



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Flexoline Index Database [Public Use Version], ca. 2000–ca. 2003  
Record Group 566

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## **I. Questions about the Flexoline Index**

### I.1. What information is in these records?

This series consists of data extracted from the microfilmed images of the Flexoline Index. It serves as an index to the microfilmed (and later digitized) Alien Registration Forms (AR-2, AR-102, or the consular form) and includes records related to noncitizen immigration and naturalization in the United States prior to 1955.

The Flexoline entries follow three different formats identified by the agency as "Format A," "Format B," and "Format C." The fields available for each format may include the following. For Format A: Alien Registration Number (A-Number), Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial, Date of Birth, Country of Birth Code, Place of Registration Codes (State, County, City), Gender, and Soundex. For Format B: A-Number, Last Name, First Name, Middle Name or Initial, Date of Birth, Country of Birth, Date of Entry, Port of Entry, Visa Number, and Soundex. For Format C: A-Number, Last Name, First Name, Middle Name or Initial, Date of Birth, Country of Birth Code, Date of Entry, Port of Entry Code, and Soundex.

### I.2. Why were these records created?

The Alien Registration Division of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) created the original Flexoline Index in 1940 to index Alien Registration records created under the Alien Registration Act of 1940. It served as an index to Alien Registration Forms (AR-2, AR-102, or the consular form). When the Alien Registration Division disbanded near the end of World War II, responsibility for the Flexoline Index transferred to the INS Records program. Thereafter Flexoline Index entries were created from A-Files (or trigger documents) related to new arrivals, adjustments, or other applications by registered noncitizens.

These entries follow formats identified by INS in automated form as "Format B" and "Format C." The latter format entries date to December 31, 1954, (a few as late as December 1955 may be errors) and A-Numbers as high as 8.6 million. Format B and C entries may also include lower, pre-April 1, 1944, A-Numbers when that case reopened after 1944. After conversion to an electronic format, the Flexoline Index digital images and database were managed as a component of the Microfilm Digitization Application System (MiDAS).

### I.3. How were these records created?

When the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) received completed Alien Registration Forms (AR-2) during World War II, the agency manually created an index using Flexoline equipment. The Flexoline equipment allowed staff to manually enter key pieces of information from the form, which was printed onto a thin strip of paper. Staff arranged the thin strips into plastic holders to create pages. Starting in about 2000, INS manually keyed the information from the strips into an electronic searchable database. It is the entries from this electronic searchable database of the Flexoline Index that is available on AAD. Because the index was manually created and later manually retyped, the index records may contain typos and other errors.

#### I.4. How can I request a copy of the Alien Registration (AR-2) form?

Records for individuals born over 100 years ago: In general, these records do not have access restrictions so requests for them do not require a Freedom of Information Act request. Send your request with the information outlined below as an email to [cer@nara.gov](mailto:cer@nara.gov).

Records for deceased individuals born less than 100 years ago: In order to release these records without privacy restrictions, NARA requires proof of death. Requests must be submitted under the Freedom of Information Act and must include proof of death for the individual. Acceptable forms of proof of death include: published obituary, a copy of death certificate, letter from a funeral home, or documentation from another recognized source, such as: Ancestry or the Social Security Death Index. Any proof of death documentation must include the name of the deceased individual, the birth date and the date of death. Send your FOIA request with the information outlined below and proof of death to [cer@nara.gov](mailto:cer@nara.gov).

For all Alien Registration (AR-2) forms requests, we need the following information in order for us to perform an adequate search:

- Name of individual, including possible spelling variations
- Country of birth of the individual
- Date of birth or estimated birth year range of the individual
- A-number of the individual, if known
- Estimated year when the individual entered the U.S., if known
- The state the individual was living in the 1940s, if known

If we find responsive records, so we may provide you options for reproductions, please also provide:

- Your billing address so we can prepare a price quotation
- Email address so we can provide records via e-delivery where we send you a link so you can download the records
- Indicate if you require certified copies of the records and include your shipping address

The fee for a single Alien Registration (AR-2) form is the minimum charge \$20. The fee for two to ten Alien Registration forms is \$17 per file (form). The fee for certifying the copies is \$15 per certification.

