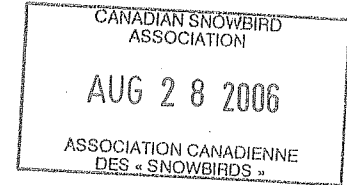




U.S. Customs and
Border Protection

AUG 15 2006



Mr. Gerald F. Brissenden, President
Canadian Snowbird Association
180 Lesmill Road
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M3B 2T5

Thank you for your correspondence of July 5, 2006. In your letter, you expressed concern regarding the difficulties that some Canadians experience when applying for admission to the United States and are found to be in possession of U.S. state-issued identification cards. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has recently completed its review of this matter. Please allow me to outline our findings.

First, permit me to apologize for any conduct that you or your members perceived to be rude or unprofessional during CBP processing. CBP takes allegations of employee misconduct very seriously and has instituted policy pertaining to abuses of authority. Complaints of unprofessional conduct are recorded and investigated, and disciplinary action is taken against CBP Officers that are found to have violated policy.

Under U.S. immigration law, persons seeking admission to the United States are assumed to be intending immigrants until they can establish, to the satisfaction of the inspecting CBP Officer, that they are eligible to be admitted to the United States in a nonimmigrant visa category. Each applicant for admission is subject to complete inspection on each arrival in the United States. No one is allowed to enter the United States until he or she has satisfied the examining officer that he or she is either a citizen of the United States or an alien who has overcome all grounds for inadmissibility. The applicant bears the burden of proof of admissibility.

While we realize that possession of state-issued identification cards and drivers' licenses, including the limited-use versions, does not constitute conclusive evidence of unlawful residence in the United States, it may, however, serve as a proper basis for a decision to engage an applicant for admission in a more thorough inspection. In this matter, however, we must rely upon the experience and expertise of the individual CBP Officer who is conducting the inspection to decide when further questioning or presentation of additional evidence is necessary.

Please be assured that it is not the intent of CBP to subject travelers to unwarranted scrutiny. Each traveler is entitled to the utmost courtesy and professionalism that can be offered within the limits of our enforcement responsibilities. Regrettably, our efforts may occasionally inconvenience law-abiding travelers in order to detect those that are involved in illicit activities.

I thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. I will convey your concerns and share your correspondence with appropriate CBP field offices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul M. Morris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "M".

Paul M. Morris
Executive Director, Admissibility Requirements and Migration Control
Office of Field Operations