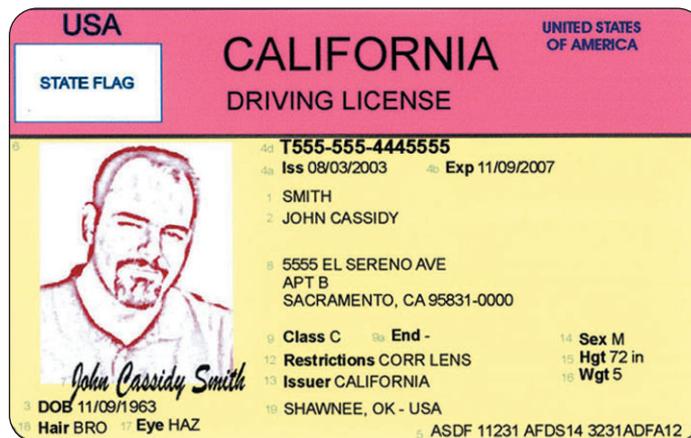




Consultations

a newsletter for the diplomatic and consular communities

Your ID — Is It for Real?



Proposed format for the front of the new DL/ID card.

Your OFM-issued driver license is one of your most important identification documents. This card serves as the most visible indication that the holder is actually the individual described on the

card and that they hold the privileges described on the card. As such, cards must be readily recognizable as genuine and need to be protected against fraud. To better meet these needs, new Driver

License/Identification (DL/ID) Design Specifications are under development. Once the format is finalized, the Office of Foreign Missions is slated to be one of the first licensing authorities to implement these specifications.

The goals of the new DL/ID Card Design are functionality, interoperability, compatibility, commonality, and security.

To be functional, the DL/ID card must provide five pieces of information: evidence of privilege to drive, identification, age verification, address/residence verification, and elements allowing for automated processing.

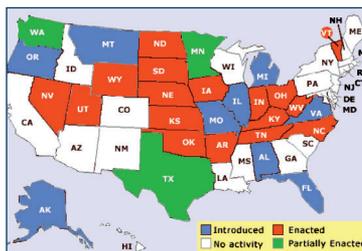
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Streamlining Project May Affect Exemptions

The Streamlined Sales Tax Project may mean changes for your diplomatic exemptions.

Relations between taxing authorities and the business community have often been stereotyped as adversarial. Now, however, the collaborative efforts of these two interests appear to have, successfully, made the Streamlined Sales Tax Project a reality.

With over 7,500 taxing jurisdictions in the United States, it is a daunting task for businesses to operate successfully within the variety of



States currently participating in the Streamlined Sales Tax Project.

laws and regulations governing the taxation of commerce. For example, one jurisdiction may define a chocolate bar as a non-taxable food item, but in a different jurisdiction the item is taxable and is defined as a candy. This reality makes the

costs of managing taxable accounts in many businesses extremely high.

Problems of jurisdictional taxing also concern state and local revenue authorities. Currently, a retailer must have a physical presence in a state before the seller can be required to collect sales tax on a purchase. Therefore, remote retailers, such as mail order catalog and Internet-based companies, have traditionally not collected sales tax. A recent report by the University of Tennessee projected that as a result of the failure of remote

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OFFICE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
US DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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A day in the life of an OFM Director ...

Thursday morning:

7:45 OFM's Regional Director arrives at the LA office—Washington headquarters has been open for

hours. He begins to respond to the accumulated e-mails and voice mails, and check the day's schedule.

8:45 Time for an overview. Having read the *New York Times* over breakfast, the Director now reviews the office copy of the *Los Angeles Times*. He looks particularly for items of interest concerning any of the 1,200 members of the consular community in Los Angeles or the 250 members elsewhere in the Southwest.

9:00 Consular posts in Los Angeles are opening. Begins making follow-up calls regarding problems such as tax exemptions, driving privileges and vehicle registration.

9:30 The Regional Director reviews Los Angeles' Fiscal Year 2004 Budget Projections, due the next day.

10:00 Next, he begins writing Los Angeles' weekly report, also due the following day.

10:30 The Director speaks with the acting principal officer of a Latin American consular post. The consulate general had been burglarized, the perpetrators netting \$11,000 in cash. Diplomatic Security Service suspected an inside job, and investigation resulted in a consular officer confessing. The Director walks the acting principal officer through the steps to terminate the consular officer's accreditation and immunity.

11:00 The Director spends 15 minutes updating his "names and faces" book, then drives 20 minutes to the consular corps' monthly luncheon. He arrives early to chat informally with perhaps a fourth of the 88 heads of consular posts in Los Angeles in attendance. He learns of situations and concerns that otherwise wouldn't have come to his attention.