We ask that you please include the individuals' last names in the subject lines to make it easier for us to track your requests.

More information about how to request copies of these records is available at <https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/alien-registration-ar-2>.

#### I.5. Do all Flexoline Index entries correspond to an AR-2 form?

No. There are a couple of reasons why there might be a Flexoline Index entry, but no AR-2 record. First, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) also used the Flexoline Index for A-files opened after April 1, 1944. The majority of Flexoline Index entries for individuals with an

A-number assigned after April 1, 1944 are likely a reference to an A-file, not a standalone Alien Registration Form. This usually includes, but is not limited to, A-numbers that begin with A62 through A69, A71 through A74, and A78 through A8. The National Archives receives transfers of A-files for individuals born over 100 years ago. Information about A-files at the National Archives is at <https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens>.

Second, after the AR-2 record was indexed, it is possible the AR-2 may have been lost or moved to another file so was no longer with the rest of the forms when they were microfilmed. For example, INS may have moved the AR-2 form to the individual's A-file.

I.6. What are the differences between the three original record formats?

The Flexoline database contains records in three format types. These formats correspond to the three different formats of the original Flexoline microfiche/film strips. The agency designated these formats with the letters A, B, and C for the purpose of automation. During data entry, keyers noted the format of the record and included that information in the Flexoline database as part of the record.

In the 2024 release, there are 6,422,866 Format A records; 749,817 Format B records; and 1081,178 Format C records.

The kinds of information the agency captured from the registration forms, and in what manner, changed over time. For example, in Format A, the agency only recorded the year of birth in the Flexoline Index record, while in Formats B and C they captured the full birth date. Likewise, in some formats, information may be captured as a code or as text. Below is a table of the kinds of information the agency captured in the three original formats along with what time periods the formats were generally used.

<b>Information captured</b>	<b>Format A (circa 1940-1944)</b>	<b>Format B (circa 1944-1954)</b>	<b>Format C (circa 1944-1954)</b>
A-Number	yes	yes	yes
Name	yes	yes	yes
(Last, First, Middle Initial)			
Gender	yes, as code	no	no
Line	yes	no	no
Miscellaneous (MISC)	no	yes	no
Birth day	no	yes	yes
Birth month	no	yes	yes
Birth year	yes	yes	yes
City of birth	no	yes	no
Country of birth	yes, as code	yes, as text	yes, as code
Place of residence	yes, as code	no	no
Port of entry	no	yes, as text	yes, as code
Three-digit Soundex	yes	yes	yes

#### I.7. What version of the Flexoline Index records are accessible via AAD?

The agency transferred the Flexoline Index records in a single file. The original file includes records for individuals born less than 100 years ago and so may be records of potentially living individuals. To provide online access to these records via AAD, NARA created a public use reference version. For the reference version, NARA:

- Removed the records for individuals with a date of birth less than 100 years old. In the current public use version, NARA released any records with dates of birth in 1923 or prior, or in the following patterns: 18xx, 190x, 191x, 1x0x, 1x1x, 1x20, 1x21, 1x22, or 1x23.
- Converted asterisk (\*) coded values in the records to underscores ( \_ ) since in AAD the asterisk is used for wildcard searching. The agency used asterisks as placeholders for illegible or unknown characters during the data entry process.
- Merged the Format [FORMAT] and Country of Birth Code (format A and C) [COBCODE] fields to create the Country of Birth Code (format A and C) field [COBCODE\_NARA]. In the country of birth code field some of the codes for the countries are the same. The meanings for the duplicate codes depend on the format. To display the meanings of the coded values in AAD and support searching, NARA combined these two fields to create a code list of unique values consisting of the country codes and format.
- Added the City of Registration Meaning (NARA added), State of Registration Meaning (NARA added), and County of Registration Meaning (NARA added) fields. These fields contain the translations for codes in the City of Registration Code (format A), State of Registration Code (format A), and County of Registration Code (format A) fields, respectively. These fields were added due to the complexity involved in translating these codes and technical limitations of AAD.
- Added the Country of Birth (all formats) (NARA added) [COUNTYOFBIRTH\_NARA] field. This field merges the country of birth information from the Country of Birth (format B) [COB] and Country of Birth Code (format A and C) [COBCODE] fields to facilitate searching on this information in AAD. The field contains the translated meanings of the coded values where possible.

