

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website.

23 April 2012

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Nigeria: Appearance of police reports, including whether there are uniform characteristics or variance across the country

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Variance of Police Reports

A representative of the police force's Special Fraud Unit indicated in correspondence to the Research Directorate via the High Commission of Canada in Nigeria, that the appearance of police reports varies (Nigeria 26 Feb. 2012). A solicitor and advocate of the Supreme Court of Nigeria told the Research Directorate in a telephone interview that the "character" of police reports is consistent among the country's larger police stations or units (Solicitor 22 Feb. 2012). However, he also said that, in his experience, a police report issued by a smaller station or unit only bears the stamp of the issuing office in ink and not the "typical" features of a police report (ibid.). According to what a Public Affairs and Communication director at the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), in Nigeria, said in a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, the appearance of police reports differs depending on whether they are issued from police headquarters or one of the zonal or state commands (NHRC 3 Feb. 2012). An assistant force public relations officer (AFPRO) working for an annex of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Secretariat, which receives complaints about the police, wrote in correspondence with the Research Directorate that police reports may originate either at the IGP office or from the office of "his official delegate" (Nigeria 28 Jan. 2012). He added that although the format of police reports remains the same, the "caption or theme" varies depending on the incident being reported (ibid.).

The Supreme Court solicitor and advocate reported that the heading on the police report he was looking at during the interview read "The Nigerian Police"; however, he indicated that he believes he has also seen police reports that read "The Nigerian Police Force" (Solicitor 22 Feb. 2012). The NHRC director stated that whether the time in police reports is recorded using a 24-hour clock or a 12-hour clock, "likely ... varies" (3 Feb. 2012).

2. Appearance of Police Reports

The Supreme Court solicitor and advocate described the following features as "typical" of a police report:

- The police force logo printed on the letterhead of the first page;
- The issuing unit's "telegraphic address" on the left-side of the first page
- The issuing unit's address on the right side of the page;
- A reference or file number;
- date; and
- The signing authority (Solicitor 22 Feb. 2012).

The NHRC director also stated that police reports include a letterhead, the police force logo, a reference number, and an officer's name and signature (3 Feb. 2012).

The AFPRO added that the police report also contains the rank of the issuing officer, the name of the police command, and a stamp from either the IGP's office or the office of the "delegated officer" (Nigeria 28 Jan. 2012). However, the representative of the Special Fraud Unit wrote that stamps are not always necessary since the reports are printed on letterhead (ibid. 26 Feb. 2012). He also stated that reports must be signed by the Divisional Police Officer or "any other authorised signatory" (ibid.).

2.1 Police Logo and Letterhead

The two police force representatives, as well as a police spokesperson in Kano, indicated that the police logo displayed on police reports is the same across the country and does not vary (Nigeria 20 Feb. 2012; *ibid.* 28 Jan. 2012; *ibid.* 26 Feb. 2012). The AFPRO said that all police correspondence must be on letterhead bearing the police logo (*ibid.* 28 Jan. 2012). The Special Fraud Unit representative stated that the police report is "usually issued on ...police letterhead" and that "the police logo ... is usually on the letterhead nation-wide" (*ibid.* 26 Feb. 2012). The Special Fraud Unit representative also indicated that the address on the letterhead varies (*ibid.*). Without an explanation of their purpose, the Special Fraud representative sent the Research Directorate two documents containing the police force logo, one from the Victoria Island Divisional Headquarters and the other from the Oko-Oba Division, which are attached to this Response.

2.2 Security Features

According to the Supreme Court solicitor and advocate, police reports do not have any security features (22 Feb. 2012). He added that police reports are "plain sheets of paper" that "look ordinary" (Solicitor 22 Feb. 2012).

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

- National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Nigeria. 3 February 2012. Telephone interview with the Director, Public Affairs and Communication.
- Nigeria. 26 February 2012. Nigeria Police Force, Special Fraud Unit. Correspondence from a representative sent to the Research Directorate by the High Commission of Canada in Nigeria, 16 March 2012.
- _____. 20 February 2012. Nigeria Police Force, Kano Command. Telephone interview with a police spokesperson.
- _____. 28 January 2012. Nigeria Police Force, Force Public Relations Office. Correspondence from an assistant force public relations officer to the Research Directorate.
- Solicitor and Advocate of the Supreme Court of Nigeria. 22 February 2012. Telephone interview.

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral Sources: Attempts to contact the following were unsuccessful: Representatives of the CLEEN Foundation; Committee for the Defence of Human Rights; Human Rights Monitor; International Centre for Nigerian Law; International Human Rights Law Group; Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Washington; Consulate General of Nigeria in Atlanta; and Nigeria Police Service Commission; and an assistant commissioner of police and police spokespersons in Ebonyi, Edo, Gombe, Lagos, Ogun and Abuja. An official at the Nigerian High Commission in Ottawa and a representative of Nigeria Police Watch were unable to provide information for this Response.

Internet sites, including: ecoi.net, United Nations Refworld, United States Department of State.

Attachments

- Nigeria. N.d. Nigeria Police Force, Victoria Island Divisional Headquarters. Document with police logo. Sent to the Research Directorate by a Special Fraud Unit representative via the High Commission of Canada in Nigeria, 26 March 2012.
- Nigeria. N.d. Nigeria Police Force, Oko-Oba Division. Document with police logo. Sent to the Research Directorate by a Special Fraud Unit representative via the High Commission of Canada in Nigeria, 26 March 2012.

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