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U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
20 Mass. Ave., N.W., Rm. 3000  
Washington, DC 20529



U.S. Citizenship  
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Services

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FILE:



Office: NEW YORK

Date: JAN 04 2007

IN RE:

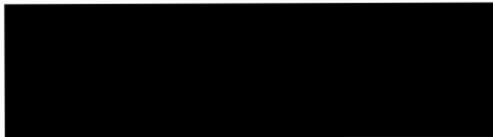
Obligor:  
Bonded Alien:



IMMIGRATION BOND:

Bond Conditioned for the Delivery of an Alien under Section 103 of the  
Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1103

ON BEHALF OF OBLIGOR:



INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

2 Robert P. Wiemann, Chief  
Administrative Appeals Office

**DISCUSSION:** The delivery bond in this matter was declared breached by the Field Office Director, Detention and Removal, New York, New York, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The record indicates that on March 22, 2001, the obligor posted a \$2,500 bond conditioned for the delivery of the above referenced alien. A Notice to Deliver Alien (Form I-340) dated April 7, 2003, was sent to the obligor via certified mail, return receipt requested. The notice demanded the bonded alien's surrender into the custody of an officer of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at 9:00 a.m. on May 14, 2003, at [REDACTED]. The obligor failed to present the alien, and the alien failed to appear as required. On August 7, 2003, the field office director informed the obligor that the delivery bond had been breached.

On appeal, counsel contends that the obligor is not bound by the obligations it freely undertook in submitting the bond in this case, and that ICE cannot enforce the terms of the Form I-352 because "its terms constitute regulations, and the INS [now ICE] did not submit it to Congress for review as required by the Congressional Review Act" (CRA), 5 U.S.C. § 801, et seq. This argument is meritless.

For purposes of the CRA, the term "rule" has, with three exceptions, the same meaning that the term has for purposes of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 5 U.S.C. § 804(3). The relevant provision of the APA defines a "rule" as the whole or a part of an agency statement of general or particular applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or describing the organization, procedure, or practice requirements of an agency. 5 U.S.C. § 551(4).

There are at least two reasons why Form I-352 is not a "rule" for purposes of the CRA. First, the Form I-352 is not a rule at all. It is a bonding agreement, in effect, a surety contract under which the appellant undertakes to guarantee an alien's appearance in the immigration court, and, if it comes to that, for removal. Section 236(a)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a)(2), permits the Attorney General, now the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security (Secretary), to release on bond an alien subject to removal proceedings. This section also permits the Secretary to describe the conditions on such bonds, and to approve the security on them. Section 103(a)(3) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1103(a)(3), permits the Secretary to prescribe bond forms. While Form I-352 may well be a form used to comply with rules relating to release of aliens on bond, the Form itself is not a rule. It is not an "agency statement," 5 U.S.C. § 551(4), but a surety agreement between the obligor and the Government.

Second, even if it can be said that Form I-352 is a "rule," the CRA does not apply. The CRA itself provides that its requirements do not apply to a "rule of particular applicability." 5 U.S.C. § 804(3)(A). Assuming, arguendo, that Form I-352 can be called a rule, it applies only to each particular case in which a person freely agrees to sign and file the Form I-352. Thus, even if the obligor were correct in saying Form I-352 is a rule, it would be a rule of particular applicability, exempt from the reporting requirement.

On appeal, counsel asserts that the alien was granted voluntary departure on February 5, 2002. Counsel indicates that the obligor does not know whether the immigration judge set a voluntary departure bond, whether the alien posted such a bond or whether the alien has departed the United States. Counsel asserts that according to handouts at numerous INS training sessions, any one of these events constitutes sufficient grounds for sustaining the appeal and canceling the bond. Counsel asserts, that in this case, the obligor provided ICE with proof of the alien's timely departure on May 20, 2002 from the United States.

Counsel does not provide copies of any of the handouts to which he refers. Without documentary evidence to support the claim, the assertions of counsel will not satisfy the obligor's burden of proof. The unsupported assertions of counsel do not constitute evidence. *Matter of Obaigbena*, 19 I&N Dec. 533, 534 (BIA 1988);

*Matter of Laureano*, 19 I&N Dec. 1 (BIA 1983); *Matter of Ramirez-Sanchez*, 17 I&N Dec. 503, 506 (BIA 1980).

