



## **NATIONAL FEDERATIONS**

## **SOUTH AFRICAN SPORTS CONFEDERATION AND OLYMPIC COMMITTEE**

## **PROVINCIAL SPORTS CONFEDERATIONS**

Dear colleagues

### **VISA AND PASSPORT PROCESSES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Over the years the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture has willingly assisted with requests with visa applications made at foreign missions, as well as passport applications made at the Department of Home Affairs. This has been an intervention for the sector where challenges may exist.

Our experience is the following:

- Sector representatives expecting the Department to apply for travel documents on their behalf.
- Individuals not applying personally in time, and not presenting themselves timeously, especially with appointments with Embassies for visas.
- Sector representatives using agencies who apply on their behalf and the Department has to deal with Agencies.
- Requests from National Federations for SA visas from visiting teams who have not made applications to the SA missions in their countries timeously.
- Sports persons losing travel documents whilst outside the country.
- We have been informed by both foreign missions, and our own Department of Home Affairs, that when a request is made to expedite the issuing of a visa, or passport, other applicants, who have applied timeously, are disadvantaged, as their application is then pushed back in the queue in order to accommodate the late applications received.



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## VISA AND PASSPORT PROCESSES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- DSAC has often been approached to try assist with visas from foreign missions, but do not receive the full account of why they are experiencing a "challenge" in getting their visa. An example would be an athlete travelling to Spain via the UK, and not having the UK transit visa, hence the Embassy of Spain cannot issue their visa until the UK transit visa is in their passport. We were approached to request the Embassy of Spain to expedite the issuing of the visa, only to be told by the Embassy the real reason for the delay.

Subsequently in our quest to assist we have had several unpleasant responses from the foreign missions regarding applications made.

These missions have informed us that they are no longer willing or able to assist with any requests received and that applicants must follow the relevant processes.

Please note the following procedures while the Department finalises its protocol document in this regard.

- DSAC cannot apply for a visa or passport on behalf of anyone else.
- The Department of Home Affairs is a separate Government Department, and we cannot give them an instruction to expedite the issuing of a passport or incoming visa (visas needed by other nationalities, travelling to compete in SA). We can only intervene in urgent /emergency situations, and request their assistance and hope that they are able to help.
- Note we cannot entertain any requests that will compromise the South African legislative framework.
- **Official and Diplomatic passports are only for identified government employees.**





## VISA AND PASSPORT PROCESSES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The above-mentioned organisations must please ensure that any athlete or official likely to have to travel or compete internationally, must keep their passports up to date, and stored in safe place.
- Please ensure that visas for international travel are applied for well in advance, and if a late invitation is received, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that they will be able to receive their visa in time to travel, taking the relevant foreign mission's timelines into consideration. These timelines differ from country to country. Please also consider the public holidays / National days of different countries as the Missions working hours' dictate closure for the day or shortened working hours.
- Also ensure that the applicant arrives in advance of any appointment, or collection time, and that the staff of the foreign mission (if they do not work through a visa agency) cannot be expected to wait until after hours for collection of visas. This is very disrespectful and unprofessional.

We are committed to providing support and intervention where necessary, and the team has often gone more than the extra mile to do this.

Going forward, we will appreciate your cooperation in ensuring the above is taken seriously, as DSAC has lost credibility, and put the Department's, and the Minister's reputation at great risk.

Yours sincerely

MR V. MKHIZE  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

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