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RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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23 June 2005

CHN100040.E

China: Whether the 15-digit identity number appearing on Resident Identity Cards issued prior to 1 October 1999 or a newly assigned 18-digit number would appear on official documents issued after 1 October 1999, if the Chinese citizen obtaining the official documents continued to be in possession of the 15-digit Resident Identity Card (January-May 2005)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

A report received from the United States (US) Law Library of Congress states that the Law of the People's Republic of China on Resident Identity Cards does not appear to indicate which type of identity card number should appear on official documents or whether a new, 18-digit Resident Identity Card should be issued at the same time as other official documents (June 2005). However, the Detailed Rules of Implementation of the Regulations of the PRC on Resident Identity Cards, which were amended on 1 October 1999, indicate that, if a citizen changes his permanent residence to a location outside of a city's districts or a county's administrative areas, then the identity card will be renewed at the same time as the residence registration procedure is carried out (US June 2005). Thus, the person would turn in his or her 15-digit identity card and be issued a new one - "presumably with an eighteen-digit number, if after October 1, 1999" (ibid.). The Law Library of Congress report notes that the identity card number is printed on both the Permanent Residence Registration Form, which residents fill out, and the *hukou* or Household Register (ibid.). If the residence relocation occurs between administrative areas of different districts in the same city or county administrative area, then "it is permissible not to renew the ID card" (ibid.).

Information obtained from the Administration Bureau of Family Registration and Identity at the Chinese Ministry of Public Security, and forwarded to the Research Directorate by the Canadian embassy in Beijing, indicates that "it is possible" that a holder of a 15-digit resident identity card would be issued a document containing an 18-digit identity number (Canada 15 June 2005). This practice would be more common for documents, such as a *hukou*, that are issued by the police (ibid.).

The Canadian embassy in Beijing cautioned that it could not infer from the information provided by the Ministry of Public Security that "this practice is consistent throughout China nor that it would apply to all types of certificates/documents issued by the Chinese government" (Canada 15 Jun. 2005). However, the Law Library of Congress report notes that, since the *hukou* and the Permanent Residence Registration Form are "key documents for recording matters of personal status, it seems likely that many other documents would have to conform [to] them" (US June 2005).

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](#)

Canada. 15 June 2005. Embassy of Canada, Beijing. Correspondence from an official.

United States (US). June 2005. Law Library of Congress. "China: Identity Cards and Official Documentation."

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral source: Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Ottawa.

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