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DoD Passport and Visa Office Newsletter

Message from the Executive Director, Army Headquarters Services



Michael Reheuser, Executive
Director

I wanted to let you know about a significant change to the Army's Passport and Visa mission.

Beginning October 1st, 2015, responsibility for the Passport and Visa mission will transfer from Logistics Services-Washington, to the Directorate of Executive Travel (DET), another organization within U.S. Army Headquarters Services (AHS).

The reason for this change is the required drawdown of headquarters elements directed by

the Army's senior leadership. The drawdown has required AHS to consolidate two of its directorates. As a result, LSW will be disestablished and its personnel and functions will be transferred to other organizations, including DET.

DET is led by Andy Hare. Mr. Hare's organization provides executive travel advice to the Army's most senior leaders. DET also runs the Pentagon motor pool. Their personnel have substantial experience with Army travel missions and will continue to meet the high level of customer satisfaction that LSW has set.

Please join me in welcoming Mr. Hare and his team to Passports and Visas. They have been working hard to study all of the processes associated with these

important missions and will do a great job going forward.

I also wanted to comment on another significant change to the AHS team. As you know, last month Dr. Toye Latimore announced that she was retiring from federal service after 35 years. Toye has given her entire adult work life to the Army and has left a long and lasting legacy. We will miss her and wish her great success in her retired life.

Please join me in wishing Dr. Latimore the best!

If you have any questions or comments, please let me know.

Thank you.

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Travel Services Division

For the last several months the Travel Services Division, in partnership with the other branches of the LSW Team have been working to update the Passport and Visa processing database. This has been through a renovated and modified VPAS software developed by the HQDA Information and Technology Agency.

One of the intended goals of this project is to develop an easily usable application to handle the vast magnitude of our opera-

tions while keeping complete visibility on any and all submissions into the system. This will allow both agents in the field and our agents here at LSW to have a clearer grasp of the status of the applications within their purview.

Currently the projected date for the completion of the redesigned VPAS project is 01 November 2015. As part of our final testing phase we are asking for any agent interest in helping to review

and provide feedback on the redesigned DD-1056 and tracking system to please send their email address to stephen.j.morgan.civ@mail.mil and we will include you in our review process.

UPDATE: The Saudi Arabian Embassy was closed on 21 September, 2015 through 25 September 2015. This has caused delays with the processing of Visa's for Saudi Arabia.

Important Suggestions and Reminders

All agents must review Passport Matters for changes to country requirements each time when applying for official passports or visas

- Agents are reminded they (agent) must sign the back of the applicants photo prior to attaching it to the application. Do not press to firmly as this will adversely affect imagery on the reverse side of the photo.

- Ensure that all passport forms and applications are downloaded from the U.S. Department of State website

www.travel.state.gov. It must be black print on white paper 8.5 x 11

inches and printed on single pages. When the application is completed a barcode will appear on the left side of the first page of the passport application.

- All agents are reminded to always refer to the Federal and Military Passport Agents Reference Guide (PARG 2013) for guidance in processing application.

- When submitting DD-1056 forms they are required to be signed in Blue ink.

- All DOD personnel assigned to Italy must have Visa's prior to arri-

val in the country per the Foreign Clearance Guide

“Personnel who require a visa must obtain it before entering Italy. Personnel who fail to obtain the “missione” visa prior to arrival in Italy must depart the Schengen territory as described in section I.A.2.b.2above, at their own expense, in order to obtain the necessary visa”.

- All UAE Visa applications must use the new application on Passport Matters or they will be rejected by the Embassy.

Customer Service Operations

As noted in the last newsletter, the major modernization of the Visa Passport Application System (VPAS) system is on schedule. Part of this revision is what we are calling an Agent Dashboard. We don't know exactly how this will look when finished, but in concept, every agent, when logging into VPAS, will have a quick view of all open actions that the agent has initiated. This is all possible as part of the new web based DD 1056. As the agent enters data into the CAC enabled DD 1056, it will pull in the agent ID and Facility data based upon the CAC validation that is required to get an account in VPAS. Because we are enforcing required fields, the dashboard view will be able to list passport and visas applications and show the mail tracking numbers.

The concept we have undertaken is process based. When you log in, you will have to select if you are processing a passport or visa. Then the input form with associated required fields will open. The DD 1056 input screen will not look like the form due to the amount of data required. You will not be able to skip any required fields. To help with this, we built associated tables i.e., if your customer is Army, then only Army grades will be available to select. Adding extra required files allows for more accurate reporting.

Because we send our passports to the various State Department processing centers you will have less visibility of the steps because our barcode is not interchangeable with the DOS barcode. That means you will not automatically see when the various processing centers scan in the action as received. However, you be able to add that data when you get delivery confirmation from the tracking code and you can always call our help desk for status checks. The next passport data point you will see using VPAS is when we scan it in for final processing and shipping. What we hope to be able to provide is the date we received the action back from State and the shipping date with tracking number.

Visas that are processed here on the other hand, will have several possible data points available to you. The same DD 1056 process will be followed as outlined above. The major difference will be you will or could see when we receive your action, when the action is assigned for processing, when delivered to the embassy, when picked up from the embassy, and when shipped with a tracking number. That is the simplest model for a visa. We are looking at how to manage the multi-country visas whereby the agent will see when the action goes to each embassy or if there is a discrepancy with one of the actions.

Another tool we are looking at, is reporting discrepancies back to you for your use/ information. This will include everything from returning the action to notifying you if our team had to make a minor modification to keep the action moving. This will help with the multi-country visas where we need additional information or correction for one country, but can process the other country action pending receipt of your corrected actions.

We are working on conducting a demo of the revised system during the next set of VTCs, but only on the 27th of Oct. This will be very helpful as we transition over to the new version of VPAS. Please look at your schedules and plan on attending if possible so you can be familiarized with the new system.

We are testing at every stage, but as we get more and more involved, we might take a few processes for granted. For that reason, as we get closer to the final steps, I would like to enlist a few agents to test the new system before we go hot. If you are interested in helping with the final testing and being involved in the initial live processing, please send me an email at stephen.j.morgan.civ@mail.mil. This will take your commitment and constructive comments but at the same time it will help make the tool better for us all.

LSW Spotlight #1

Ms Dolly Fugate was born in Louisville Kentucky and was raised in Boone North Carolina. She graduated from Watauga High School. From 1981-1994 Ms Fugate served on active duty as a 42A, in 1994 she joined the reserves. From 1999-2014 she served as the Unit Administrator for 3-338th Training Support Battalion in Blacklick Ohio. Ms Fugate is married and has one child who is currently attending Columbus State Community College located in

Columbus Ohio. She enjoys providing customer service to our civilian government employees, DoD service members and their family members. Ms Fugate is in training with various sections within the Passport Branch where she is presently assigned. She enjoys music, going to the beach, and spending time with friends and family. Ms Fugate retired from the military at Fort Belvoir on 1 Jan 2015 with over 33 years of consecutive service to our nation



LSW Spotlight #2

Our second new employee is Ms Natasia Louissaint-Carvajal. She is a former Army veteran who is originally from Vero Beach, Florida. As a soldier, she was a 42A (Personnel Specialist) and helped other soldiers with all matters personnel within the Army. She also has over 10 years' experience with administrative and human resources duties. Ms. Louissaint-Carvajal started out as a contractor working in

LSW and has now transitioned to becoming a Federal employee. Ms. Louissaint-Carvajal is also an Army spouse, has two little girls and they reside in the local area.

