

**Refugee Review Tribunal  
AUSTRALIA**

**RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE**

**Research Response Number:** ETH34594  
**Country:** Ethiopia  
**Date:** 11 May 2009

Keywords: Ethiopia – Identity Card – Departing Ethiopia – Pending Court Case

This response was prepared by the Research & Information Services Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. This research response may not, under any circumstance, be cited in a decision or any other document. Anyone wishing to use this information may only cite the primary source material contained herein.

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**RESPONSE**

- 1. Do courts or other authorities in Ethiopia routinely or ever endorse a person's identity card to show that an individual has a case outstanding to prevent them from leaving the country? If so, what is the purpose of the endorsement?**
- 2. Are persons departing Addis Ababa airport for overseas routinely required to show their identity cards. If so, what is the purpose (given that a passport would presumably serve as proof of identity)?**
- 3. Is there any other way that authorities at the airport would know that a person had an outstanding court case?**

These issues were referred to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on 5 March 2009 (RRT Research & Information 2009, Email to DFAT: 'RRT Information Request: ETH34594', 5 March - Attachment 1)

On the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2009 DFAT provided the following response:

- A. Do courts or other authorities routinely or ever 'endorse' a person's identity card in the circumstances described above (ie in reftel)? If so, what is the purpose of the endorsement?**

DFAT contacts (and contacts who frequent court hearings) have never heard of or seen this practice occurring.

- B. Are persons departing Addis Ababa airport for overseas routinely required to show their identity cards? If so, what is the purpose (given that a passport would presumably serve as proof of identity)?**

Kebele or other identity documents are not 'routinely' required at airport departures. Because immigration staff have electronic copies of passports they would normally cross-check the electronic copy with the hard copy.

If there is doubt regarding a person's identity, then a secondary ID may be requested (not necessarily Kebele IDs). DFAT are advised that these are very rare incidents.

**C. Is there any other way that authorities at the airport would know that a person had an outstanding court case?**

If the courts consider that a person should not leave the country, they issue a letter informing Ethiopian Immigration to that effect. The Immigration office then sends to departure control officers a list of those people who should not be permitted to leave. However, DFAT are advised that the fact that someone has a pending case does not necessarily result in the court issuing a prohibition against departure. It is only in cases where the court considers that the departure will render the implementation of the eventual decision impossible that it gives such orders (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2009, *DFAT Report No.997 – Ethiopia: RRT Information Request ETH34594*, 7 May – Attachment 2)

**List of sources consulted**

Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIAC Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)

MRT-RRT Library Catalogue

**List of Attachments**

1. RRT Research & Information 2009, Email to DFAT: 'RRT Information Request: ETH34594', 5 March.

2. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2009, *DFAT Report No.997 – Ethiopia: RRT Information Request ETH34594*, 7 May.