If these handouts were in the form of memoranda or opinions, it should be noted that legacy Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) memoranda merely articulate internal guidelines for its personnel; they do not establish judicially enforceable rights. An agency's internal personnel guidelines "neither confer upon [plaintiffs] substantive rights nor provide procedures upon which [they] may rely." *Loa-Herrera v. Trominski*, 231 F.3d 984, 989 (5th Cir. 2000)(quoting *Fano v. O'Neill*, 806 F.2d 1262, 1264 (5th Cir.1987)); see also *R.L. Inv. Ltd. Partners v. I.N.S.*, 86 F.Supp.2d 1014, 1022 (D. Haw. Mar 03, 2000); *aff'd*, 273 F.3d 874 (9th Cir.).

Likewise, documentation developed by the Office of General Counsel (OGC), now Office of the Principal Legal Adviser (OPLA) are advisory in nature and do not bind ICE or the AAO. See *R.L. Inv. Ltd. Partners*, 86 F.Supp.2d at 1022. Even apart from its advisory nature, an OGC opinion is not a statement on which the obligor was entitled to rely. The AAO has held in a precedent decision that INS General Counsel memoranda are merely opinions. The OGC is not an adjudicative body and functions in an advisory capacity only; as such, adjudicators are not bound by its recommendations. See *Matter of Izummi*, 22 I&N Dec. 169 (Comm. 1998).

The record reflects that a removal hearing was held on February 5, 2002, and the alien was granted voluntary departure from the United States on or before May 24, 2002, with an alternate order of removal to take effect in the event that the alien failed to depart as required. The immigration judge imposed no requirement for a voluntary departure bond and did not set other conditions on the grant of voluntary departure.

The obligor is only bound by the terms of the Form I-352 to which it obligated itself. It is noted that the terms of the Form I-352 for bonds conditioned upon the delivery of the alien establish the following condition: "the obligor shall cause the alien to be produced or to produce himself/herself . . . upon each and every written request until *exclusion/deportation/removal proceedings* . . . are finally terminated." (Emphasis added). Thus, the obligor is bound to deliver the alien by the express terms of the bond until either exclusion, deportation or removal proceedings are finally terminated, or one of the other conditions occurs.

Counsel appears to be suggesting that once ICE no longer has detention authority over the alien, it can no longer require a delivery bond. However, this ignores the holdings of *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678 (2001) and *Doan v. INS*, 311 F.3d 1160 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2002). In *Zadvydas*, the Supreme Court expressly recognized the authority of the legacy INS to require the posting of a bond as a condition of release without regard to detention authority over the alien, even though a bond was not provided as a condition of release by the statute. In *Doan*, the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit held the legacy INS had the authority to require a \$10,000 delivery bond in a supervised release context even though it did not have detention authority. Even though these cases arose in the post-removal period, it is apparent from the rulings that detention authority is not the sole determining factor as to whether ICE can require a delivery bond.

The bond provides that it may be canceled when (1) exclusion/deportation/removal proceedings are finally terminated; (2) the alien is accepted by ICE for detention or deportation/removal; or (3) the bond is otherwise canceled. The circumstances under which the bond may be "otherwise canceled" occur when the Secretary or the Attorney General imposes a requirement for another bond, and the alien posts such a bond, or when an order of removal has been issued and the alien is taken into custody. For instance, in accordance with the instructions on the current Form I-352 (Rev. 06/23/00), which was approved by the Office of Management and Budget after changes implemented by HIRAIRA, the General Terms and Conditions provide that "[c]ancellation of a bond issued as a delivery bond shall occur upon...issuance of a new delivery [bond] or voluntary departure bond on the bonded alien" and "[e]xecution of a voluntary departure bond for an alien cancels any existing delivery bond posted on behalf of the same alien, except in the circumstance when an immigration judge

grants voluntary departure at the conclusion of a proceeding, and the alien appeals the finding of removability.” As the obligor has not shown that any of these circumstances apply, the bond is not canceled. *See also* Form I-352 at ¶ 1, providing that “[t]he express language of the bond contract shall take precedence over any inconsistent policies or statements.”

Further, the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(a)(1) provides, in pertinent part that:

Every . . . document submitted on the form prescribed by this chapter shall be executed and filed in accordance with the instructions on the form, such instructions . . . being hereby incorporated into the particular section of the regulations in this chapter requiring its submission.

In accordance with the post-IIRAIRA instructions on the bond, incorporated into the regulations pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(a)(1), there is no cancellation of the delivery bond if the immigration judge grants voluntary departure but does not require that a voluntary departure bond be posted. Under the express terms of the bond, it is only the execution of a voluntary departure bond that cancels the delivery bond. *See* Form I-352, General Terms and Conditions at ¶ 2.

