



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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15 May 2008

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Mexico: Processing times for issuing passports in Mexico; whether they vary across the country
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, a director of the General Regional Offices Branch (Dirección General de Delegaciones), which operates within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE) and is responsible for overseeing the passport issuing agencies in Mexico, provided the following information:

Mexican passports are issued by the Passport Issuing Centre (Centro de Emisión de Pasaportes), in Mexico City and by 42 regional offices (*delegaciones*) across the country, located in all the states of Mexico and in Mexico City (Mexico 22 Apr. 2008). The Passport Issuing Centre and the regional offices follow the same guidelines in terms of processing times for issuing passports (*ibid.*). Passport applicants must appear in person at the Passport Issuing Centre or at one of the regional offices, provide all the required documents and have their fingerprints taken (*ibid.*). Under normal circumstances, if all the documents are in order, and there are no questions regarding the individual, such as an alert in the database system or possible identity theft, the passport will be issued to the applicant the same day (Mexico 23 Apr. 2008b).

Replacements of lost or stolen passports are ready within three to five business days (Mexico 22 Apr. 2008). When a passport is lost or stolen, the applicant must first declare the loss at an Office of the Public Prosecutor (Agencia del Ministerio Público) or to another appropriate jurisdiction (*ibid.*). Appropriate jurisdictions may include the municipal authorities or local police where there is no Office of the Public Prosecutor available (Mexico 23 Apr. 2008b). The applicant must present a certified copy of the statement of loss (*acta de extravío*) when applying for a replacement passport (Mexico 22 Apr. 2008).

In a 23 April 2008 telephone interview, a senior liaison officer (*Enlace de Alta Responsabilidad*) of the Passport Issuing Centre corroborated the information that regular passport requests are processed the same day, and that lost or stolen passports are replaced within three to five days, which is the time it usually takes for the SRE to verify the certified copy of the statement of loss (Mexico 23 Apr. 2008a). The Senior Liaison Officer added that a delay of one to three months can be expected when the director of the centre has doubts as to the authenticity of a required document (*ibid.*). These delays represent the average time it would take to obtain verification of the document provided with the corresponding issuing authority, such as the Office of Vital Statistics (Oficina del Registro Civil) for a birth certificate, the Secretary of National Defence (Secretaría de Defensa Nacional, SEDENA) for a military service card, or the Federal Electoral Institute (Instituto Federal Electoral, IFE) to verify an electoral card (*ibid.*).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Mexico. 23 April 2008a. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE. Centro de Emisión de Pasaportes. Telephone interview with a liaison officer.

_____. 23 April 2008b. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE. Dirección General de Delegaciones. Correspondence from a director.

_____. 22 April 2008. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE. Dirección General de Delegaciones. Correspondence from a director.

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