#### I.8. Will there be future updates to the Flexoline Index records?

Yes. NARA will create a new version of the public use file in five-year blocks. Each new public use version will include records of individuals with a birth year of over 100 years ago as of that current year. As NARA releases additional records, NARA will update the Flexoline Index records available for searching AAD and for download through the Catalog. See [Question I.4 How can I request a copy of the Alien Registration \(AR-2\) form?](#) if searching for a deceased individual born less than 100 years ago.

I.9. What are some of the limitations of the Flexoline Index records?

- Not all fields are populated depending on the format of the original Flexoline record from which the information was taken. In the 2024 release, there are 6,420,932 Format A records; 749,588 Format B records; and 1,080,757 Format C records. See [Question I.5. What are the differences between the three original record formats?](#) for a list of the fields present in each format.
- Flexoline does not contain records for all individuals who may have completed an Alien Registration Form (AR-2) or other Alien Registration forms filed between circa 1940 to 1945.
  - The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) manually indexed the Alien Registration forms they received to create the original paper-based Flexoline Index. They later microfilmed and digitized the Index to create the electronic Flexoline database. It is possible, for unknown reasons, forms may not have been recorded during the initial indexing or later microfilming.
- The Flexoline Index contains inaccurate and incomplete information, which makes it difficult to search for and locate records.
  - Individuals completed the AR-2 Forms to the best of their knowledge, but may have misremembered their birthdate, country of birth, or other names they had gone by.
  - INS manually indexed the Alien Registration forms so typos may have occurred as staff transcribed the information.
  - It is possible an A-Number may be associated with more than one individual. This is often due to errors during data entry. Researchers may need to refer to other records for the individual to determine if the A-Number is accurate. See [Question I.11. Can I use this record to locate other records about the individual?](#)
- There are known gaps in the Flexoline Index. There are about 1.25 million A-Numbers associated with the AR-2 Forms that are not listed in the Flexoline Index.
- The A-Number was not populated, or is incomplete, in a small number of records. About 2.6% of the A-Numbers include wildcards (originally an asterisk), which keyers used to substitute illegible characters during the data entry process.

I.10. I found an error in one of the Flexoline Index records available on AAD. Can it be corrected?

No. We are aware there may be errors in some of the Flexoline Index records. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) manually indexed the Alien Registration forms and later manually entered the index into a searchable database format. Errors may have been introduced during either of these processes. In addition, when filling out the AR-2 Form, individuals may have misremembered their birthdate, country of birth, or other names they had gone by.

As an archives, NARA's role is to preserve the integrity of the records that federal agencies transfer and organizations donate for archival preservation, even if the records include objective inaccuracies. For that reason, NARA does not correct or revise accessioned records.

#### I.11. How can I access a copy of the full file?

The full public use data file (records of individuals born over 100 years ago), along with the associated technical documentation, may be downloaded from the National Archives Catalog at: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>. There you can search by the series name, Flexoline Index Database, or using the National Archives Identifier 200294723, which is the description identifier for this series.

In the results, select to view the full series description. Click on the "Search within this Series" button for a list of the file units within this series. Then select the file unit containing the records of interest to you. The file unit description will include the list of electronic records and documentation files available for viewing and/or downloading.

