



HM Passport Office

Parliamentary Correspondence Unit
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2 Marsham Street
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Email foi@hmpo.gsi.gov.uk
Website www.gov.uk/hm-passport-office

Mr Ng
request-255435-e5762b28@whatdotheyknow.com

Reference: FOICR 34479/15

Date: 11 May 2015

Dear Mr Ng

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

I am sorry for the delay in replying to your e-mail of 25 February 2015, in which you ask for information on the number of passport applications being processed within Her Majesty's Passport Office (HM Passport Office). Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am able to disclose the following information as set out below.

I am writing to request under the Freedom of Information Act the current number of passport applications in the Passport Office system

As at close of business on 04 May 2015, the Work in Progress i.e. total number of passport applications which HMPO was considering whether to issue or refuse the application was 61.9 thousand.

The <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-passport-office> website sets out the expected turnaround times of around three weeks for straightforward applications and six weeks for non-straightforward applications made in the UK. For the week ending 03 May 2015, 99.97% of straightforward applications were dealt with within 15 days and 97.5% of non-straightforward applications within 30 days. For international applications, minimum turnaround times are set on a country-by-country basis. For the week ending 03 May 2015, 99.73% of straightforward international applications were dealt with within 15 days. The complexity of the international application system means that we cannot give a similar answer for non-straightforward applications as to do so would exceed the proscribed cost limits.

Under section 12 of the Act, HM Passport Office is not obliged to comply with an information request where to do so would exceed the cost limit.

We hold the information which you have requested but we have estimated that the cost of meeting your request would exceed the cost limit of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. We are therefore unable to comply with it.

The £600 limit is based on work being carried out at a rate of £25 per hour, which equates to 24 hours of work per request. The cost of locating, retrieving and extracting information and preparing the response can be included in the costs for these purposes. The costs do not include considering whether any information is exempt from disclosure, overheads such as heating or lighting, or items such as photocopying or postage.

We are unable to advise how you can refine your request, so that it is more likely to fall under the cost limit. Please note that if you simply break your request down into a series of similar smaller requests, we might still decline to answer it if the total cost exceeds £600.

...as well as the current backlog.

There is no backlog of applications in the passport processing system.

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 www.gov.uk 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 HM Passport Office 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 34479/15. 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

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

H Reid
Parliamentary Correspondence Unit