

Responses to Information Requests - Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Nigeria: Requirements and procedures to obtain a driver's licence; appearance of driver's licenses (2016-November 2019)

1. Issuance of Driver's Licences in Nigeria

According to sources, the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) is responsible for road safety administration in Nigeria, including the issuance of driver's licences (OECD 18 May 2018, 4-5; Nigeria 2007, Art. 10). Article 10 of the *Federal Road Safety Commission (Establishment) Act, 2007* provides that the FRSC is responsible for the following, among others:

...

(d) designing and producing the driver's licence to be used by various categories of vehicle operators;

(e) determining from time to time, the requirements to be satisfied by an applicant for a drivers licence;

...

(u) maintaining the validity period for driver's licenses which shall be three years subject to renewal at the expiration of the validity period

.... (Nigeria 2007, Art. 10(3))

2. Classes of Licence

NaijAuto.com, "a leading [website] for automotive classified ads in Nigeria" (NaijAuto.com n.d.), which also hosts information on Nigerian traffic regulations, indicates that "driver's licenses are issued by the Nigerian Federal Government with 10 types and scope" (NaijAuto.com 13 Dec. 2018). According to the *Nigeria Highway Code*, the licence classes are the following:

1. Motor cycle
2. Motor vehicle of less than 3 tonnes gross weight other than motor cycle, taxi, stage carriage or omnibus
3. A motor vehicle of less than 3 tonnes gross weight, other than motor cycle
4. Motor vehicle other than motor cycle, taxi, stage carriage or omnibus excluding an articulated vehicle or vehicle drawing a trailer.
5. Motor vehicle other than a motor cycle or articulated vehicle
6. Agricultural machines and tractors
7. Articulated vehicles
8. Earth moving vehicles
9. Special, for physically handicapped persons. (Nigeria n.d.a)

Other sources similarly indicate the same licence classes, but also mention "Class V[:] Convoy driving," which is issued to individuals who drive vehicles in convoys of political and government officials; the same sources indicate "J" as the "Special" class for individuals who are physically handicapped (NaijAuto.com 13 Dec. 2018;

InfoGuide Nigeria 14 June 2018).

3. Requirements and Procedures to Obtain a New Driver's Licence

The FRSC provides the following information on the procedure for obtaining a driver's licence for the first time:

Step 1) Attend training at an accredited driving school.

Step 2) [Appear before the] Vehicle Inspection Officer (VIO) for a driving test.

Step 3) Pass the driving test and obtain a certificate of proficiency from the VIO.

Step 4) Complete the driver's licence application form at the Driver's Licence Centre (DLC).

Step 5) Pay the licence fee online or at the Bank.

Step 6) Present [the] application form to the Board of Internal Revenue (BIR) Officer and VIO at the DLC for endorsement.

Step 7) Proceed to the FRSC Officer at the DLC for biometric data capture.

Step 8) Obtain a temporary driver's licence valid for 60 days.

Step 9) Pick up original driver's licence at the BIR Office after 60 days. (Nigeria n.d.b)

Without providing further details, the FRSC states that "[t]he new driver's licence costs N6,000" [approximately C\$22] (Nigeria n.d.c). According to NaijAuto.com, the "total" cost for obtaining a new driver's licence ranges from 16,000 to 20,000 Nigerian Naira (NGN) [approximately C\$58 to C\$73], noting that fees for a new driver's licence include the following:

- Driving school certificate: 8,000 NGN [approximately C\$30]
- VIO test certificate: 1,000 NGN [approximately C\$4]
- Eye test certificate: 500 NGN [approximately C\$2]
- Driver's licence payment: 6,350 NGN (valid for 3 years) [approximately C\$23] or 10,450 NGN (5 years) [approximately C\$38]. (NaijAuto 19 Nov. 2018)

Further and corroborating information on the fees associated with driver's licenses could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Sources report that the procedure for obtaining a driver's licence can range from 60 days to "years" (NaijAuto.com 19 Nov. 2018) or "close to a year rather than about 120 days" (*New Telegraph* 4 May 2017). In correspondence with the Research Directorate, the CEO of a driving school in Nigeria indicated that the process can take 5-6 weeks, depending on where in the country the application is being processed, "as logistics play a critical role" (CEO 22 Oct. 2019). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate with the time constraints of this Response.

According to the FRSC, it is possible for applicants to process their driver's licence application through a "VIP lounge" (Nigeria n.d.d). This service is available at a higher fee than the regular application and results in the permanent driver's licence being obtained within 48 hours (Nigeria n.d.d). The service involves "additional

charges up to" 26,500 NGN [approximately C\$96], depending on where applicants would like their licence to be delivered (Nigeria n.d.d). In order to use this service, applicants must make an appointment and visit the FRSC Premium Drivers Licence Centre in Abuja (Nigeria n.d.d). Further information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate with the time constraints of this Response.

The *New Telegraph*, a national newspaper in Nigeria, reports that the procedure for obtaining a driver's licence is uniform across the country (*New Telegraph* 25 Jan. 2018). In contrast, without providing further details, the CEO stated that the "application process facilitation may vary" depending on where in the country the application is being processed (CEO 22 Oct. 2019). Further information on the uniformity of the driver's licence application process across Nigeria could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

4. Procedure for Driver's Licence Renewal

The FRSC website provides the following information on the procedure for renewing a driver's licence:

Step 1) Apply online at www.nigeriadriverslicence.org or in person at the Driver's Licence Centre (DLC).

