

# Rules could hurt SAA

Continued from page 1

according to Statistics SA data.

SAA is implementing its ninth turnaround plan in 15 years and is emphasising regional routes.

The tourism industry, represented by Satsa and the Association of Southern African Travel Agents (Asata), wants the new rules to be placed on hold and the Department of Home Affairs to consult with the industry. Home Affairs Minister Malusi Gigaba had set up a task team to engage with the industry but the team had yet to meet, Mr Frost said.

Home Affairs director-general Mkuseli Apleni defended the new regulations, saying the department now had a backlog of only 800 unabridged certificates, which was down from 4,000.

The rules were benchmarked against the UK, Canada, Australia and Schengen countries, which require additional documentation when travelling with children.

"We do not understand the

claims that our requirements are unique, not applicable elsewhere, and would have consequences for tourism and the economy in general," Mr Apleni said.

"Our regulations were benchmarked even with countries attracting more tourists."

Asata CEO Otto de Vries said home affairs had identified at least 190 unabridged birth certificates.

Mr de Vries said the new regulations affected airlines and travel agents across the globe, regardless of whether they fly directly to SA.

Verifying that all documents were complete would be the task airline staff at the very first flight to be taken by a family before connecting to SA. If a family flying from Canada to SA, via Frankfurt, reached Frankfurt without proper documentation, an SAA flight would not allow the children to fly into SA. Children who made it to OR Tambo International without proper documentation would be declared undesirables, he said.

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