

Recommendation #13
Immigrant Visa I-551

On December 15, 2004, the Ombudsman made *long and short-term recommendations concerning USCIS issuance of permanent resident cards to arriving immigrants.*

In the short term, the Ombudsman recommends that USCIS revise its procedures for processing lost immigrant visa cases in light of new methods available to USCIS to electronically verify valid immigrant visa issuance and lawful admission to the United States.

For the long term, the Ombudsman recommends that USCIS enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Department of State (DOS) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to allow electronic transfer of the immigrant visa packet from DOS to USCIS and to automatically initiate production of a permanent resident card (I-551) upon inspection and admission of an arriving immigrant by CBP.

On May 25, 2005, USCIS responded to the Ombudsman's recommendation. We agreed with the recommendations, have implemented some and others are part of our transformation process. We began with a process for issuing Certificates of Citizenship to IR-3 immigrants. We are working with service and enforcement components of DHS and DOS to develop the ability to transfer information electronically.

The Ombudsman did not have any follow-up to the USCIS response and we consider this recommendation closed.