



National Audit Office

The UK's independent public spending
watchdog

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Date 21 March 2024

HMPO SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

Thank you for your request of 15 March 2024 asking whether “*it’s true that HMPO DO NOT have a service level agreement for processing overseas passport applications*”. We have considered your request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We confirm that we hold some information relevant to your request. In December 2022 we published a report [Investigation into the performance of HM Passport Office](#) (HMPO), which stated that:

“For international applications, there are no formal service level agreements, but HMPO advises overseas customers on how application times may vary depending on the type of application (renewal, first-time application, replacement) and country of application. These advisory times range from ‘at least 13 weeks’ to ‘at least 39 weeks’. (paragraph 3.5)

The advisory time range of 13 to 39 weeks in our report was based on data obtained during fieldwork we conducted in September and October 2022. We do not hold current data on overseas application times. However, we note that the email you received from HMPO’s Customer Service Management Team on 4 March 2024 indicated that 16 weeks is the typical time cases are now taking. The HMPO [website](#) explains that “*There are different turnaround times if you’re applying from another country.*”

I hope this response is helpful. **Annex A** sets out the steps you may wish to take if you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your request for information under FOIA.

Yours sincerely,

NAO FOI Team



Annex A

Statement of Policy

Our policy is to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as helpfully and promptly as possible, having regard to the principles set out in the Act. I therefore hope you are happy with the way we have handled your request. If you are not, then you should take the following steps.

In the first instance, within 40 working days, write to the National Audit Office Freedom of Information (FOI) Team at FOI@nao.org.uk or by post to:

FOI Team, Green 2, National Audit Office, 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9SP

The Head of FOI will arrange a review, which will be conducted by a senior member of staff who was not involved in decisions relating to your original request. Once the review has been completed, we will write informing you of the outcome.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The primary way of escalating your concerns to the Information Commissioner is at: <https://ico.org.uk/foicomplaints>

Alternatively, you can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/> or Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF.