

# Airport entry pass norms may be eased

**Faizan Haidar**

■ [letters@hindustantimes.com](mailto:letters@hindustantimes.com)

**NEW DELHI:** The ministry of civil aviation has proposed relaxation of norms for issuance of airport entry passes (AEPs) to airline and airport employees, according to ministry officials familiar with the development.

The move is likely to provide relief to pilots, cabin crew and other airport staff who have to make the rounds of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) to get permanent and temporary passes for access to various parts of the airport.

To speed up the process, which currently takes 3-4 months, the ministry proposes issuing the pass within a month — like the Tatkal passport procedure —

without waiting for the applicant's police verification report, the officials said.

“The regional director of the Bureau for Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) will initiate police background check within seven days. Once the report is received, it should not take the regional director more than five days to issue the pass. Earlier, there was no timeline as the meeting of the committee that approves AEPs used to be held once every quarter,” one of the ministry officials quoted above said.

In case of pilots, the AEP is likely to be valid for an additional 30 days beyond the day his or her flying licence expires, as it is at present. This will ensure that the pilots will no longer have to sit around for three-four months to

get fresh passes issued.

According to the proposed norms, foreign pilots will be able to get temporary airport entry passes (TAEP) for seven instead of three days, as stipulated under the rules for non-Indians. An airline official said the proposed move would help plan and manage the employee roster better.

Proposal states, “AEP shall be issued, even if background check is not received, within one month. The background check report shall be reconciled post issuance of AEP mandatorily within three months. While issuing pass to crew, 30 days grace period will be added with the remaining valid days of commercial pilot licence.”

Hindustan Times has accessed the proposal. A written query on the proposed guidelines sent to

Usha Padhee, joint secretary, ministry of civil aviation, on October 15 remains unanswered.

On relaxing norms for foreign nationals, including pilots, the proposal states: “Temporary AEPs restricted upto a period of seven days shall be issued by the airport operator without background checks only to business/employment visa holders/ work permit holders.”

Earlier, in case of urgent operational requirement, temporary passes with three days validity were issued.

The guidelines related to AEPs were last revised in 2014 when the ministry switched from colour-coded to alphabetical passes. BCAS said the Central Industrial Security Force have the toughest job of ensuring safety at airports.