



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

The Board		11 July 2011	
About the Board	<p>CHN103770.E</p> <p>China: Whether state authorities use second-generation Resident Identity Cards (RICs) to track citizens</p> <p>Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa</p> <p>Article 6 of the 2003 Law of the People's Republic of China on Resident Identity Cards states that the Resident Identity Card (RIC) "shall be readable both visually and by computer, and the contents read visually and by computer shall be limited to the items prescribed in the first paragraph of Article 3 of this Law" (China 2003). In turn, Article 3 states that</p> <p>[t]he items to be registered in a resident identity card consist of the name, sex, nationality, date of birth, address of permanent residence, citizen's identity number, the bearer's photograph, term of validity of the card and the issuing authority. (ibid.)</p> <p>Chinese media sources report that second-generation identity card readers have been installed at hotels (<i>Changsha Evening News</i> 17 June 2011), daily rental houses (a type of small unlicensed hotel) (<i>Shanxi Evening News</i> 18 May 2011), Internet cafes (<i>Daye Today</i> 10 Aug. 2010), and train stations (<i>Metro Express</i> 13 June 2011).</p> <p>The <i>Changsha Evening News</i> reports of an instance in which a man was registered as a guest at a hotel in the Xiangya Road subdistrict of Changsha with the second-generation card reader and his information was forwarded to the police (<i>Changsha Evening News</i> 17 June 2011). In comparing the card information with their own records, the police recognized the guest as a suspected narcotics trafficker and arrested him at the hotel (ibid.). Radio Free Asia (RFA), a Washington-based broadcaster, reports that all hotels and guesthouses in the Tibetan capital Lhasa are required to install the second-generation card readers, and that the police will be monitoring the information from the card readers (31 May 2010).</p> <p>The <i>Shanxi Evening News</i> reports that in the city of Taiyuan, 1,644 [translated by Translation Bureau] "'Fast Pass' processors have been installed in 'daily rental houses'" to manage the migrant population (18 May 2011). The Fast Pass [translated by Translation Bureau] "information management systems" are reportedly able to read information on the second-generation RICs directly (<i>Shanxi Evening News</i> 18 May 2011). According to the article, the police apprehended 14 fugitives in Taiyuan by using this system (ibid.).</p>		
Biographies			
Employment			
Legal and Policy			
References			
Organization Chart			
Publications			
Tribunal			
Decisions			
Forms			
Immigration Appeal Division			
Immigration Division			
Refugee Protection Division			
Statistics			
Research			
Research Program			
National Documentation Packages			
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets			
Responses to Information Requests			
Recent Research			
Media Centre			
News			
Information Sheets			
Media Relations			
Proactive Disclosure			

The New York-based newspaper *Epoch Times*, which is affiliated with the Falun Gong spiritual group, reports that a man from Zhengzhou, Henan province, found that when he used his second-generation RIC, such as to go to a bath centre or hotel, police would show up to investigate him (26 Sept. 2010). The police claimed that when conducting a background identity check, the "public security network" indicated that he had a "bad history" or was a "'high-risk petitioner'," even though he claimed that he had never petitioned (*Epoch Times* 26 Sept. 2010). According to the article, the police had made a data entry mistake and eventually corrected his record (*ibid.*).

RFA reports that Internet cafés in the province of Sichuan also require all users to register with their second-generation RICs before going online (RFA 25 June 2010). Local Chinese media source *Daye Today* reports that Internet café users in the city of Daye face the same requirement (10 Aug. 2010). According to one Internet café patron in Daye, when users register with their second-generation RICs, the computer displays their name, date of birth, place of origin, address, photograph, and other information (*Daye Today* 10 Aug. 2010). The article claims that the use of the second-generation RICs to access the Internet will help the police in their investigations (*ibid.*).

RFA reports of a 2010 case in which a citizen using a second-generation RIC at a railway station found that the card linked him to a dissident watch list (RFA 2 Sept. 2010). The man in question is reportedly a blogger from Zhejiang who often criticizes China's Communist Party on social media sites (*ibid.*). He claims that when swiping his card at the railway station, a reference to "'stability protection'" and a contact name, as well as a cell phone number, at his local police station appeared at the bottom of the official screen (*ibid.*). When he inquired about it, he was reportedly told that it meant that the local police station had a file on him (*ibid.*). In March 2011, RFA reported that this same blogger was detained by police on suspicion of "'incitement to subvert state power'" as part of a "crackdown on political activists and petitioners" after calls for a fourth day of "'Jasmine'" protests (*ibid.* 11 Mar. 2011).

In a 2009 case reported by the *Epoch Times*, a former Falun Gong practitioner was reportedly travelling by train with her son en route to his college (26 Sept. 2010). When transferring trains in Beijing, police allegedly accessed her background information from her identity card through the "public-security network system" and sent her back to her hometown, presumably because of her former affiliation with the Falun Gong (*Epoch Times* 26 Sept. 2010). This incident could not be corroborated among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

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.

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Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: Amnesty International, Asia Society, *Asia Times Online*, *Beijing Review*, China Internet Information Center, *China Perspectives*, Chinese Human Rights Defenders, *Current History*, *The Economist*, European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Factiva, Freedom House, Human Rights in China, Human Rights Watch, IHS Jane's, United Nations Refworld, United States Department of State.

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[Top of Page](#)

[Important Notices](#)