



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Cabinet's position on Immigration Regulations

23 October 2015

Cabinet was briefed on the progress on the Inter- ministerial committee on Immigration Regulations which was led by the Deputy President.

The President had set up this IMC so as to investigate the unintended consequences that were raised by the stakeholders in the tourism sector.

Having investigated and explored areas that can be adjusted to deal with both the security consideration and the unintended consequences the IMC made the following recommendations.

Application in person:

Concessions that will take effect within the next 3 months.

Countries where no South African missions exist, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) will accept applications sent by post.

Thereafter, the biometrics and photos of those travellers will be captured on arrival at ports of entry. This concession will only be applicable to visitors/medical Visa.

The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) will implement the biometrics (including fingerprints and photos) at ports of entry starting. The pilot sites will be at OR Tambo Airport; King Shaka Airport and Cape Town International Airport.

DHA will introduce an Accredited Tourism Company (ATC) Programme for China, India and Russia with possible extension to other visa requiring countries.

DHA will continue to issue a long-term Multiple Entry Visa to frequent travellers. This will be valid for a period exceeding 3 months but not exceeding 3 years.

Concessions that will be effective within 3 months to 1 year.

DHA will increase Visa Facilitation Centres (VHC) in China, India, United Kingdom, Nigeria Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Ghana, Kenya and Uganda. The DHA will fast-track the opening of VFC in Zimbabwe, UAE and Botswana.

Concessions that will be effected beyond one year.

The DHA will install systems for pre-flight checks (including operation-centres) at international airports. The DHA will upgrade Advance Passenger Processing (APP) systems and implement a Passenger Name Record (PNR) to enhance risk assessment.

The DHA will finalise the automation of the visa and permitting system.

Child-travel requirements: South African children:

In respect of South African children (outbound travel) the IMC accepted the implementation of the current child-travel requirements, including the parental consent affidavits as these seek to protect children.

Concessions to be effective within the next 3 months.

School principals will issue letters confirming the permission for children to travel on school tours. This authority will also be extended to include registered sports bodies. The validity of the Parental Consent Affidavit will be extended to a period no longer than 6 months.

Concessions to be effective within the next 3 months to a year.

The term "Unabridged Birth Certificate" will be changed to "Birth Certificate containing parental details" Details of parents will be printed in passports, so that parents whose particulars are printed would therefore not be required to carry birth certificates.

Child-travel requirements: foreign children.

In respect of inbound travellers, the IMC took the position that where visas are required, provision of original birth certificates or certified copies of required documents should continue during the visa application process as this is in line with practise in many other countries.

In respect of children from visa-exempt countries, the IMC recommended a dispensation in terms of which:

Travellers will be strongly advised to bring along proof of the relation and consent from the absent parent/s or guardian/s.

All the other administrative issues affecting the relevant departments will be resolved through inter-departmental engagements.

Cabinet endorsed these recommendations and believes these will address the unintended consequences that were raised and also the safety of the children will not in any way be compromised.

Cabinet further endorsed that the DHA should facilitate the legal instrument to implement the recommendations. It further mandated all the relevant departments to engage with their relevant stakeholders to present these approved recommendations.

Cabinet extended the life of the IMC in order to be able to deal with any issues that may arise whilst implementing the Cabinet decision.