Additional information about downloading electronic records from the Catalog is available at: <https://www.archives.gov/research/electronic-records/access-in-catalog-faqs>.

Please keep in mind that the data file consists of the raw structured data as loaded into AAD (i.e. the coded values without meanings), but without the AAD software that displays the meanings for coded values and field titles. The file also contains more than 8 million records (rows) so may be too large for some applications. For more details about using files containing raw structured data, you may wish to review our "Introduction to Raw Data" at: <https://www.archives.gov/files/research/electronic-records/raw-data-intro.pdf>.

#### I.12. Can I use this record to locate other records about the individual?

The fields Alien Registration Number (A-Number), Visa Number, Field File, File Series, and File Number may be helpful in locating additional records. The Miscellaneous field may also contain Visa numbers or Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) file numbers. Please note the INS manually created these records so it is possible some of the numbers in these fields may contain typos or may not even be for the correct person. The Visa Number, Field File, File Series, File Number, and Miscellaneous fields are blank in 96% - 99% of the records.

The existence of an A-Number in Flexoline does not necessarily imply the existence of a paper A-File. To our knowledge, later Format B or C records were created to index arrivals and A-files, and so may indicate a paper A-File exists. Information about A-Files that have been transferred to NARA is available at <https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens>.

Information about other records in NARA's custody pertaining to researching immigration and naturalization is available on the Nation Archives website at <https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration>.

Further information about the Flexoline Index records is available on NARA's website at <https://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/flexoline>.

## II. Questions about searching the Flexoline Index

### II.1. How do I find records in the Flexoline Index?

Searching these records is like searching other files in AAD. Like other files, wildcard characters (% or \*) are useful when searching. In addition, you may need to use a combination of other fields in your search to help identify records. When searching, keep in mind some fields may be blank and the information in the records may contain misspellings or other inaccuracies. You may need to use less search criteria to retrieve all possible matches.

Individuals could be listed up to three times in Flexoline. For example, someone might be listed under their birth name, the name they entered the U.S. under, and an alias or maiden name. If you locate a record using one name, you may wish to search the Index again using that A-Number to retrieve any other possible records associated with that number. If a search by A-Number returns records of different individuals, this suggests there may be a typo in the A-Number for the individual you found or for the records of the different individuals.

### II.2. How do I search by name?

There are three fields that contain parts of the name: First Name, Middle Name, and Last Name. Note the Middle Name field is blank in over half of the records. In those in which it is populated, it generally only contains an initial. You may wish to search first using only the First and/or Last Names.

Start a name search by entering the first name and last name in the appropriate fields. If you are unable to find a match, try searching only by the first name, only by last name, or the beginning of a name (at least three characters) followed by a wildcard character (\* or %). Also try searching using various spellings of the name. If you are aware of other language versions of a name, such as how the name might appear in German versus English, or vice versa, try searching for both variations. You may want to refer to the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) *Foreign Versions Variations and Diminutives of English Names* document available in the technical documentation on AAD.

Married women might be listed under their maiden name or their married name. It is also possible they may be listed twice, once under each variation.

Some of the names contain misspellings; obvious typos, such as numerical characters and punctuation; or wildcard characters, which keyers used to substitute illegible/unreadable characters during data entry. For example: OLYMP9IA, MA4RGARET, MAU\DALENA, MURIEL', and LI\_0\_I\_.

First names may include the middle name or initial. It may be helpful to use a wildcard (% or \*) at the end of the first name if an exact search is unsuccessful.



Last names may include a suffix, such as SR, JR, or III. For example: AGUAO SR, BOYER JR, and CHESNEY II. It may be helpful to use a wildcard (% or \*) at the end of last names that include known suffixes.

