

From the desk of:
Theron P. Keller

April 28, 2008

Ms. Colleen Manaher, Director, WHTI
Office of Field Operations
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Room 5.4-D
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20229

Dear Ms. Manaher,

Thank you very much for your April 23, 2008 reply to my questions about emergency travel home for cruise passengers who fall under the passport exemption for round trip cruises from the United States.

Your answer is very reassuring, and I will be pleased to pass it along to fellow cruise passengers.

Another situation has developed, which requires me to ask you for more information.

A recent news story concerning a family on a cruise vacation who had to return to the United States after their child took ill in The Bahamas reported that the family had a great deal of trouble in their effort to return by air, even having to obtain new passports while in The Bahamas before they were allowed to fly home.

I have included a printed copy of the news story for your reference, and highlighted the part of the story about passports.

This does not seem to match the process you described in your earlier letter. Is this a matter of policy not being followed, or not yet in place, or just an error on the part of the CBP personnel on site? Are the airlines in the WHTI area aware of, and acting in compliance with this policy?

I'm not asking for you to investigate this particular incident, as there are several reports of a similar nature that have recently occurred. This one just happened, and was easy to document.

Can you comment on how one should handle this situation if they should happen to be in need of an emergency return home by air?

Again, thank you very much for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

Theron P. Keller