



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

UNITED KINGDOM LEGALISATION OFFICE

12th International Forum
on the electronic Apostille programme (e-APP)
October 2021

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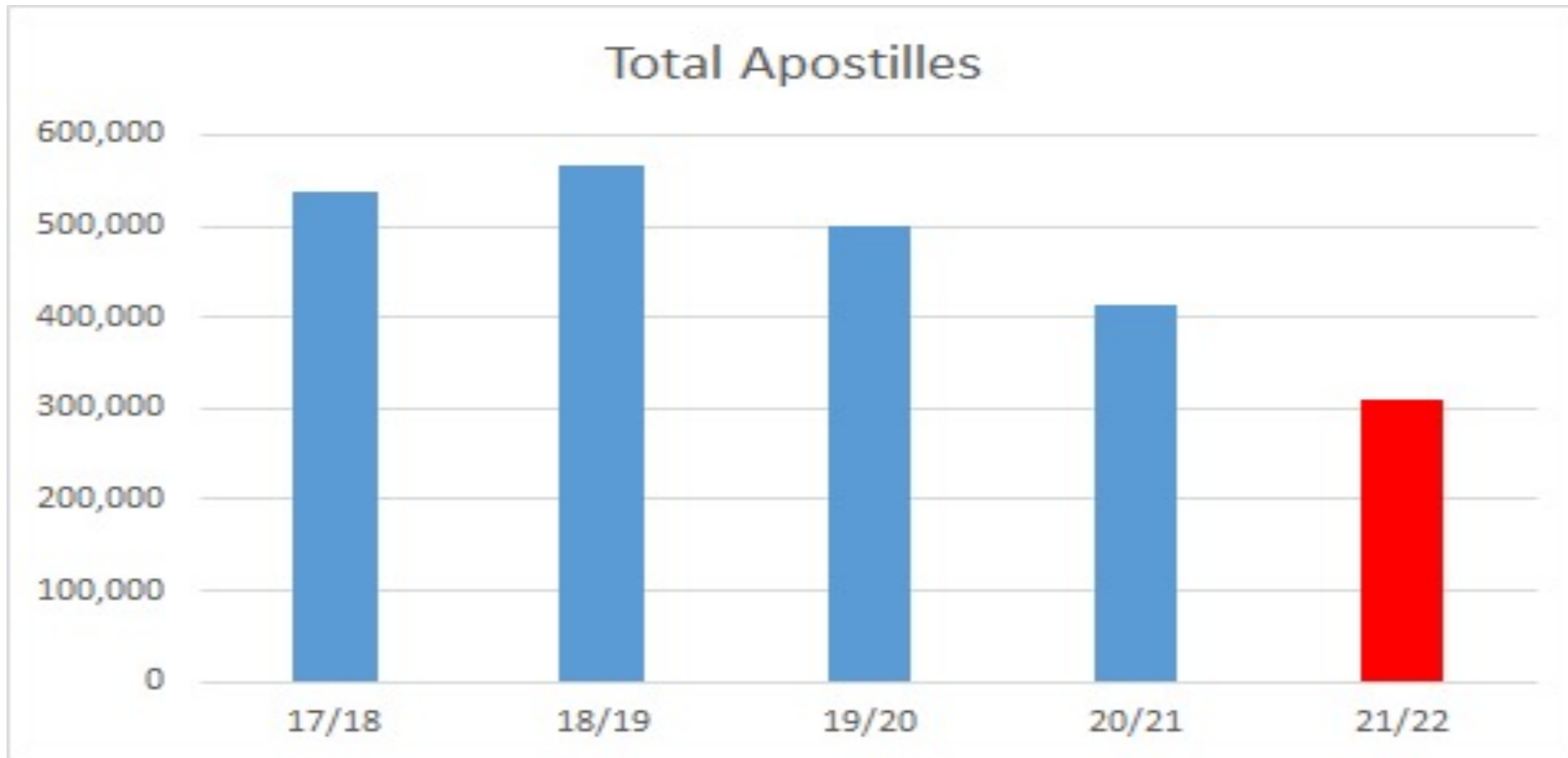


Introduction

- The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is the only designated Competent Authority authorised to issue apostilles in the United Kingdom.
- How do we deliver this?
- Challenges



Introduction





The UK Electronic Apostilles Project

- Initially investigated potential implementation in 2012
- e-Register component went live in 2014
- Project was re-visited in 2019 following the 11th International e-APP Forum
- Initial discovery of the project stalled



The UK Electronic Apostilles Project

- Met with other authorities to share digital knowledge
- Benefits of expert external suppliers
- The impact of Covid-19
- Stakeholder discussions and regular checkpoints
- Private beta pilot



The UK Electronic Apostilles Project

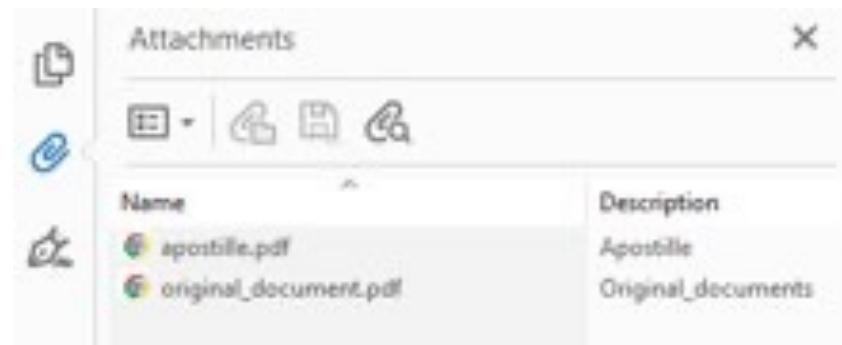
- PDF with private signing solution developed by supplier
- Self-service application creation through online portal
- Customer uploads pdf documents which are pulled through directly to our case management system and attached to application
- Digital signature automatically recognised in case management system, matched if already present, operator to check document meets requirements
- Once apostille issued and application complete, legalised documents pulled back through to portal for users to download



The UK Electronic Apostilles Project

e-Apostille structure: Coversheet with original documents and apostille attached

- Coversheet provides guidance to users and receiving authorities
- This structure preserves all underlying digital signatures



Legalisation Office
United Kingdom (UK)

14 April 2021

e-Apostille cover sheet

The e-Apostille certificate and related documents are attached as separate PDFs.

View document and e-Apostille certificate

This file has 2 separate PDF attachments:

- **original_document.pdf** – document the Apostille certificate relates to
- **apostille.pdf** – e-Apostille certificate including conditions of use
Reference: APO-123K-7HND-8232-2021

Instructions

To view the attachments and digital signatures **open this file in a PDF viewer** such as Adobe Reader (select the 'paperclip' icon).

This file has been digitally signed by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) Legalisation Office in the UK.

Verify the e-Apostille certificate

To verify the e-Apostille certificate go to:
<https://www.verifyapostille.service.gov.uk>



Why now?

- Covid-19 pandemic
- Resilience
- Digitally signed UK documents are becoming more common
- HMG digital by default agenda
- If not now, then when?



Challenges

- Where to even start; no agreed standards
- Internal obstacles and project governance
- Justification – is it really worth it?
- Finding niche expertise
- Acceptance across authorities
- Cost



Future Hopes

- Adoption of digital signatures from partners across government
- e-Apostille integration with other government departments
- End-to-end legalisation from the point of issue – Legalisation Nirvana!
- Universal acceptance from receiving authorities



Thank you for listening

Any Questions?