

Defence Instructions and Notices (Not to be communicated to anyone outside HM Service without authority)	
Title:	Arrangements for the MOD Provision of Passports for Service Personnel and their Dependants Serving Overseas Following the Closure of Regional Passport Processing Centres (Rppcs)
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Content:	Arrangements for the MOD provision of Passports for Service Personnel and their dependants serving overseas following the closure of Regional Passport Processing Centres (RPPCs)
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Supplements: (Please click on the links to access >>>>)	Annex A: Applicant's Instructions and Covering letter for initial/replacement/renewal passport application. Annex C: Certificate of confirmation of service as a crown servant.
Related Info:	JSP 752 - Tri-Service Regulations for Expenses and Allowances - Link JPA Library https://www.gov.uk/overseas-passports
Classification:	OFFICIAL

References:

- A. JSP 752 – Tri Service Regulations for Expenses and Allowances.
- B. JSP 800 –Defence Movements and Transportation Regulations, Volume 2 - Passenger Travel Instructions.

Background

1. Previously, all applications to renew/replace passports for Service personnel and their dependants serving overseas were processed by a Regional Passport Processing Centre (RPPC), as determined by an individual's country of residence. In April 2012, the

Government announced that responsibility for issuing UK passports overseas would transfer from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) to Her Majesty's Passport Office (HMPO). From October 2012 (when the first RPPC in Düsseldorf closed) until approximately February 2014 (when the final RPPC closed), HM Passport Office had been gradually transferring the handling of overseas passport applications to their UK processing site in Peterborough. As a result, the procedure for overseas based SP (and their dependants) changed for those located in Europe (Düsseldorf, Madrid and Paris RPPC countries) and for the Washington, Pretoria and Hong Kong RPPC Countries in 2014.

2. Under the revised procedures, passport applications are initially forwarded to the Unit Admin Office and thereafter sent direct to the dedicated Armed Forces Team in Peterborough. The main benefit of this scheme is that the costs of applying for/renewing a passport are based on the UK fees and do not attract any delivery fees, providing the passport is delivered to a BFPO or UK residence. However, participation in this scheme is dependent upon applications being staffed by Unit Admin Office staff, who are required to check the applications in order to ensure compliance with the instructions. This not only saves time because there are fewer errors but, by following the process, it also ensures that the passport is issued as quickly as possible.

General

3. The policy rules and regulations relating to passports can be found within References A and B. Certain passport facilities are gratis and others must be paid for. The general rule is that if a Service Person or member of the Civilian component¹ and their dependants, (spouse/Civil Partner or child), are required to travel at public expense to or from a country which will require the use of a passport, one will be provided free of charge.

4. UK Passport Offices can only process passport applications from individuals who are British Nationals. Those who are born in Commonwealth countries or former colonies and who have not acquired UK Citizenship by Registration must apply to their own authorities for renewal or replacement of passports.

5. Passport applications can be treated either as standard (non-urgent) dispatched via BFPO or as urgent using a courier service.

Application Process

6. **All** applications for Service Personnel and their dependants serving overseas **must** be submitted through the Unit Admin Office to enable payment by Government Procurement Card (GPC) and also to ensure that the application is checked for correctness prior to dispatch. It is recommended that the same unit office deals with both Military and dependants' passport applications to ensure continuity and accuracy. Members of the Civilian Component and their dependants may also seek assistance from unit admin to check applications but will be required to pay by Credit/Debit Card and reclaim costs through their appropriate authority. There are four key stages in the application process – Collect Forms, Complete, Check & Dispatch:

¹ The Civilian Component includes civil servants, members of SSAFA, BFPS staff, NAAFI staff and SCE teachers based outside mainland UK.

- a. **Collect Forms:** Applications for all types of British Passport² are to be made using **HM Passport Office UK Passport Application Form – SE/04/01**. With effect from 6 January 2014, the application packs³ should be ordered via the Millie Online Portal (MOP) which can be accessed [here](#). Since HM Passport Office is unable to accept or process any passport applications from service personnel based in the UK or overseas via the online channel on the .Gov.UK website, the online passport application process **should not** be used under any circumstances. Applicants should also be issued a copy of the Instructions at Annex A.
- b. **Complete:** Applicants must refer to the guidance notes when completing their applications and also seek advice from Unit Admin Offices, where necessary, to avoid application errors. Particular attention should be made to the guidance notes in relation to the supporting documentation required for each type of passport application. Applicants are to note paragraph 18 below regarding addresses to be used on the application. Once completed, the application is to be passed to the Unit Admin Office. **Under no circumstance are Service Personnel to send applications direct to HM Passport Office.**
- c. **Check:** Unit Admin Office staff must check applications thoroughly before dispatch to verify entitlement and to authorise payment. Unit Admin Offices must ensure that the appropriate supporting documentation has been provided before the application can proceed. If the application is for a first time passport for a child under 16 a copy of Annex C on unit headed paper is also to be provided. When the application has been completed and countersigned, (where required) the Unit Admin Office responsible for checking it is to produce a covering letter – see example at Annex A. Where several applications are involved, a separate envelope is to be used for each application.
- d. **Dispatch by Special or Recorded Delivery:** Once the application has been checked by the Unit Admin Office it is to be placed into a standard *OHMS* style brown envelope along with the supporting documentation, photographs, payment mandate form and unit covering letter. The envelope is then to be marked and signed 'Certified Official' and dispatched by Special or Recorded Delivery through BFPO to the address below.

