

TO: SIMON

FROM: HEATHER

DATE: 29th March, 1985

London to Johannesburg 30th March

Hi Simon

Well glad you made it back in time to do this trip for us and managed to sneak just a few hours off! Just one word of advice - remember that we DON'T go to Yaounde on southbounds! (I am sure you won't mind that).

All the very best of luck with this trip - sure you will do a great job. Hopefully the icicles will have melted off the sand dunes by now and you should be able to improve your suntan!

Di is doing some notes for you concerning your group and a few other details and I will just add my 3 or 4 pages worth!:

1. SPAIN:

Australians and New Zealanders need visas and they all have.

You buy your own ferry ticket from Algeciras to Ceuta and it should cost you about U.S.\$ 270 for the group and the truck.

2. MOROCCO:

Your Dutch passport holder needs a visa and has one. Please double check the entry date to make sure it is O.K.

You have no-one else on board who needs a visa.

In order for you to get into Morocco we have to telex the British Embassy in Rabat who in turn apply for the permission from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This permission has come through as I spoke to the British Embassy earlier this week and the telex reference is: telex number 697 dated 25th February which came from the Administration de Douanes in Casablanca and it was signed by the Directeur des affaires techniques, Monsieur Jai Hikinin Hammad (that should get you in!) The permission is for you to enter at Ceuta and exit at Figuig and you must keep to these borders. Quite a few guys have been told when they arrive at Ceuta that the permission isn't there but it always is - it's just hidden under a pile of papers so don't be put off. Any problems just give us a ring.

Morocco has recently decided to issue money declaration forms. Can you please INSIST that you are given one at Ceuta. The ruling is that if you enter Morocco with more than 5000 dirhams of foreign currency (which you obviously will) you MUST declare it and it has to be entered on the currency declaration form. You then hand this in when you exit at Figuig. LANCE THOMAS wasn't given this form on entry and had to pay a LARGE fine.

GHALI (who you know!) is allowed to advance U.S.\$500 to northbounds if they are desperate for money but this does NOT apply to southbounds.

3. ALGERIA:

All but British and Swiss need visas and they all have. Please note Algerian visas are only valid for 45 days from the date of issue so please double check all yours to make sure they are valid.

ALGERIAN CURRENCY REGULATIONS:

As you know everyone entering Algeria is obliged to exchange 1000 dinars which cannot be exchanged back - believe this is about U.S.\$ 210 at the present rate of exchange. The only exceptions to this rule (and this does not always apply) is for people holding valid international student cards or anyone under 18.

Everyone has been told about this - when they booked, with their pre departure information, at the pre departure meeting etc but there is always one who claims never to have heard about it! It will be reiterated at the meeting on the morning of departure but suggest you mention it again.

Things are very expensive in Algeria these days - meat is \$12 per kilo and souvenirs are expensive so they should be able to spend their money especially if they spend a night in the Hotel Tahat or have the odd good meal out. Sure you know from your trip up with Neil how best to spend money in Algeria.

4. NIGER:

Everyone apart from EEC passport holders needs a visa and they all have. Please double check all the dates.

The Niger authorities can be very fussy and they are particularly paranoid about anyone having 2 passports especially 2 passports of a different nationality so can you check with everyone to see if they are holding 2 passports and if anyone is I suggest they should send the other one home unless it contains valid visas for the trip or they have to have the 2nd passport really well-hidden on entry to Niger. Grant Mayes actually got deported from Niger for having 2 passports along with 2 of his group and it was an extremely costly exercise to rescue that one. Americans often have 2 passports so watch out for them (they often have their South African visas in their 2nd passports).

Niger often doesn't accept our FIA carnets despite the fact that they are valid for entry to Niger (African logic) and they usually make you buy a carnet de transit routier at Customs and use this as well as your normal carnets - however a few people have managed to escape this one recently.

5. NIGERIA:

The land borders have been closed for almost a year now and look likely to remain so for some time to come. It is supposed to be an offence punishable by death to enter Nigeria on a carnet according to the AA - the RAC are more moderate about it and only claim you will spend 21 years in prison.

6. TCHAD:

So to save you from all those dreadful fates in Nigeria we go to Tchad instead. Unfortunately you missed out on this crossing with Neil but am sure he has given you some very precise directions about how to cross. There are some good notes in the handbook as well so am sure you will manage to find your way through.

As we have already discussed Tony Watson who was the last person through going south didn't go to Niamey to get his permit and in fact didn't manage to obtain a permit at all in the end but just kept getting his passenger list stamped in each town. Would suggest you apply in Agades like he did and hope that you actually do get a permit in Zinder. Seems that things have relaxed somewhat recently since so many trips have come through - long may it last.

