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Reference: FOICR 22661/12

01 June 2012

Dear X XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your e-mail of 3 May, in which you ask for information on passport production and losses. Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am able to disclose the information 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 22661/12. 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

Xx Xxxx
Parliamentary & correspondence Management Team

Freedom of Information request from Xx Xxxxxxxx (reference 22661/12)

Information requested

1. Details of the number of passports that have been issued in the past 12 months, or the last 12 month period for which you have data;

5,133,767 passports issued in financial year 2011-12

2. A breakdown of whether these passports have been issued to applicants who have presented in person, or which have been delivered by post;

Below is a breakdown on the number of passports passed for issue by counter (personal caller) applications, Post Office Check & Send Service and routine postal receipt.

Counter - 482,574 or 9.4% of output

Post Office Check & Send Service - 2,695,228 or 52.4% of output

Postal - 1,955,965 or 38.2% of output

3. A description of your delivery policy – including details of the postal and delivery companies you employ and the particular type of service that is used;

IPS has a tiered service level for its customers and as such there are two delivery service levels for DX Secure to adhere.

For Fast Track or upgraded items, 99% must be attempted within 24 hours of collection from IPS or its Secure Printers.

For Standard items, 99% must be attempted within 48 hours of collection from IPS or its Secure Printers.

Sundays and Public holidays do not count towards the delivery time target.

All new passports and supporting documents (where the customer has elected to pay the additional Secure Delivery fee of £3.00) are delivered by DX Secure, a tracked courier service. A small proportion, around 4%, in remoter parts of the UK is sent by a disguised mail service. The disguised mail service uses Royal Mail Recorded Delivery for Standard items, Royal Mail Special Delivery for Fast Track items. Disguised mail is used for low risk areas of the UK where a courier service is prohibitively expensive and does not significantly add to the security of the delivery.

Where customers do not choose to pay for the Secure Delivery of their supporting documents, Royal Mail 2nd class post is used.

4. Details of the number of passports that have been reported to you as not received by passport applicants in the past 12 months, or for the last 12 month period for which you have data;

There is no record of the number of customers who contacted IPS to claim their passport was not received. Such customers are usually advised of the delivery details and do not return to IPS to progress their claim, indicating that they have located their item. For the period February 2011 to January 2012, IPS investigated 994 claims from customers of non receipt of passports or supporting documents that were despatched by Secure Delivery, and of these, 158 items were recorded as lost due to courier mispost.

A further 38 items despatched by Royal Mail disguised mail were recorded as lost in the same period. The use of disguised mail is under review and a proportion of these deliveries will shortly be moved to the courier service to reduce losses.

5. Details you keep on the postal and delivery companies used in cases where passports have been reported as not received

Please see above; IPS use DX Secure for UK passports and Royal Mail for old cancelled passports and supporting documents.

6. Details of the number of passports that have been returned to you as 'undelivered' by the Royal Mail in the past 12 months, or for the last 12 month period for which you have data;

DX Secure has advised that for the 12 month period ending 31 March 2012, 584 items were returned to IPS after they had been delivered to the address on the envelope. These are a combination of DX Secure and Royal Mail (Disguised Mail) items and are invariably returned as the item has been mis-addressed or misposted. These could also have been declined by the occupant, or the address was empty when delivery was attempted.

Date

01 June 2012