

UNCLASSIFIED STATE 00120664

AUG 13

SUBJECT: DS-260 WORLDWIDE DEPLOYMENT

REF: 13 STATE 103210

1. This message contains an action request. See para 9.

2. Summary: Effective September 1, 2013, the DS-260 Immigrant Visa Electronic Application and the DS-261 (Choice of Address and Agent) will replace the paper-based DS-230 Application for Immigrant Visa and Alien Registration (parts I and II) and the DS-3032 (Choice of Address and Agent). This message describes the timeline for deployment and provides guidance to posts. End Summary.

Worldwide Use of DS-260/261 for New Cases Mandatory

3. Reftel announced the availability of IVO 04.07, which includes a "biometric oath module" that allows posts to record an electronic fingerprint in lieu of a written signature attesting to the oath administered prior to every immigrant visa interview. The Data Engineering Group in CST has completed its portion of the deployment to all 130 IV processing posts; you have until August 30 to complete installation of that software (see Reftel for details re installation). Following that deployment, we intend to deploy the DS-260/261 as follows:

* Beneficiaries submitting new cases that arrive at the National Visa Center (NVC) from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) on or after September 1 will be instructed to complete the DS-260/261 in lieu of the DS-230/3032. We will update travel.state.gov to reflect this guidance and will remove the PDF versions of Forms DS-230 and DS-3032 from public circulation. If a beneficiary submits a DS-230, NVC will instruct him or her to re-submit a DS-260.

* We will not require DS-260s for beneficiaries of "pipeline" cases already in process at NVC on September 1 if: 1) the case has already been documentarily qualified and sent to scheduling, or 2) NVC receives a single submission of documents that makes a case documentarily qualified. For all other pipeline cases where NVC has occasion to send a "checklist" of missing documents after September 1, NVC will instruct petitioners/agents/beneficiaries to submit the DS-260 along with those missing documents, even if a DS-230 was already on file.

* Those filing petitions locally overseas (with either USCIS or a consular section) on or after September 1 must submit a DS-260 once the petition is approved. Posts should instruct beneficiaries to enter the principal applicant's DOB in YYYYMMDD format in lieu of an "Invoice ID" on the DS-260 login page.

* For cases filed locally overseas prior to September 1, if beneficiaries have already submitted a DS-230 or received instruction to do so, you should accept the DS-230. If you have not yet provided beneficiaries instructions on how to submit their applications, you must require the DS-260. You should not, as a general rule, require the submission of a DS-260 if a valid, signed,

unexpired DS-230 is already on file and requiring the DS-260 would result in a 221(g) refusal for an otherwise issuable case.

4. For Havana Only: Cuban Family Reunification Parole (CFRP) cases are the lone exception to the scenarios described above. The DS-260 will not allow an applicant whose case is not current to access the DS-260. For now, NVC will continue to solicit and accept Form DS-230 from applicants who opt in to the CFRP program.

Effects on Posts, Projected Timeline

5. Detailed guidance on how to process DS-260 cases via IVO is contained within the IVO 04.07 User Manual. . Please familiarize yourself with the various scenarios outlined in the user manual, including how to take a parent or guardian's biometric oath in cases in which an applicant is unable to attest to his/her own oath.

6. Like the DS-230, the DS-260 is valid for one year from the date of the oath. After the oath expires, the DS-260 will automatically unlock and you must tell the applicant to update and resubmit the form. IVO will require a new biometric oath after the re-submission of the DS-260 in order to authorize the case.

7. Based on the criteria laid out in paragraph 3, as well as the typical processing times for cases to become documentarily qualified and scheduled at NVC, you may see your first DS-260 cases as September "expedites" or regularly-scheduled October cases. We anticipate that the mix of DS-260 and DS-230 cases in your regular monthly shipments will steadily begin to favor the DS-260. We expect more than 90 percent of cases arriving at post for interview in February 2014 and beyond will already have submitted the DS-260 to NVC. Over the coming months, VO will evaluate the flow of cases through the pipeline and make a determination at a later date whether to make a "hard cutover" to the DS-260 requiring all applicants to submit a DS-260/261 notwithstanding a potentially still-valid DS-230 on file.

8. Worldwide implementation of the DS-260/261 is a necessary first step for the transition to IV Paperless Processing (IVPP). We expect to begin beta testing of the various IVPP components later this year and look forward to working with posts to continue to innovate towards a more efficient and secure IV process.

Action Request

9. You should review the information provided on your website and the website of your GSS or other contract services to remove reference to the DS-230 and direct applicants to http://www.travel.state.gov/visa/immigrants/info/info_5164.html for instructions on completing the DS-260.

Kerry

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