12:00 The Los Angeles City Attorney addresses the consular corps. Forty percent of Los Angeles' population is foreign born, many retain the citizenship of countries represented at the luncheon. Therefore, many Los Angeles residents who benefit from the City Attorney's crime prevention programs, especially programs to deter gang activity—or who are prosecuted despite the City Attorney's best attempts to prevent crime—are customers or potential customers of the consular officers in the audience.

1:40 Back in the office, the Director makes the last calls of the business day to Washington, D.C.

2:00 The Director contacts a consulate general about a 101 mile-per-hour speeding ticket. The consular dependent receiving the ticket enjoys full immunity

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Q & A

Frequently Asked Questions

If your consulate, or a member of your mission, has a shipment arriving into the U.S. it might qualify to enter duty-free. To see if it qualifies, you will need to complete and submit a Form DS-1504 to the OFM Tax and Customs Office.

Q. Where can I get additional copies of Form DS-1504 used for duty-free application?

A. Form DS-1504 is available on the Internet at the **OFM website** (<http://www.state.gov/ofm>). You can access the form either from the "hotlink" under the *What's New* column on the right side of the homepage or by using the *Resources* button on the left and selecting "Online Forms". Complete the form on-line and print the appropriate number needed, or download the form for future use. Alternatively, ask your Mission's administrative office or customs clearance representative, or call the OFM Customer Service Line at 202-895-3500 to ask that 1504s be placed in your Mission's mail box, or, come in person to 3507 International Place, NW, Washington, D.C. Over-the-counter requests are usually limited to six copies.

Q. How do I fill out the DS-1504 form?

A. Section 4, Duty-Free Customs Entry Program, of *Guidance for Administrative Officers, 2004 edition*, provides the most up-to-date explanation of U.S. policies, detailed instructions on completing the form, and examples of completed forms. *This publication is available only online at the OFM website.* Access the Guide's Table of Contents, containing links to each of OFM's program-specific sections, using either the button, *Publications*, on the homepage's left or the "hotlink" under *What's New* on the right side of the page. Alternatively, please refer to Diplomatic Circular Note Number 02-281, January 1, 2003, with complete instructions on DS-1504s, including sample formats at the back.

Q. How long does a DS-1504 take to be approved?

A. It may take as long as 10 working days from the day your shipment arrives. Most shipments are cleared in far less time. We recommend that if possible, you submit your application before the date of arrival in case additional information regarding your paperwork is needed. If a DS-1504 needs to be returned for any reason, it will be placed in your Mission's mailbox for same day pick-up.

Q. If a mission representative has questions about a clearance, who should they call?

A. Call 202-895-3500—as the call options are given, select "3" twice. A Customs Liaison Officer will gladly assist you Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. ♦

under a bilateral consular treaty between his nation and the United States. The Director emphasizes the seriousness of the offense and the Department of State's determination to prevent further risks to public safety. He acknowledges that the individual cannot be compelled to appear in court, but reminds the consulate general of OFM's "pay or contest policy." Driving is a privilege. The consular dependent will certainly lose that privilege if he neither pays nor contests.

- 3:30** He receives two telephone calls from automobile dealerships; one call from the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services; as well as calls from the Consulates General of Argentina, Croatia, Pakistan and China.
- 4:30** Assists a local bank in retitling a repossessed automobile found, after a year's search, abandoned by a former foreign consular employee in a Las Vegas casino parking garage.
- 5:30** The Director spends 30 minutes preparing for what will prove to be an hour of remarks followed by almost an hour of questions and answers.
- 6:00** The Director sets off by car to speak at the University of California, Los Angeles. He has spoken there many times before, but this is his first invitation from the newly formed Undergraduate International Relations Society.
- 8:00** The Director next travels to the residence of a career consul general. The consul general is hosting a reception for top leaders of his nation's national police force. The guest list includes not only senior officers of federal, state and local law enforcement organizations in southern California, but also the leaders of several ethnic organizations with which the nation presently has strained relations. The Director renews acquaintances and makes initial contact within both groups.
- 9:45** The Regional Director decides to take the rest of the day off. ♦



Changes in the collection of sales tax, may mean a greater understanding and acceptance of diplomatic tax exemptions.

retailers to collect sales tax, state and local governments will lose \$440 billion between 2001 and 2011.

The Streamlined Sales Tax Project, a collaboration of business interests and revenue authorities, was developed to design, test and implement a sales tax system that radically simplifies regulations governing the imposition, exemption and collection of sales tax.

To accomplish this, states choosing to become an implementing member of the project must agree to certain criteria, including a uniform sales tax rate and project-wide uniformity in the interpretation of definitions and authorization of exemptions.

OFM has been involved in this project especially in regard to the manner in which the privilege of diplomatic tax relief would be incorporated into the project's overall exemption component. It is anticipated that in participating states there will be minor changes in the way diplomatic tax exemption is authorized. However, along with those changes, a greater degree of acceptance and understanding of diplomatic tax exemption can also be expected.

