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1 June 2005

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Nigeria: Issuance procedures for driver's licences (December 2003-May 2005)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

The Information Attaché at the Nigerian High Commission in Ottawa said in a telephone interview that to obtain a national driver's licence of Nigeria, an individual must pass two tests- a practical driving test and a written exam-administered by the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) (10 Dec. 2003). If an individual successfully passes the two tests, he or she must complete an application form and pay a fee of approximately N2,500, the equivalent of CDN\$24.32 (Oanda 27 May 2005). The application form includes questions regarding the applicant's blood type, facial marks, height, use of glasses and date of birth; it also requires a set of the applicant's fingerprints (Nigerian High Commission 10 Dec. 2003). The tests and applications are standard throughout Nigeria and are conducted exclusively by the FRSC, which is easily accessible since it maintains offices in all cities in the country (ibid.).

The photograph of the applicant, which is found on the driver's licence, is taken by the FRSC at the time of application (ibid.). The Information Attaché said that since only photographs taken by the FRSC are valid, the applicant must apply for the driver's licence in person (ibid.). Once the application has been completed, applicants are provided with a receipt and the date on which they may return to obtain the licence (ibid.). In case an applicant is unable to pick up the licence personally, he or she may provide a letter authorizing someone else to obtain it on his or her behalf (ibid.).

Although it is possible for people to renew their driver's licence by mail, the Information Attaché said that it is not recommended since the postal system can be unreliable (ibid.). The licence renewal process involves updating, if necessary, the individual's personal information as well as the payment of an application fee (ibid.). According to the Information Attaché, 99.9 per cent of renewals are completed in person (ibid.).

In its *Detailed Report of Activities Since 1999 for the Ministry of Transportation*, the Lagos State government explains that the National Driving Licence Scheme (NDL) was introduced in February 1990 in an effort to harmonize driving and vehicle licensing procedures in Nigeria (n.d.). However, the NDL was eventually cancelled and replaced by the Enhanced National Driving Licence (ENDL), which introduced additional security features (n.d.).

The Head of the Enhanced National Driving Licence (ENDL) Division in the Ministry of Transportation of the Lagos State Government, explained in correspondence that Nigerian driver's licences are administered jointly by three government departments, namely, the Directorate of Motor Vehicle Administration, the State Vehicle Inspection Unit, and the Federal Road Safety Commission (31 Mar. 2005). The Driving Licence Division of the Directorate of the Motor Vehicle

Administration is responsible for processing application forms and issuing the licence once it is printed (Lagos State Government 31 Mar. 2005). The State Vehicle Inspection Unit supervises the testing of applicants, while the Federal Road Safety Commission is in charge of printing the licences (ibid).

According to the Head of the ENDL Division, the Nigerian licence, which is laminated and, as of May 2005, carries a fee of N3,000, [the equivalent of CDN\$28.55 (Oanda 31 May 2005)], includes the following details and security features: the class of licence (A, B, C, etc), name, address, blood group, any facial marks, sex, birth date, height, number of replacements (if applicable), signature, thumb print, date and place of issue, expiry date, bar code, authorized signature, colour passport photograph, hologram, coat of arms, seal, and a licence number which indicates the local government of issue (Lagos State Government 31 Mar. 2005). The passport photograph must be of standard size and clear enough to reveal any facial markings (ibid).

First-time applicants must complete the application form and attach two passport photographs, along with a learner's permit, a driving school certificate, a testing fee receipt, and a receipt showing payment of the application fee (see attached copy) (ibid). Applicants must submit the forms in person to a vehicle inspection officer (VIO), who returns a photocopy of the application fee receipt to the applicant, who must then show it when returning to pick up his or her licence (ibid).

The driving licence is valid for up to three years beginning at the time of payment and expires on the driver's birth date in the third year after issuance (ibid). While the licence is being processed, a temporary driving permit (see attached copy) may be issued upon request and is valid for 15 days (ibid.).

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 additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Lagos State Government. 31 March 2005. Ministry of Transportation. Correspondence from the Head of the Enhanced National Driving Licence Division.

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Oanda. 31 May 2005. "FXConverter - 164 Currency Converter Results." <<http://fxtrade.oanda.com/convert/classic>> [Accessed 31 May 2005]

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Attachments

Lagos State Government. 2005. Ministry of Transportation Enhanced National Driving Licence Scheme (Temporary Driving Permit).

_____. 3 March 2005. Treasury Receipt.

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