Members of religious orders may be listed under their birth names and/or their religious name. Their term of address, such as Sister or Brother, may appear in the first or last name fields. The term of address may be in parenthesis. For example:

A-Number	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
A7373917	Sister		Agathilda
A7373917	Regina	G	Fahrland
A6218181	John Cross		(Brother)
A6218181	John	P	Dooley

### II.3. How do I search by names containing punctuation or spaces?

Names that contain a prefix such as "D", "O," "Van," or "Mc," etc. may or may not contain the appropriate space, apostrophe ('), or hyphen (-). Some names may contain a different character (space or hyphen) instead of the appropriate character. For example:

- D'ANGELO, D ANGELO, and DANGELO
- MARIE-LOUISE, MARIE LOUISE
- VANDER LAAN, VAN DER LAAN, VAN-DER-LAAN, VANDERLAAN

AAD ignores punctuation in search criteria. Punctuation in the records and in the search terms is treated like a space for searching purposes. For example, a search for the first name MARIE-LOUISE returns matches on MARIE-LOUISE and MARIE LOUISE.

To search for a name that may contain punctuation or spaces, enter the name as originally spelled. If you are unable to find a match, try searching on variations of the name, replacing punctuation with spaces or excluding any spaces or punctuation.

### II.4. How do I search by birth date?

You can search for a specific date or range of dates. There are separate month, day of the month, and year fields. To search by month, day, and/or year you need to enter search criteria in all the appropriate fields. You do not need to enter search criteria in all three fields.

Since month and day information was not captured in all the original Flexoline formats, you may wish to start by searching by year. See also [Question I.5. What are the differences between the three original record formats?](#)

To search by year, enter the four-digit year in the Birth Year field. You can search for several years in a single search by selecting the "with any of the values" search operator from the drop-

down box next to the field and entering the multiple years in the search field. You can also use a wildcard (\* or %) to search for all records within a decade. For example, a search 191\* will return records with the years 1910 through 1919.

Some of the Flexoline Index records contain incomplete dates, such as dates where digits were substituted with placeholder characters in the original records. These placeholder characters are represented by an underscore ( \_ ) in the records on AAD. Some dates might contain non-numeric values (e.g. letters or symbols) as the result of typos or dirty data. If you attempt a search using an exact four-digit year and are unsuccessful, you may want to repeat the search using a wildcard character (\* or %) for the final digit. Some dates might also contain an original wildcard (an underscore) for the second digit (hundreds position).

You can search the month and day fields by selecting criteria from the “Select from Code List” on the Fielded Search page. You can select multiple days or months to search for a range of dates. For example, if you know the birth occurred in the summer, you might select the codes for June, July, and August. Or if you know the birth occurred in the beginning of the month, you might select the codes for the first (1) through the fifteenth (15). If you do not know the month and/or day, it is best to leave those fields blank, especially since those fields are not populated in format A records.

For example:

- To search for records with a birth that occurred on January 1, 1889
  - For the Birth Month (format A and C) field, select the code for January
  - For the Birth Day (format A and C) field, select the code for 1
  - For the Birth Year field, enter 1889
  - Since it is possible the day and/or month may not have been captured in the original Flexoline record, revise the search by removing the day and/or month.
  
- To search for records with a birth that occurred between 1880 to 1900:
  - For the Birth Year field, change the search operator to "with any of the values" and enter the search values 188\* 189\* 1900

### II.5. How do I search by A-Number?

Enter the Alien Registration Number in the A-Number field. Enter the number with the "A" prefix (e.g. A5638112). Do not include spaces or dashes.

You can use wildcards (% or \*) to return ranges of A-Numbers. You need at least three characters in your search criteria to conduct wildcard searches on AAD (e.g. A22\*).

There are several reasons why searching by A-Number may return no results:

- Less than 1% of A-Numbers include a leading zero (e.g. A0944819). Consider revising a search to include a leading zero if unsuccessful searching without one. Note a few A-Numbers may have multiple leading zeros (e.g. A0002293473).
- The A-Number was not populated, or is incomplete, in a small number of records (less than 1%).

- About 2.6% of the A-Numbers include wildcard characters ( \_ ), which keyers used to substitute illegible or unreadable characters during the data entry process.

