

Recommendation #3 **Green Card Replacement**

The Ombudsman recommended that USCIS create a one-step, front-end process for processing green card (Form I-551) replacements. An applicant would appear at a USCIS local office where identity would be verified, status confirmed, security checks performed, and a preliminary decision rendered. Through this process, qualified applicants would receive their green cards within 90 days.

On June 1, 2005, individuals submitting an Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card (Form I-90) started to send their applications to the Los Angeles Lock Box. After processing at the Lock Box, the applicant is scheduled into an Application Support Center (ASC) where they will go through a series of background and identity checks. If no derogatory information is found, a new card will be ordered from the ASC. If issues arise (e.g. identity or possible disqualifying criminal issues) the applicant will be referred to the local district office for a more comprehensive review, usually a review of the A-file and/or an interview. More than 330,000 I-90 applicants have been processed at the ASCs since August 2005. CIS is currently making some resource adjustments so that these applications will be scheduled to appear at an ASC within 3 weeks of filing, and unless there is a substantive eligibility question, their new card will be ordered, manufactured and mailed within the following week.

It should be noted that I-90 applicants whose reason for filing is either "b" (card never received) or "d" (incorrect information on card due to CIS error) are processed at Service Centers. This is because CIS does not charge the applicant a fee for these applications and they are better handled outside the current process. Also, the process for I-90 Commuters did not change (they are processed at the Texas Service Center). These three exceptions make up a small part of the total I-90 workload.

USCIS has not received any feedback from the Ombudsman regarding the new process. We have found that it is much more efficient, customer friendly, and maintains the integrity of the system. For these reasons, we plan to continue to process the applications in this manner.