The Armed Forces Team,
PO Box 1238,
Peterborough,
PE1 9PU, United Kingdom

Additional guidance for standard and urgent applications is at Annex B.

- e. **Dispatch by Courier (where a signature is required):** Where the application is to be dispatched by courier and a signature is required, the application is to be sent to the following address:

The Armed Forces Team

² Initial, replacement, renewal and changes in respect of both adults and children.

³ The MSN for this form is 091LAN1371055.

Her Majesty's Passport Office
Aragon Court
Northminster Road
Peterborough
PE1 1QG
United Kingdom

7. The task of processing passport applications and related matters will be undertaken by the HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team in the UK. Once the application has been checked and approved, HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team will pass the application to their central passport printing centre for production which will then be dispatched direct to the applicant/Unit securely by DX Services through BFPO (see also paragraph 26). Supporting documents and the old expired passport will be returned separately by HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team in Peterborough.

Photographs

8. In order to meet the strict criteria for biometric passports it is very important to ensure that passport photographs are the correct size and quality and are meet the HM Passport Office guidelines. It is also important to note that photographs are on the correct background (plain cream or plain light) and have been are taken within the last month. **ONE** of the photographs must be endorsed on the reverse by the countersigning officer – and both are to be the same. Full guidance on the photograph requirements can be found on the HM Passport Office website (<https://www.gov.uk/photos-for-passports/photo-requirements>). Photographs are **not** to be taken in uniform.

Gratis Facilities

9. All Service Personnel and members of the Civilian component and their dependants, regardless of their nationality, who are required to travel on official duty to or are assigned to a country which requires a valid passport are to be provided one at public expense.

10. Passports will be provided as a free initial issue, or will be replaced (if validity has expired), or extended, or have additional entries made in it, under the circumstances listed below. However, lost or damaged passports, or changes to passports for personal reasons, will **NOT** be provided at public expense and must be paid by the individual.

a. **Service Personnel and MOD Civilian Staff**

(1) On travelling, on assignment or attachment, to or through a country which requires a passport.

(2) On travelling on official duty in connection with exercises in a non NATO country, but NOT for adventurous training.

b. **Spouses of Service Personnel and MOD Civilian Staff**

(1) To accompany spouse overseas.

c. **Children of Service Personnel and MOD Civilian Staff**

- (1) All dependant children accompanying parents overseas, including new born babies.
- (2) Insertion of recent photograph. (Up to 16 years of age).

Payment Method and Fees

11. Payment for passports processed through HM Passport Office Armed Forces team is to be made using the Mandate form in Sterling by GPC Card. However, where this is not possible, personal credit/debit card details can be entered onto the mandate form and then reclaimed via JPA, if appropriate. **Note:** The mandate form will authorise HM Passport Office to charge for the passport **and** for any 'non urgent' return postage overseas. As GPC Cards are associated to an individual, units will need to consider nominating at least two card holders with sufficient delegation⁴ to allow cover during absence periods. The GPC application process, which includes the requirement for new card holders to carry out online training via the Defence Learning Environment⁵, can be lengthy so units should allow sufficient time. Units are to seek advice on the correct GPC application process through their respective TLB holder.

12. With effect from 1st August 2013, a new Consular Fees Order took effect which stipulates that all Armed Forces personnel based overseas that have adopted the new process of applying through their Welfare Officer pay the UK fee **and do not attract any delivery fees providing the Passport is delivered to a BFPO or UK residence**. If, however, the customer requires delivery to a different overseas address then they will pay the UK Passport Fee but will be subject to the relevant overseas delivery fee. Unit HR staff are strongly advised to check the HM Passport Office website (<https://www.gov.uk/passport-fees>) for the most up to date rates for fees and delivery charges before submitting applications.

Application Methods and Processing Times

13. Foresight and advanced planning are important and therefore accuracy is essential to avoid delays. Passports can be renewed at any point up to **9 months prior to the expiry date** and any remaining time left on the passport will be added to the new passport. Options to submit both Non-Urgent and Urgent applications are available through the HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team. The table at Annex B provides a full breakdown of the various application methods and **minimum** processing times.

