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09 November 2006

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China: Process to obtain a People's Republic of China (PRC) driver's licence; documents required; whether the serial number on the national identity card is the same as the ID number that appears on the driver's licence
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Eligibility requirements

According to 29 October 2006 correspondence sent to the Research Directorate from an official at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, Chinese citizens between the ages of 18 and 60 years, who meet the physical requirements, are eligible to apply for a People's Republic of China (PRC) driver's licence. China's Regulations on Application and Use of Vehicle and Driving License, implemented on 1 May 2004, however, indicate that the eligibility age of an applicant depends on the type of vehicle he/she will be licensed to drive. For example, an individual applying for a licence to drive a small car must be between the ages of 18 and 70, while an individual applying for a licence to drive a low-speed truck or three-wheeled motorcycle must be between the ages of 18 and 60 (China 1 May 2004).

The Regulations on Application and Use of Vehicle and Driving License also indicate that an applicant must meet certain physical requirements such as height, eyesight, and have functioning upper and lower limbs to be eligible for a PRC driver's licence (*ibid.*). For further information on the physical requirements to be eligible for a PRC driver's licence, please consult the summary of Regulations on Application and Use of Vehicle and Driving License attached to this Response.

Application process

In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, the Official at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing indicated that a Chinese citizen applying for a Chinese driver's licence must present an application form, a copy of his/her national identity card or his/her passport, along with four one-inch colour photographs of himself/herself to the motor vehicle office (29 Oct. 2006; see also China 1 May 2004). According to the Official, applicants must apply for a driver's licence in person (Canada 29 Oct. 2006).

A summary of China's Regulations on Application and Use of Vehicle Driving License sent to the Research Directorate from an official at the Canadian Consulate General in Guangzhou provides information on where applicants must apply for their driver's licence (China 1 May 2004). The summary states that

[an] applicant should submit an application to the vehicle registration department according to the following rules: (1) Living in the *Hukou* area, submits the application in *Hukou* area; (2) Living in a temporary residence, submits the application in the temporary residential area; (3) Active serviceman (including armed police), submits the application in the residential area; (4) Expatriate, submits the application in the settlement area; (5) Adding additional admissible vehicle type in original driving license, submits the application in the issuing place of the original driving license. (*ibid.*)

Once the applicant passes a written exam which tests knowledge of driving and traffic regulations, he/she will receive a learning permit (29 Oct. 2006; see also China 1 May 2004). The learning permit is valid for two years, the first year of which is referred to as the "practice period" (Canada 29 Oct. 2006; see also China 1 May 2004). After the applicant has passed the road test [or site test] which is held at a driving school, he/she is reportedly issued a driver's licence (Canada 29 Oct. 2006). According to the Official at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, the applicant may pick up the driver's licence in person or have it delivered to his/her mailing address (ibid.).

Serial numbers

In 29 October 2006 correspondence, the Official at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing indicated that the certificate number that appears on the PRC driver's licence is the same number that appears on the holder's PRC national identity card. The Official further noted that there is also a file number on the PRC driver's licence (Canada 29 Oct. 2006). According to the Official, both the certificate number and the file number are unique to the individual (ibid.).

Renewal of driver's licence

The PRC driver's licence is valid for a period of six years (Canada 29 Oct. 2006). A driver wishing to renew his/her driver's licence must apply for renewal 90 days prior to the expiry date on the licence (ibid.; China 1 May 2004). According to the Official at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, upon renewal

[t]he driver is required to submit an application form, a Physical Condition Certificate issued by the designated medical institutions, the driver's licence, a valid identity card, and three one-inch colour photos taken recently with white background and without hat. (29 Oct. 2006)

The Official further noted that, a Chinese citizen would not be able to renew his/her driver's licence outside of China (Canada 29 Oct. 2006).

In 6 November 2006 correspondence to the Research Directorate, an official at the Canadian Consulate General in Guangzhou indicated that the Consulate had contacted a local PRC vehicle registration department which "acknowledged that Chinese [citizens] should submit the [licence] renewal application in person and [that] the ID card is needed."

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. 6 November 2006. Canadian Consulate General in Guangzhou, China. Correspondence from an official.
- _____. 29 October 2006. Canadian Embassy in Beijing, China. Correspondence from an official.
- China. 1 May 2004. Ministry of Justice. Regulations on Application and Use of Vehicle Driving License. English summary of Mandarin version sent by an official at the Canadian Consulate General in Guangzhou, China.

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts to contact the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Canada were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: Canadian Government in China, China.org, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Canada, European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Factiva, United Kingdom Home Office, United States Department of State.

Attachment

China. 1 May 2004. Ministry of Justice. Regulations on Application and Use of Vehicle Driving License. English summary of Mandarin version sent by an official at the Canadian Consulate General in Guangzhou, China.

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