country name. For example if the place of birth on an applicant's originating documents was Rhodesia, it would be shown on the passport as Zimbabwe, as this is the officially recognised name for the country. The new policy guidance is an extension of this in order to give staff more advice on the specific names they should use.

In addition, countries of birth would also have previously be shown on a passport, where the town of birth was potentially confusing because it was a recognisable place in the UK as well as in a country overseas. For instance Kingston in Jamaica as opposed to Kingston in the UK would have been shown on the passport as Kingston (Jamaica). This has now been discontinued as it is not required for passport purposes.

My requests for information are:

- 1) is the above change (i.e. only the recognised name of country is printed – with no other region or city allowable) a formal IPS policy?**

It is a formal policy guidance document, which explains to staff how to follow policy.

- 2) if the answer to the above is a yes, please indicate the date of implementation of such policy**

31st May 2011.

- 3) if the answer to the above is a yes, I would be grateful if a list of such countries can be sent to me.**

The list will be published as part of the Place of Birth page on our website in due course. The current page can be seen by clicking on this link:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/agencies-public-bodies/ips/passports-policy-publications/date-and-place-of-birth?view=Standard&pubID=891549>

- 4) If the list of the country allowable (to be printed on newly issued passport document) is released on a website, I would be grateful if you can supply the web address for such publication.**

Please see above.

- 5) If the answer to the above policy question is a no, could I ask if there are any policy which has a similar stipulation been implemented recently? I would be grateful if you can point me to the right direction for further details.**

Please see above.

Date 25 July 2011