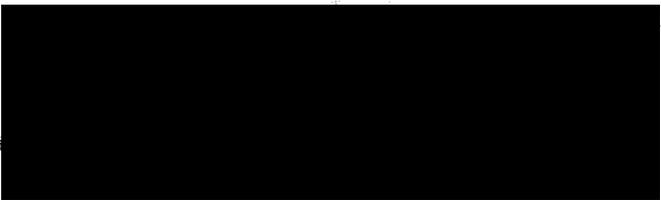


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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
20 Mass. Ave., N.W., Rm. A3042
Washington, DC 20529



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services



FILE: [Redacted] Office: DALLAS Date NOV 26 2004

IN RE: Obligor: [Redacted]
Bonded Alien: [Redacted]

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: Self-represented

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.

Robert P. Wiemann

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

identifying data deleted to
prevent clearly unwarranted
invasion of personal privacy

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

The record indicates that on January 23, 2003, the obligor posted a \$7,500 bond conditioned for the delivery of the above referenced alien. A Notice to Deliver Alien (Form I-340) dated May 6, 2003, was sent 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 10:00 a.m. on June 5, 2003, at 8 [REDACTED]. The obligor failed to present the alien, and the alien failed to appear as required. On June 13, 2003, the field office director informed the obligor that the delivery bond had been breached.

The Form I-352 provides that the obligor and co-obligor are jointly and severally liable for the obligations imposed by the bond contract. As such, ICE may pursue a breach of bond against one or both of the contracting parties. *See Restatement (Third) of Suretyship and Guaranty* § 50 (1996). Consequently the record clearly establishes that the notice was properly served on either the obligor or the co-obligor in compliance with 8 C.F.R. § 103.5a(a)(2)(iv). Reference in this decision to the obligor is equally applicable to the co-obligor and vice versa.

On appeal, the obligor asserts that the Congressional Review Act (CRA) mandates that rules promulgated by Federal agencies be submitted for Congressional review prior to use. The obligor contends that it 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 ICE "bond contract (Form I-352) is a rule within the meaning of the CRA, but has never been submitted for Congressional review."¹ 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). 8 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.

¹ Capital Bonding Corporation executed a settlement agreement with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (legacy INS) on February 21, 2003 in which it agreed that any appeals to the AAO subsequent to the execution of this Agreement shall be filed by counsel of record and/or not to raise certain arguments on appeals of bond breaches. The AAO will adjudicate the appeal notwithstanding Capital Bonding Corporation's failure to comply with the settlement agreement in this case.

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). The obligor argues that the Form I-352 cannot be a "rule of particular applicability" because the Form I-352 is not "a rule that approves or prescribes for the future rates, wages, prices, services, or allowances therefor, corporate or financial structures, reorganizations, merges, or acquisitions thereof, or accounting practices or disclosures bearing on any of the foregoing." 5 U.S.C. § 804(3)(A). This office reiterates its primary holding: Form I-352 is a surety contract, which the obligor freely chose to sign, and hence is not a "rule" at all. But 5 U.S.C. § 804(3)(A) does not indicate that it provides an exhaustive list of rules that can properly be characterized as rules of particular applicability. The list, rather, is illustrative, indicating examples of rules that can be so characterized. 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.

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, as specified in the appearance notice, upon each and every written request until removal proceedings are finally terminated, or until the said 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 May 6, 2003 was sent via certified mail. This notice demanded that the obligor produce the bonded alien on June 5, 2003. The domestic return receipt indicates the obligor received notice to produce the bonded alien on May 12, 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).

Pursuant to the Amwest/Reno Settlement Agreement, entered into on June 22, 1995 by the legacy INS and Far West Surety Insurance Company, ICE agreed that a properly completed questionnaire would be attached to all Form I-340s (Notices to Surrender) going to the obligor on a surety bond. The failure to attach the questionnaire would result in rescission of any breach related to that Form I-340.

Based on the provisions of the Amwest Agreement and the fact that the record fails to show that a properly completed questionnaire was sent to the obligor, the appeal will be sustained. The field office director's decision declaring the bond breached will be rescinded and the bond will be continued in full force and effect.

ORDER: The appeal is sustained. The field office director's decision declaring the bond breached is rescinded and the bond is continued in full force and effect.