Children Passports

14. All applications for first time (initial) children's passports are to be accompanied by the declaration at Annex C to confirm that the child is born to parents in Crown Service. Children in full time education at school/university in the UK are regarded as being UK domiciled and therefore an application for renewal of passport can be made, using Form SE/04/01, direct to the nearest UK passport office. The HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team can also renew passports for dependant children in these circumstances, provided

⁴ It is suggested that the delegation should allow up to £5000 per month – to enable a unit to process approx 30 – 50 applications per month.

⁵ Course Title: Low value Purchasing Training Package V2.0

they are still entitled to travel to the overseas duty station during school holidays – this can be verified through the Regimental Administration Office.

Post Dated Initial Passports on Marriage

15. Where a Service Person intends to marry an individual who is not already in possession of a passport, and their intention is to travel abroad immediately after marriage, a post-dated passport may be obtained in the applicant's future married name. The fee must be paid by the individual. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/changing-passport-information/marriage-and-civil-partnership> .

16. The applicant must be in UK at the time of applying, and the new passport will only be returned to a UK address.

Second Passports

17. Exceptionally, second passports may be issued to personnel who for Service reasons are required to travel regularly to numerous countries (other than UK) that require him/her to hold a visa or who travel regularly to countries that have conflicting visa regimes. HM Passport Office guidance is that a second passport is only issued if the applicant can prove that without one, they would have severe problems carrying out their military duties.

Use of Addresses on Applications

18. The applicant's **unit civilian address is to be shown in Section 2** of the application form with the **unit military address shown at Section 8** which will be the address used to dispatch the passport and supporting documents. Applicants who are Service Personnel should not give Service particulars in the application form, nor are details of Service, e.g. rank and number, to be entered.

Countersignatures

19. Applicants should refer to the passport application guidance notes to see when countersignatures are required. When required, one photograph must be certified by an officer whose rank is OF2 or above. If there is no one who has known the applicant for the requisite period of two years, an officer with sufficient knowledge of the individual is to countersign, stating the actual period they have known the individual. However, this period should be not less than 1 month. If this is not possible then advice should be sought from HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team.

Passport Enquiries & Tracking

20. Forces families can telephone the Armed Forces Team direct for any enquiries at the following numbers:

+44 1733 898 725
+44 1733 888 361
+44 1733 888 295

Loss or Destruction of Passports

21. A passport is a valuable document. It remains the property of HM Government and its loss or destruction is to be reported immediately to the Unit Admin or Welfare Office as well as to the nearest Service Police Detachment giving as much information on its details as are available. Failure to report the loss of a passport can have serious consequences, and delay replacement. Further information on how to report a lost or stolen passport can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/report-a-lost-or-stolen-passport>.

Passports for Foreign Born Spouses

22. The marriage of a foreign born spouse to a British Service Person does not, in itself, result in the acquisition of UK citizenship and entitlement to a British passport at public expense. Application of UK Citizenship must first be made to the appropriate authorities at private expense. This process can take up to nine months. If there is an intention to travel shortly after marriage this should be on a passport obtained in the spouse's original nationality. Where an overseas post requires Diplomatic and Administrative and Technical (A&T) accreditation status, necessitating a Diplomatic or Official Passport for the duration of an assignment i.e. for a DA and their foreign born spouse, the case should be forwarded to the Defence Attaché Loan Service Centre (DALSC) for budgetary approval by DE STRAT/HOCs Fin.

Passports for Children Born Overseas to a Member of the British Armed Forces from a Non-EEA Country

23. All children born overseas, on and after 13 January 2010, to parents in the British Armed Forces can register as a British Citizen, provided:

- a. They were born to a Foreign and Commonwealth member of the UK Armed Forces; and
- b. That parent was serving outside the UK at the time of birth; and
- c. Both parents consent to the registration.

Further detail can be found in Army Briefing Note 58/10. Children born before this date are **not** eligible.

Emergency Travel Documents (ETD)

24. When there is an urgent requirement to travel to UK for Compassionate or Welfare reasons and the traveller is not in possession of a passport (e.g. lost or are already in the renewal application process) the British Consulate-General may be able to issue an ETD. However, ETDs may not be issued for travellers who have not previously held a passport (e.g. a newborn child). ETDs are expensive and any costs associated with the issue of ETDs should fall to the traveller.

UK Visa Applications on Re-Assignment to UK

25. Dependents of military personnel or entitled civilians who hold Non-EEA passports (including both visa and non-visa nationals) must hold valid UK entry settlement visas (not

visitor's visa) to enter UK on re-assignment. Advice on how to apply for visas for non EEA dependants can be found in **DIN 2013DIN01-142**.