Step 2) Pay the licence fee online or at the Bank.

Step 3) Present [the] application form to the Board of Internal Revenue (BIR) Officer and Vehicle Inspection Officer (VIO) at the DLC for endorsement.

Step 4) Proceed to the Federal Road Safety Corps Officer at the DLC for biometric data capture.

Step 5) Obtain a temporary driver's licence valid for 60 days.

Step 6) Pick up original driver's licence at the BIR Office after 60 days. (Nigeria n.d.b)

Sources indicate that the cost of renewing a driver's licence is 6,000 NGN (InfoGuide Nigeria 14 June 2018; TheNigerianInfo 4 Jan. 2019), although InfoGuide Nigeria, a blog on "daily living" in Nigeria, notes that the cost may vary depending on the DLC at which the application is made (InfoGuide Nigeria 14 June 2018). Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

5. Fraudulent Procurement of New Driver's Licences

The Guardian, a Nigerian daily newspaper, reports that "[d]ue to impatience and the cumbersome process in getting [a driver's licence], [and] corruption in some of the government parastatals, some Nigerians unknowingly get issued with fake drivers licenses" (*The Guardian* 22 Sept. 2018). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

According to the Premium Times, a Nigerian online news publication, there are three ways to obtain a driver's licence: through the FRSC; "colluding with officers" in a "semi-legitimate" process to obtain a "valid licence"; or by purchasing fraudulent driver's licences (Premium Times 21 July 2018). According to sources, many Nigerians favor dealing informally with officers due to the length of the normal

process of obtaining a driver's licence (NaijAuto.com 19 Nov. 2018; *New Telegraph* 4 May 2017). According to the Premium Times, in an investigation which had a reporter pose as an applicant in order to get a licence informally from an "agent," the reporter was told that the licence would be ready in two weeks (Premium Times 21 July 2018). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

The Premium Times, in their investigation of this method of acquiring licences, found that the cost is approximately 23,000 NGN to 25,000 NGN [approximately C\$83 to C\$91] for a three year licence and approximately 26,000 NGN to 35,000 NGN [approximately C\$94 to C\$127] for a five year licence (Premium Times 21 July 2018). In a report "supported by The Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism," the Gavel International, a Nigerian news website, reports, without providing further information, that the process can cost 16,000 NGN (The Gavel International 25 Sept. 2019).

Sources indicate that the fraudulent procurement of driver's licences through "collusion" (Premium Times 21 July 2018) or "patronising" (*New Telegraph* 4 May 2017) persists due to the involvement with FRSC officials (*New Telegraph* 4 May 2017; Premium Times 21 July 2018) and "the VIO, owners of driving schools and third party racketeers" (Premium Times 21 July 2018). The Premium Times, in their investigation of acquiring valid licences through "semi-legitimate" means, indicated that their reporter

was certified to have gone through the driving school, fit to drive on the highway and was issued a certificate — without knowing anything about driving.

[Premium Times] understands that the certificate generation process is initiated by the driving school operators, who in turn input daily records of applicants into their data system.

... [T]he records are verified and duly approved via the FRSC online portal, through which officials duly acknowledge that the applicant is confirmed to have attended the schools for 26 days.

After 26 days, the certificate is issued and applicants are expected to authenticate it on the FRSC portal after which they are now considered eligible to begin the driver's license application process. (Premium Times 21 July 2018)

Further and corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Information on the methods by which individuals can obtain completely fraudulent driver's licences could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

6. Security Features and Appearance

Sources indicate that "original" driver's licences can be identified as they are verifiable in the FRSC database, whereas "fake" licenses are not (*The Guardian* 22 Sept. 2018; Media Nigeria 14 Mar. 2018). The authenticity of driver's licences can be checked through text message (*The Guardian* 22 Sept. 2018; Media Nigeria 14 Mar. 2018) or online, through the FRSC website, www.nigeriadriverslicence.org (Media Nigeria 14 Mar. 2018).

The European Union's Public Register of Authentic Travel and Identity Documents Online (PRADO) provides information on the physical appearance and security

features of the driver's licence, which is attached to this Response (Attachments 1 and 2).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

CEO, driving school in Nigeria. 22 October 2019. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

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TheNigerianInfo. 4 January 2019. "[FRSC Drivers Licence Renewal: How to Renew Your Drivers Licence Online \(2019\)](#)." [Accessed 7 Oct. 2019]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Canada – high commission in Abuja; Heritage Driving School; Nigeria – Federal Road Safety Corps.

Internet sites, including: Africa Check; Azizi Nigeria; Chronicle; Concise News; ConnectNigeria.com; Factiva; *The Herald*; Keesing Technologies – Documentchecker; Nairaland; *The Nation*; Nigeria Infopedia; Nigerian Bulletin; No Nap Nigeria Limited; The Office of the Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; P.M. News; Pulse NG; SundiataPost; *The Punch*; *This Day*; Udeme; Ventures; Yes International! Magazine.

Attachments

1. European Union (EU). N.d. Public Register of Authentic Travel and Identity Documents Online (PRADO). "[Document: NGA-FO-02001](#)." [Accessed 5 Nov. 2019]
2. European Union (EU). N.d. Public Register of Authentic Travel and Identity Documents Online (PRADO). "[Document: NGA-F-01001](#)." [Accessed 5 Nov. 2019]