



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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1 September 2009

NGA103217.E

Nigeria: Whether driver's licences in the format of the one provided to the Research Directorate were issued in February 2007; format and appearance of drivers' licence being issued in 2009

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

In a 13 August 2009 telephone interview, an official with the Nigerian High Commission in Ottawa explained that the Nigerian Driver's license in use as of August 2009 has been used for "at least" a year. The Official was not certain when the format in use had been introduced, but indicated that the previous format had been used for "at least ten years" (Nigeria 13 Aug. 2009).

In a subsequent telephone interview on 27 August 2009, the Official stated that "it was possible" that the current license format had been in use in February 2007 (Nigeria 27 Aug. 2009). After looking over a faxed copy of a sample of a driver's license provided to the Research Directorate that was issued in February 2007 with personal identification blacked out, the Official indicated that it appeared genuine, and volunteered that this type of license was "hard to fake" (ibid.).

The Official gave details on the differences in the format of the driver's license now in use as compared to the format that was previously used (Nigeria 13 Aug. 2009). According to the Official, Nigerian driver's licenses now use a more complex bar code, distinct from the Universal Product Codes (UPC) often found on different consumer products (ibid.). The picture of the license holder was described by the Official as now being on the right of the card rather than on the left of the card (ibid.). The Official indicated that a thumbprint of the license holder no longer appears on the license (ibid.). The Official also stated that the Nigerian coat of arms appears in the centre of the current card, with a smaller hologram of the coat of arms appearing on the right hand side of the card towards the bottom (ibid.).

According to the Official, the private/commercial designation previously used with the former license format has been eliminated (ibid.). The Official indicated that within a red strip, beneath the name of the country and the indication that it is a national driver's license, are the class level, the license number and the expiry date of the license (ibid.). The Official stated that the back of the card had a description of the different license classes and a dark magnetic strip on the back. (ibid.)

The Official indicated that each state can issue licenses on behalf of the federal government (ibid.). According to the Official, Abuja has its own issuing office (ibid.). The Official stated that there would not be any real differences among cards issued by different states and that the issuing state would always be specified (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 sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Nigeria. 27 August 2009. Nigeria High Commission, Ottawa. Telephone interview with an official.

_____. 13 August 2009. Nigeria High Commission, Ottawa. Telephone interview with an official.

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral Sources: Attempts to obtain information from the Nigerian Embassy in Washington were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: Factiva, Nigerian Road Safety Commission, Road Safety Nigeria.

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