

Passport Policy Change Welcomed by A Gender Agenda

A Gender Agenda welcomes the changes to passport requirements for sex and gender diverse Australians announced today by the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Hon Robert McClelland MP, Attorney-General.

“The changes to passports regulations which will eliminate the requirement for individuals to have reassignment surgery prior to changing the sex on their passport are strongly welcomed” said Peter Hyndal, spokesperson for A Gender Agenda.

“Previously, many sex and gender diverse people have been forced to travel on a passport which shows their sex as different from the way they identify and present. This predicament has raised very real safety issues for transgender and intersex people when travelling overseas. We are aware of specific cases where individuals have been detained in international airports or denied visas because the sex on their passport did not match their presentation and identity.”

“The changes announced today are the most significant reforms affecting transgender and intersex Australians that we have ever seen at a Commonwealth level. These reforms bring Australian passport policy into line with many other countries such as the US and the UK.”

“A Gender Agenda congratulates the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Attorney-General for their initiative on this issue. In particular, A Gender Agenda congratulates the Minister and officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for their highly professional and respectful consultation with transgender and intersex organisations in the lead up to these changes.”

“The change to passport policy announced today signals a first, very significant step towards removing discrimination against transgender and intersex people at a Commonwealth level. A Gender Agenda encourages the Commonwealth Government to continue this work across other portfolio areas.

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A Gender Agenda works with the sex and gender diverse community which includes transsexuals, transgender people, intersex people, cross-dressers and other gender variant or gender non-conforming people. We provide support and advocacy services to individuals, partners and families. We also provide information and training to employers and service providers. www.genderrights.org.au.