One piece of advice - do NOT go via Bol and Tourba - Lance Thomas went this way and said it was just horrendous so you should go via MAO as normal.

Everyone needs Tchad visas and everyone has. If for any reason you were running really late and you had expired Tchad visas, the French Consulate in Niamey will extend them (not that we want you to go to Niamey)

7. CAMEROUNS:

Everyone needs a visa and they all have. If any Camerouns visas need extending they can be extended on the border with no problem.

You heard the Graeme Kidd incident at the meeting last night so don't think we have to tell you to keep a low profile in the Camerouns and keep on the **right** side of the authorities. It is very heavily policed but this mainly applies to Yaounde and D ouala where you won't be going so all should be well.

8. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC:

Everyone needs a visa and everyone has. Please check the dates to make sure they are not expiring - however both Lance and Spiny entered the R.C.A. with expired visas and no-one seemed to notice... However if you are running well to time your visas should be ok.

All the R.C.A. visas issued in London are only valid for 48 hours but you can get these extended in Bouar with no problem.

9. ZAIRE:

Ho hum.....!!!! As you know the Zaire Embassies around the world are basically not issuing tourist visas at the moment but if this is still the case when you get down there we will have sorted out an alternative plan but we are just keeping our fingers crossed that the Zaires will change their minds and start issuing visas again.

9. ZAIRE cont

If the Embassy in Bangui is issuing visas by the time you get down there, then they normally take 48 hours.

10. OTHER VISAS:

It isn't feasible for us to obtain Rwandan visas for southbound groups as their main Embassy is in Brussels and they take a minimum of 2 weeks to issue the visas and there are no Rwandan Embassies along your route so most southbounds go through Burundi, just making a short transit of Rwanda and you can obtain these Rwandan transit visas on the border, or the other alternative is for the trips to go through Uganda and into Tanzania from there.

UGANDA Visas available on the border. All your pax need apart from Irish but I would double check this.

BURUNDI Visas available from the Consulate in Bukavu (providing the Consul isn't away on one of his many holidays!) Everyone needs.

RWANDA If you go via Burundi, then you will need TRANSIT visas for Rwanda and these are available on the border.

TANZANIA Everyone either needs a Visitors Pass (commonwealth passport holders) or a visa and you can either obtain these in Bujumbura (if you go to Brundi) or on the border.

KENYA Irish, Australian, Swiss, Dutch and Americans need. Try and obtain these in Bujumbura otherwise obtain in Arusha or Moshi.

TANZANIA Re-entry visas from the High Commission in Nairobi. You must obtain these in Nairobi as this High Commission is fairly newly opened and you can no longer obtain these visas on the border.

ZAMBIA Swiss, Americans, Dutch need. Obtain at the border.

BOTSWANA You have no-one on board who needs a visa but please double check this with the Botswana High Commission in Lusaka.

SOUTH AFRICA Everyone but British and Swiss need and they all have. Please note anyone entering South Africa is obliged to have an airline ticket out of the country and anyone not conforming

with this regulation can be refused entry to South Africa. **EVERYONE** has been told about this and they know that if they do not have tickets we are quite within our rights to leave them at the border. If you find you have people on board without tickets we can organise for them to be sent down to Dar for their collection providing they either pay you or ensure that we are paid here in London.

Please ensure that everyone has adequate funds on them when entering S.A. otherwise they are likely to be granted a very short stay indeed.

Obviosuly ensure that all Looseleaf visas are **well-hidden away** during the trip.

11. GENERAL:

Botswana

You need a road permit to drive through Botswana, called a D Permit. This is organised through Travel Tours in Johannesburg and this permit should be waiting for you at the Poste Restante in Lusaka and a copy at Kasungula. If, for any reason, the original permit isn't in Lusaka, then please phone Joy at Travel Tours (our agents in S.A.) on 29-7607, telex 95-482759 and ask her to chase for you.

Lusaka

On arrival in Lusaka, you should telex Joy to let her know when you are arriving, how many people want accommodation on the first night (which we do **NOT** pay for) and to book a group meal for you. To give your group an idea of accommodation costs bed and breakfast in the Chelsea which is an OK hotel is R19 per night.

Can't think of anything else at the moment - sure you'll be pleased to hear that!! Hope it's a really good trip Simon, take care and hope WBH is a good girl (she, like Gurti, is suffering from an identity crisis as she is also supposed to be **blue!!!**)


HEATHER