



Border Force

**Border Force Policy
Implementation**

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Mr Marty Pearson

By email request-118803-160cd16d@whatdotheyknow.com

27 June 2012

Dear Mr Pearson,

Thank you for your email of 10 June to the Freedom of Information Team regarding circumstances British citizens would be asked for further information at the primary control point. This has been passed to me to reply. Your query does not fall within the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Although not subject to immigration control, British nationals are required to satisfy the Border Force officer as to their nationality and identity and this is usually done by presenting a passport. Once entitlement is established such passengers pass freely through the primary checkpoint.

Whilst British citizens are free to enter and leave the United Kingdom, Border Force officers do have the power under Section 1(1) of the 1971 Act to question anyone presenting a British passport in order to establish that they are the rightful holder of the document. You will appreciate that British passports which have been forged, fraudulently obtained or are being used by impostors present a significant risk to the security of our borders. Border Force officers may therefore ask relevant questions by which to determine the passenger's familiarity with the United Kingdom and its language and how the passport itself was acquired.

The following list is not exhaustive as we are unable to anticipate every possible scenario that we may ask for further information, but covers the most common reasons why we might ask further questions of a British citizen who presents a British passport.

- The passport has been reported lost or stolen
- They are the subject of Home Office records
- As part of the process to check that the passport is genuine and unaltered and that the passenger is the rightful holder.
- As part of our duty to safeguard the welfare of children

In addition, factors such as the condition of the passport, many are presented with significant damage, invite closer scrutiny. On some occasions, the passage of time between the issue of a

passport and its presentation at the border can result in significant changes in the appearance of the holder compared to the image in the passport.

Since the formation of the United Kingdom Border Agency in April 2008, legacy immigration staff assessed by legacy HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) as suitable to carry out HMRC functions on the primary checkpoint have additionally been conferred with certain Customs powers. Under Section 78 of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979 and Part 1 Paragraph 3 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009, Border Force officers may therefore ask questions with regard to goods in baggage and since allowances differ depending on where such goods were purchased, ask the passenger the origin of their flight / journey.

As part of our legal obligation under section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 to safeguard children where a passenger is travelling with a child and they are not the child's parent or if the officer has any concerns for the safety of the child, the officer would ask questions to confirm the relationship to the child.

Yours Sincerely

Caroline Antell
Border Force Officer
Border Force Policy Implementation