That the immigration judge did not order the posting of a voluntary departure bond does not alter the terms of the bond or serve to extinguish the delivery bond. The delivery bond requires delivery of the alien to ICE upon demand or until proceedings have terminated, and is not conditioned upon a theory of constructive detention. Thus counsel’s arguments cannot be reconciled with the statutory, regulatory, and case law discussed above or with the express terms of the delivery bond.

On appeal, counsel asserts that the bonded alien was granted voluntary departure on February 5, 2002. Counsel further asserts that because ICE made no attempt to execute this order within 90 days, it has lost detention authority, and the delivery bond should be canceled as a matter of law. Counsel asserts, “the above argument is moot in this case since the alien timely departed on May 20, 2002. We are presenting it, however, because to date the District has not accepted the proof of departure.”

The AAO has held that an alien who departs from the United States prior to the date demanded for surrender may be in substantial compliance with the terms of his delivery bond. *Matter of Don Donaldson's Key Bail Service*, 13 I&N Dec. 563 (Acting Reg. Comm. 1969). However, the burden is upon the alien or his surety to prove by probative evidence that the alien did leave the country prior to his surrender date. *Matter of Peerless Insurance Company*, 15 I&N Dec. 133 (Reg. Comm. 1974).

A physical verification of departure by an immigration officer at the port of departure, or a verification of the alien's presence in the foreign destination by a United States consular officer or immigration officer abroad, is required to verify departure.

ICE will accept a document signed by an embassy official, consular officer, or an immigration officer abroad, and bearing an appropriate seal or other indicia of reliability as proof that a voluntary departure or self-removal has occurred. The field office director retains the discretion to accept other documents of voluntary departure. The original of such documents may be delivered either by the surety or through diplomatic channels. Copies of such documents will be accepted only if received through diplomatic channels.

On appeal, counsel asserts that the bonded alien has departed from the United States. The record contains a photocopy of a Form I-392, Notification of Departure-Bond Case, which indicates that on August 8, 2002, the alien presented himself to the United States Embassy in Honduras with documentation reflecting an entry into Honduras on May 20, 2002. In order to verify the authenticity of said form, the United States Embassy in

Honduras was contacted. The signature on the Form I-392 was confirmed, however, a manual search in its databases and actual file was conducted and there was no evidence that the bonded alien presented himself on August 8, 2002. In addition, the Form I-392 raises questions to its credibility as did not bear the official seal, and was not an original. Accordingly, the Form I-392 cannot be accepted.

Delivery bonds are violated if the obligor fails to cause the bonded alien to be produced or to produce himself/herself to an immigration officer or immigration judge upon each and every written request until removal proceedings are finally terminated, or until the alien is actually accepted by ICE for detention or removal. *Matter of Smith*, 16 I&N Dec. 146 (Reg. Comm. 1977).

The regulations provide that an obligor shall be released from liability where there has been "substantial performance" of all conditions imposed by the terms of the bond. 8 C.F.R. § 103.6(c)(3). A bond is breached when there has been a substantial violation of the stipulated conditions of the bond. 8 C.F.R. § 103.6(e).

8 C.F.R. § 103.5a(a)(2) provides that personal service may be effected by any of the following:

- (i) Delivery of a copy personally;
- (ii) Delivery of a copy at a person's dwelling house or usual place of abode by leaving it with some person of suitable age and discretion;
- (iii) Delivery of a copy at the office of an attorney or other person including a corporation, by leaving it with a person in charge;
- (iv) Mailing a copy by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested, addressed to a person at his last known address.

The evidence of record indicates that the Notice to Deliver Alien dated April 7, 2003 was sent to the obligor at [REDACTED] via certified mail. This notice demanded that the obligor produce the bonded alien on May 14, 2003. The domestic return receipt indicates the obligor received notice to produce the bonded alien on April 14, 2003. Consequently, the record clearly establishes that the notice was properly served on the obligor in compliance with 8 C.F.R. § 103.5a(a)(2)(iv).

It is clear from the language used in the bond agreement that the obligor shall cause the alien to be produced or the alien shall produce himself to an ICE officer upon each and every request of such officer until removal proceedings are either finally terminated or the alien is accepted by ICE for detention or removal.

It must be noted that delivery bonds are exacted to insure that aliens will be produced when and where required by ICE for hearings or removal. Such bonds are necessary in order for ICE to function in an orderly manner. The courts have long considered the confusion which would result if aliens could be surrendered at any time or place it suited the alien's or the surety's convenience. *Matter of L-*, 3 I&N Dec. 862 (C.O. 1950).

After a careful review of the record, it is concluded that the conditions of the bond have been substantially violated, and the collateral has been forfeited. The decision of the field office director will not be disturbed.

**ORDER:** The appeal is dismissed.