



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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China: The manufacture, procurement, distribution and use of fraudulent documents, including passports, hukou, resident identity cards and summonses in Guangdong and Fujian in particular (2005 - May 2009)  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

In 12 June 2009 correspondence, a professor of law at George Washington University Law School, who specializes in the Chinese legal system, stated that "just about any document can be forged in China, and many are." A 2007 briefing paper published by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) indicates that a United States (US) consular official based in southern China reported that fake passports in China are rare, while the ability to screen other documents is inhibited by "widespread fraud" (Sept. 2007, 18). According to the official, "'you can't trust any [personal] documents in China'," and the market for fraudulent documents is rapidly expanding (EIU Sept. 2007, 18). The official further indicated that documents are assumed to be fraudulent unless proven otherwise, and that the verification of documents is a "labour-intensive and time-consuming process" (ibid.). A 2009 *Vancouver Sun* article reports that it is possible to "buy any kind of document you want" in China (19 Mar. 2009).

A 2005 *Jane's Intelligence Review* report suggests that Chinese and South Asian groups are "key players" in human smuggling and that providing forged documents is a "basic requirement" in this market (1 Feb. 2005). According to the report, migrants from China travel to Thailand as tourists using authentic passports and are provided with forged documents in Bangkok (*Jane's Intelligence Review* 1 Feb. 2005). The article further states that illegal migrants from China use altered Singaporean or Japanese passports due to visa-waiver provisions for travel to the US and the European Union (ibid.). A 2007 report written by the US National Institute of Justice (NIJ) indicates that Chinese nationals who are smuggled into Taiwan use fake IDs to acquire Taiwanese passports for travel to the US (Jan. 2007, 26). Agence France Presse indicates that an immigration ring in Spain was dismantled and over 50 Chinese nationals were arrested on suspicion of helping with the illegal entry of Chinese citizens, who were provided with fake documents (30 Mar. 2009).

ITAR-TASS World Service, a Russian news agency, reports that border guards on the border between China and Russia have agreed to cooperate in order to reduce illegal migration (23 Sept. 2008). According to the article, 500 forged passports have been seized from Chinese nationals crossing into Russia (ITAR-TASS 23 Sept. 2008). In an attempt to curb passport fraud, the Australian federal government recruited two Chinese officials to study document verification; of the 128 people that arrived in Australia with fake passports in 2007, most were from Iraq, China and Sri Lanka (*ABC News* 20 Oct. 2008).

In 9 June 2009 correspondence, a professor of international affairs at the Georgia Institute of Technology, who has published on the *hukou* system in China, stated that both hukou forgery and acquiring a genuine hukou by fraudulent means "have been observed for a long time" in China. The Professor also noted that "while it is hard to ascertain which type of counterfeiting is more common in a given place, obtaining a genuine document by fraudulent means (such as bribery) appeared to be the preferred kind of fraud" (9 June 2009). A 16 March 2009 *South China Morning Post* article reports that two employees of Beijing's labour and security bureau produced fake documents that allowed 26 people to obtain city residence permits; the two employees

were jailed for 10 to 12 years.

Specific information on fraudulent summonses could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

Information on the manufacture, procurement, distribution and use of fraudulent passports, hukou, resident identity cards and summonses in Guangdong and Fujian, in particular, could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, according to a *South China Morning Post* article, Shenzhen "is the centre of the mainland's bogus degree certificate industry" (14 June 2007). The article states that fraudulent degrees are sold over the Internet and that a well-known printer claims to have sold 1,500 degrees in 2007 (*South China Morning Post* 14 June 2007).

Another *South China Morning Post* article on fake university degrees indicates that the lack of a credible verification system, as well as ineffective penalties for those who produce counterfeit documents, contributes to their production (15 Nov. 2007). The EIU reports that measures to verify the authenticity of secondary and degree certificates were implemented through the China Higher-Education Student Information Centre, which maintains a database containing student identification information and a certificate serial number, but that this database was largely accessible to domestic educational bodies and not foreign governments (Sept. 2007, 21).

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

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- Vancouver Sun*. 19 March 2009. Joanne Lee-Young. "Canada Rejects Almost One Third of Entrepreneur-Class Applications from Hong Kong; Promises to Start a Business Often Include Fake Documents, Government Records Show." (Factiva)

#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** the Embassy of Canada in Beijing and two professors did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

**Internet sites, including:** Asia Times, Association for Asian Research (AFAR), Bertelsmann Transformation

Index, *The Economic Observer* [Beijing], *The Epoch Times* [New York], European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), *Forced Migration Review*, Global Insight, Global Integrity, Interpol, GlobalSecurity.org, Havocscope Black Markets, The Jamestown Foundation, *Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor*, Keesing's Reference Systems, Ministry of Public Security in China, *People's Daily* [Beijing], Radio Free Asia, Reuters, *The Times*, United States (US) Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC), US Department of State, WorldNetDaily, Xinhua News Agency.

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 [Top of Page](#)

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