The project will commence as soon as ten states (a number that would represent at least 20 percent of the U.S. population subject to sales taxes) enact provisions that comply with the agreement. It currently appears that this threshold has already been met. Now, the Project's governing board is certifying that the changes each state has enacted fully comply with the project agreement. It is possible that the regulations of the Streamlined Sales Tax Project will go into effect as early as the summer of 2004. According to the National Governor's Association, the success of this project would be the first overhaul of the nation's sales tax policy in 40 years, and the first time states have acted together to significantly restructure the system. ♦

Regional Activity

OFM at Police Conference

OFM Director and Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security, Ambassador Francis Taylor, headed the State Department delegation to the 110th International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) 2003 Annual Conference in Philadelphia.

Founded in 1893, the IACP is the world's oldest, and largest, nonprofit membership organization of operating chief executives from international, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. With more than 19,000 members in over 89 different countries, the association strives to advance the science and art of police services; to develop, disseminate and promote improved administrative, technical and operational practices, and to foster agency cooperation and the exchange of information, as well as to

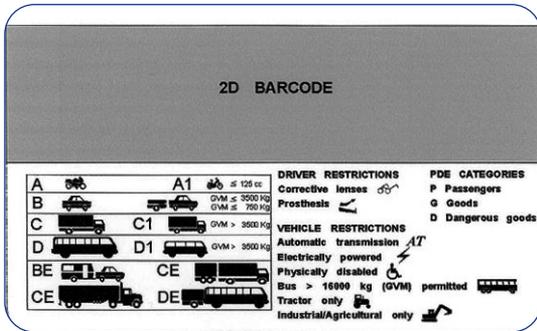
encourage recruitment and training that will impart the highest professional standards of performance and conduct.

OFM, represented by OFM New York Regional Director Robert Tatge and OFM Washington Chief of Community Relations Clay Hays, along with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security Service, were among Conference exhibitors. Interested attendees were briefed on OFM's overall mission and goals, as well as on topical issues of particular interest such as diplomatic and consular immunity, consular notification and access requirements upon the arrest of foreign nationals, and OFM assistance available to law enforcement in cases involving the foreign diplomatic community.

Ambassador Taylor extended the OFM outreach by hosting an evening reception for international IACP delegates.

The October 2004 IACP Conference will be in Los Angeles. ♦

The focus on interoperability and compatibility is necessary because the population in North America is highly mobile; persons often appearing in jurisdictions other than where the DL/ID was issued. DMVs as well as other stakeholders and users must be able to authenticate and collect information from cards issued in all other jurisdictions, as well as in their own. Information on the DL/ID card, in both human



Proposed format for the back of the new DL/ID card.

and machine-readable formats, is specified as either mandatory or optional data elements.

Commonality in design and layout is important because of the current array of card formats across North America. The hundreds of variations are confusing and hamper recognition and authentication of genuine documents, as opposed to the detection of fraudulent ones, by law enforcement and others. The new specifications prescribe a common graphic design and physical layout plan for the DL/ID cards by providing zoned areas for specific data and information for both the front and back of the documents.

Some common design features include:

- a standardized barcode that can be read by DMVs and law enforcement,
- a horizontal orientation for persons over 21 and a vertical for those younger,
- bearer's photo located on the left side,
- standard locations for mandatory and optional data elements, and
- conformity to the standards for driver licenses established by the International Organization for Standardization where ever possible.

Finally, establishing a document security baseline is vital. Some cards now possess many fraud deterrence techniques while others contain little protection against security risks and threats.

While there is no "one size fits all" plan, there are proven techniques to increase identity protection. For the security benefit of all jurisdictions, a minimum set of card security specifications would address the threat of counterfeit/simulation and alteration/forgery, as well as cannibalization (using parts of cards together) and photo/signature substitution. Using the proposed design, approved security devices will conform to a standard set of criteria in a layered and structured application to protect DL/ID cards at three levels of security inspection.

It seems that the benefits and advantages offered by the proposed new card design specifications are many.

The new specifications will acknowledge and address the functional identification and information needs of the many jurisdictions.

Authentication of documents, and recognition of fraudulent ones, will be greatly facilitated and should increase the confidence level of both civilian and government communities.

Identification and driving privilege reciprocity between jurisdictions will be facilitated. Law enforcement and DMV agents will be able to authenticate and collect information in both human and machine-readable standard formats from all jurisdictions.

A common machine-readable format will make the transfer of information, heavily reliant on the data presented on the DL/ID cards, easier, more uniform, more compatible, and more secure, with fewer errors of transcription. ♦

Where are You @ ...

Consultations has gone electronic!

Now you can simply click "forward" for distribution throughout your mission. Take advantage of this informative tool — if you have not done so, email your updated internet address to Consultations@state.gov today. Include the email addresses of everyone in your Mission that you would like to have receive Consultations directly.

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