Exception to Application Process

26. Whilst every effort should be made to adopt the new procedures following the closure of the RPPCs, where it is not practicable to implement the revised application process e.g. where Service Personnel are widely dispersed; where access to a UAO is limited; where personnel have no access to BFPO facilities, units/individuals will be required to follow the instructions as set out by the direct.gov website (<https://www.gov.uk/overseas-passports>). Under such circumstances, applications will be treated in the same as regular overseas customers (and not Armed Forces personnel) and will attract the standard overseas passport fee, which is significantly more expensive.

Annexes

- A. Instructions and covering letter for initial/replacement/renewal.
- B. Delivery methods and processing times for non-urgent and urgent Applications.
- C. Certificate of confirmation of service as a crown servant.

DELIVERY METHODS AND PROCESSING TIMES FOR NON-URGENT & URGENT APPLICATIONS

Standard (non-urgent) applications: Dispatched via BFPO. Application processed by the HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team. Passport dispatched from HM Passport Office Passport production centre in UK via BFPO. Supporting documents returned separately by HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team via BFPO.						
Delivery Method to HM Passport Office in the UK	Passport Fee	HM Passport Office Process Time	Return Delivery Method & Fee for Passport from UK	Return Delivery Method & Fee for Supporting Docs from HM Passport Office	Total Estimated Processing Time	Remarks & Notes
BFPO – (Free)	Standard – See Website for Fee	Four weeks	Secure Delivery - postage included in passport fee	Sent by UK 2 nd Class Mail via BFPO - postage included in passport fee	Should allow 4 – 6 weeks but may take longer especially during holiday periods	

DELIVERY METHODS AND PROCESSING TIMES FOR NON-URGENT & URGENT

<p>Urgent (Courier) Applications: This method should normally only be used for urgent operational, welfare or compassionate applications. However, service and entitled civilian families may also use the Urgent process as long as any additional charges (ie increased element of passport fee and courier costs) are paid for at private expense. Applications will be dispatched by Courier by Individual/Unit to HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team in Peterborough who will process and issue the passport. Applicants will be responsible for arranging the courier to/from HM Passport Office UK. For courier collections HM Passport Office will not need a letter of authorisation from the applicant. The Courier Agency will only be required to show proof of identity (preferably ID which shows they work for the courier agency collecting the passport). The courier agency will also need to provide the collections team with the name and (unit) address of the person they are collecting the passport for.</p>						
Delivery Method to HM Passport Office in the UK	Passport Fee	HM Passport Office Process Time	Return Delivery Method & Fee for Passport from UK printing centre	Return Delivery Method & Fee for Supporting Docs from HM Passport Office	Total Estimated Processing Time	Remarks & Notes
By Courier – at cost to Applicant – See Note 1 & 2	Fast Track - See Website for Fee	7 working Days	N/A – printed by Armed Forces Team	Courier to be arranged and funded by Applicant – See Note 1	Dependent on Contract made with courier agency.	<p>Note 1 – If deemed urgent by unit, i.e. for Operational, Compassionate or Welfare reasons then Unit may consider paying the courier fee.</p> <p>Note 2 – All urgent applications should annotate '<i>Urgent Application</i>' on the top left hand corner of the envelope.</p>

DELIVERY METHODS AND PROCESSING TIMES FOR NON-URGENT & URGENT APPLICATIONS

Urgent (Premium Appointment) Applications: This method allows for units/individuals to make an appointment to visit the HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team in Peterborough to apply and collect passports the same day **provided** the passport holder has sufficient time on their passport to travel to UK. This option should normally only be used for urgent operational, welfare or compassionate applications. However, service and entitled civilian families may also use the Urgent (Premium Appointment) process as long as any additional charges (i.e. increased element of passport fee and travel costs) are paid for at private expense. To arrange an Urgent Premium (Same Day) Appointment, individuals or units will need to contact the HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team on **+44 1733 888 641**

Delivery Method to HM Passport Office in the UK	Passport Fee	HM Passport Office Process Time	Return Delivery Method & Fee for Passport from UK	Return Delivery Method & Fee for Supporting Docs from HM Passport Office	Total Estimated Processing Time	Remarks & Notes
In Person	Premium - See Website for Fee	Same Day	N/A	N/A	1 Day	

Collection (Proxy) Applications: This method allows for units/individuals to arrange for their passports (whether dispatched through BFPO or via Courier) to be collected by a third party from the HM Passport Office Armed Forces Team in Peterborough. To enable this, HM Passport Office require a letter from the applicant authorising the collection of the passport by the named individual. The letter of authorisation should be submitted with the applications. The collector will need to show their ID which could be a driving license, passport, medical card etc.