China: Validity periods of passports issued within China and abroad, particularly in 2001; whether validity periods are consistent on all passports issued within China and through embassies

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Since 1 January 2007, regular passports issued to Chinese citizens, whether in China or abroad, are valid for ten years for passport holders sixteen years of age and older and five years for passport holders under sixteen years of age (China 24 Mar. 2011; Canada 30 Mar. 2011; China 2007, Art. 7). According to an online version of an article published in the English-language newspaper the China Daily, the Passport Law of the People’s Republic of China, which established these validity periods, was "the first passport law since the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949" (30 Dec. 2006). According to the Xinhua News Agency, the law "replaced a two-decade-old regulation governing passport management" and aimed "to standardize the application, issuance and management of passports" (5 Jan. 2007).

Prior to 1 January 2007, regular passports issued by China were valid for five years with the possibility of renewal for another five years (Canada 30 Mar. 2011; China 24 Mar. 2011). In 29 March 2011 correspondence with the Research Directorate, an official with the Document Integrity Unit of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) stated that the five-year passports were renewable for up to two periods of five years (Canada 29 Mar. 2011). The China Daily likewise states that passports with a five-year validity period were extendable to a maximum of ten years (30 Dec. 2006). In a 24 March 2011 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, the Consul General of the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Canada explained that due to the possibility of extending their validity periods, some older passport versions are still in use (China 24 Mar. 2011).

Specific information on whether the validity periods for passports issued by embassies were consistent prior to January 2007 was not found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. According to the China Daily, the ten-year passports, which have been issued since January 2007, are not renewable (30 Dec. 2006). The Consul General stated that even in the case of the replacement of a lost or stolen passport, a new passport is issued with a validity period of ten years (China 24 Mar. 2011).

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


_____. 29 March 2011. Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). Correspondence with an official.


Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States did not provide information for this Response. Attempts to contact the Department of Consular Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in London and the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in France were unsuccessful.


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