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Originally published 12:37 a.m., June 12, 2006, updated 12:00 a.m., June 12, 2006

Homeland Security accepts fake ID

The Department of Homeland Security allowed a man to enter its headquarters last week using a fake Matricula Consular card as identification, despite federal rules that say the Mexican-issued card is not valid ID at government buildings.

Bruce DeCell, a retired New York City police officer, used his phony card -- which lists his place of birth as "Tijuana, B.C." and his address as "123 Fraud Blvd." on an incorrectly spelled "Staton Island, N.Y." -- to enter the building Wednesday for a meeting with DHS officials.

Mr. DeCell said he has had the card for four years and has used it again and again to board airliners and enter government buildings, without being turned down once. But he said he was surprised that DHS, the agency in charge of determining secure IDs, accepted it.

"Obviously, it's not working," Mr. DeCell said.

The Mexican government has issued millions of Matricula Consular cards in the past few years, mostly to give illegal aliens a form of identification that banks and other institutions will accept.

The FBI, in testimony to Congress, has said that the cards are not secure. The General Services Administration ruled in 2003 that the Matricula Consular is not valid ID for entering a federal building.

In addition to being a forgery obtained for him from a street vendor in California, Mr. DeCell's card was modeled on an older version, which the Mexican government publicly acknowledges is not a secure document. The Mexican government says the old-style cards "are no longer valid."

Some members of Congress tried to crack down on use of the card, particularly as valid ID for opening a bank account, but the Bush administration opposed that effort.

Jarrod Agen, a spokesman for DHS, said the department shouldn't have allowed the ID to be used for entry to its headquarters.

"DHS is following up on these allegations and will take necessary actions to ensure there is not another occurrence of this type," he said.

Mr. DeCell had provided his name, birth date and Social Security number to be pre-cleared for entry to the building and had been vetted before, Mr. Agen said. The security guard accepted the ID to match Mr. DeCell's name to a name on her list of cleared visitors, he said.

The spokesman said Mr. DeCell's group went through metal detectors and other routine security screening and had an escort at all times while in the building.

"At no time was there a threat to any person or property," Mr. Agen said.

DHS' security performance didn't surprise one member of Congress.

"You mean the Department of Homeland Insecurity," said Rep. Elton Gallegly, California Republican and one of the first to introduce a bill in Congress several years ago cracking down on acceptance of

the Matricula Consular card. "The real sad story here is that it doesn't surprise me -- in fact it just vindicates all the things I've been saying here, along with so many others."

The Mexican government argues that the cards improve security by giving illegal aliens some form of identification, which assists police and businesses.

Mexico is not the only country to issue such cards, and has in fact issued a form of the Matricula Consular card for decades. But Mr. Gallegly said the Mexicans used to issue few, and only for special circumstances, while in recent years they have issued millions.

Mr. DeCell is a member of 9/11 Families for a Secure America, an organization of families with relatives who died in the September 11 terrorist attacks. He and two other members paid the visit Wednesday to DHS officials.

Mr. DeCell said he keeps the fake ID card in his wallet and often shows it just to see what places will accept it. He keeps his driver's license handy in case the forgery is challenged, he said, but it never has been.

"I'm dismayed," Mr. DeCell said.

Joan Molinaro, who accompanied him, said she was shocked that DHS, of all agencies, accepted the phony ID.

"Homeland Security is not doing their job," she said. "Homeland Security accepted a fraudulent document as a legitimate one."



http://www.govtsecurity.com/mag/fake_id_mission/index.html

A Fake ID and a Mission

Aug 1, 2006 12:00 PM

A man using a fake identification card was able to enter the Homeland Security Department headquarters in Washington, he says, even though the United States government considers the type of Mexican-issued card he used invalid.

Retired New York City policeman Bruce DeCell, who had arranged to meet with DHS officials this month to lobby for document security, told CNN he purposely used a forged version of identification that Mexican consulates in the United States issue to their nationals living here illegally.

Undocumented Mexicans can use the cards at banks and other institutions that accept them. The cards are not valid for entry into federal government buildings.

DeCell is a board member of a group called "9/11 Families for a Secure America," which he formed with others after losing his son-in-law in the 2001 terrorist attacks.

His group advocates stricter controls against illegal immigrants and wants to ban use of the "matricula consular" cards.

"The card is an unsecure document that could facilitate terrorist money and travel," he said.

DeCell told CNN that a friend in California bought him the fake Mexican card for \$20. "I sent him a passport-size photo and the spelling of my name, and he had the card made for me on the street," he said.

Days before his meeting with DHS officials, DeCell was asked to furnish his name, Social Security number and birth date, so they could be compared by security personnel to a valid form of picture identification. The building security accepted his matricula card, even though it listed a false date of birth, he said.

He was allowed entry into the building after walking through a metal detector, according to a statement posted on his group's Web site.

"It's obscene in a post-9/11 world that they did not match my name against the fake [date of birth]," DeCell fumed. "They're spending a lot of money [on security] for nothing."

"In response to this incident, we are following up on the allegations, and we seek to ensure that an incident like this does not occur again," Jarrod Agen, a Homeland Security spokesman, told CNN.

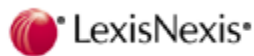
Fooled by a Fake ID at DHS Headquarters

Security consultant able to use fake Mexican ID with errors to prove identity at DHS main facility

<http://www.securityinfowatch.com/printer/1282819?pageNum=1>

BY STEPHEN DINAN, THE WASHINGTON TIMES THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Updated: 02-6-2009 1:23 pm



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