9 FAM PART IV APPENDIX D, 400 IMMIGRANT VISA SYSTEM

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)
(Office of Origin: CA/VO/L/R)

9 FAM 401 FUNCTIONS

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

a. The first automated immigrant visa processing system, known as immigrant visa applicant control system (IVACS), provided automated assistance in managing and controlling immigrant visa applications. IVACS automated much of the repetitive work. It replaced the Form OF-224, Immigrant Visa Control Cards with computerized data files and automated major case processing tasks, including preparing transmittal letter packets, requesting consular lookout and support system (CLASS) and other required clearances, managing numerical control functions, generating reports, and printing the immigrant visa.

b. The current immigrant visa processing (IV) and immigrant visa/diversity visa processing (IV/DV) systems include significant improvements in automated processing at post and have integrated automated processing at posts with electronic data exchanges among agencies and between the Department and abroad posts. Data is transmitted electronically from the point of petition approval at Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to the national visa center (NVC) for preliminary processing, to the Visa Office for numerical control and visa allocation, to Department of State posts for final processing and visa issuance, and to the Consular Consolidated Database (CCD). Visa issuance data is transmitted instantly to DHS for retrieval at ports of entry. The IV and IV/DV systems are being replaced with Immigrant Visa Overseas (IVO), a merge of IV and IV/DV that also includes Biometrics (photo and fingerprint capture), the transmission of that information to DHS's IDENT database for storage and biometric check, and the printing of visas using a new machine readable foil (MR-IV).

9 FAM 402 UTILITY

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

The primary functions of the IV system are case management, Applicant management, including printing machine readable foil (MR-IV) and use of

biometrics and visa number control and allocation.

9 FAM 403 CASE MANAGEMENT

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

Case management begins when DHS receives a request for approval of a petition for immigrant status. If the petition is approved the case data, including the priority date accorded by DHS, is transmitted electronically to the national visa center (NVC). NVC uses the Immigrant Visa Information System (IVIS) to manage the processing of petitions received from DHS. NVC performs functions previously handled by posts, including handling inquiries from petitioners and beneficiaries and conducting preliminary name checks, and handling scheduling for some posts. Cases not subject to numerical limitation are forwarded to posts for final processing. For numerically controlled cases, files are transmitted electronically to posts when the petition priority date falls within the qualifying dates reported by the visa office.

9 FAM 404 APPLICANT MANAGEMENT

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

The applicant management function is performed at NVC and at posts. The IV system maintains electronic case data, performs name-check functions, interfaces with NVC, and the visa office. DHS prepares communications to visa applicants, provides for different access levels to permit only designated users to review and evaluate name-check return records, adjudicate cases, authorize visa printing, and overcome refusals. The IV system transmits all name-check data to the CCD for audit and accountability. Enhancements being deployed in 2004 include electronic processing of clearance requests to the Department and transfer of visas cases from post to post via the CCD rather then by cable and e-mail. Also being deployed are the machine readable immigrant visa and photo and fingerprint capture.

9 FAM 405 NUMERICAL CONTROL

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

Visa number allocation is handled by visa office (VO) through the Immigrant Visa Allocation Management System (IVAMS), which helps administer the complex series of annual numerical limitations on immigrants, set forth in the Immigration and Nationality Act. Each month a determination is made regarding the number of visas that can be made available on a worldwide basis. These numbers are used both by applicants processing their cases

abroad at Foreign Service posts and in the United States at Citizenship and Immigration Service (CIS) offices. Numbers are made available in the chronological order of the applicant's priority dates. The monthly cut-off dates, which are used to determine whether an applicant's case is eligible for final interview, are published in the Visa Bulletin available on the CA intranet site.

9 FAM 406 USER SUPPORT

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

The CA Overseas Support Desk and IV On-Line Training on the CA Intranet provide users the latest guidance and procedures.

9 FAM 407 IV AND IV/DV RECORDS

9 FAM 407.1 Case Identification

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

New cases received at post electronically from NVC include a Case ID number composed of the post code, century, year, Julian date and case creation number - PPPCCYYJJJNNN. NVC supplied cases have a Julian date plus 500. For cases created at post, the Case ID is system generated when the data for a new applicant is first entered. The Alien registration number (A-number) is assigned during processing at NVC and included when the case file is sent to post. For cases created at post, the A-number is assigned at the time of adjudication.

9 FAM 407.2 Case Contents

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

Each IV case consists of a record of an alien entitled to visa status (the principal applicant) and all applicants whose status is derived from a defined relationship to the principal applicant. The IV system stores both data that apply to the case in general and data unique to each individual applicant, distinguished by separate case data and applicant data windows. Information recorded in one is automatically populated into the other. "Case data" includes all the immigrant visa processing information common to all applicants in the case. "Applicant data" are those personal and biographic details unique to each applicant.

9 FAM 408 CONSULAR SHARED TABLES

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

The IV system includes an interface with the consular shared tables (CST), a collection of essential tables including post codes, country codes, visa codes, and refusal codes. The Department maintains the CST and distributes updates electronically, providing rapid and uniform access to new codes and code changes and relieving posts of the burden of manual updates. The CST also includes tables of authorized users and access levels to provide security and management controls.

9 FAM 409 IV MANAGEMENT

(TL:VISA-634;   07-01-2004)

The IV system assists managers with an array of reports that can be generated on demand or scheduled automatically. The reports permit managers to monitor case activity and quickly review workloads. These include management reports to reflect changes to record data and standard reports to report qualified applicants, return unused visa numbers, schedule applicants for interview, and report monthly and annual workloads. The system also contains specialized query reports, such as refused applicants or applicants eligible for appointments, allowing the user to set parameters to determine date ranges. An Ad Hoc report function allows the user to design customized reports.