## II.6. How do I search by country of birth?

There are three fields that contain country of birth information in the version of Flexoline in AAD: Country of Birth (format B), Country of Birth Code (format A and C), and Country of Birth (all formats) (NARA added). The Country of Birth (format B) and Country of Birth Code (format A and C) fields are part of the original records. NARA added the Country of Birth (all formats) (NARA added) field to the version of the records prepared for AAD. See also [Question III.I. Why are there three fields for country of birth? Why does the Country of Birth Code field include the format?](#)

The Country of Birth (all formats) (NARA added) combines the information from the Country of Birth (format B) and Country of Birth Code (format A and C) fields to provide a single search field and is the recommended field to use first. To search this field, enter the country name into the search field. You can use wildcards (\* or %) to account for different spellings.

To search by using the Country of Birth (all formats) (NARA added), enter the country into the search field. You can use wildcards (\* or %) to account for different spellings.

You can also search using the original Country of Birth (format B) and Country of Birth Code (format A and C) fields. These fields are not part of the default search fields, so you will need to add them to the list of search fields. To do this, on the Fielded Search page, click the "show more fields" button. From the list of fields, tick the box in the Select column for the fields Country of Birth (format B) and/or Country of Birth Code (format A and C), then click Submit. Keep in mind the Country of Birth Code (format A and C) field was only used in Format A and C records and the Country of Birth (format B) field in Format B records.

To search using the Country of Birth Code (format A and C), click on the "Select from Code List" link to bring up a pop-up page with the list of codes and meanings. There may be more than one code for a country.

To search using the Country of Birth (format B) field, enter the country name into the search field. You can use wildcards (\* or %) to account for different spellings.

There are several reasons why searching by country of birth may return no results:

- A country may have been known under a different name at the time of registration. Try searching for all possible names or, if under rule by another country at the time, try the sovereign state governing it.
- Some countries may be grouped with others by geographic area or sovereign state. For example, "GREAT BRITAIN, INCL. ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND WALES" or "OTHER NORTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE WEST INDIES." This generally might occur in Format A or C records. Refer to the codes for Country of Birth Code for a list of possible country names.

- Some country names may include wildcard characters ( ) or be incomplete or misspelled. For example, "AUST\_". This generally can occur in Format B records.

### II.7. How do I search by Soundex? What is the Soundex?

The soundex is a coding system for indexing surnames (last name) based on the way they sound rather than the way they are spelled. This allows you to find a surname even though it may have been recorded under various spellings. Basic soundex coding rules are available on the National Archives website at <https://www.archives.gov/research/census/soundex>. There are also soundex calculators available online (such as the one linked in the page). You may also want to refer to the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) Soundex Rules available in the technical documentation on AAD.

Once you know the code for the name, you can enter it into the Soundex field. Generally, you should include the hyphen (e.g. P-250). For about 8% of the records, the Soundex field only contains the number portion of the code (e.g. 250).

Note the soundex codes in these records are the original codes present in the Flexoline strip. It is possible some of the codes are incorrect or incomplete due to typos or other data entry errors during the creation of the electronic Flexoline records.

### II.8. How do I retrieve all records for an individual?

Since individuals may have changed names or there may be typos or spelling variations in the name, you need to search by the Alien Registration Number (A-Number field) to retrieve all records. To retrieve all possible records for an individual, once you locate a record use that A-Number to conduct a search of the entire file to retrieve all other records associated with that number. You can search the entire file on the Fielded Search page or Series Description page on AAD, which is accessible using the breadcrumbs at the top of the page. See also [Question II.5. How do I search by A-Number?](#)

### II.9. Why can't I find a specific record(s)?

There are several reasons why you may not find the record(s) you seek:

- Flexoline does not contain records of all individuals who completed Alien Registration forms or other immigration and naturalization forms between 1940 and 1955.
- The records contain misspellings and other inaccuracies. You may need to search using various spellings of names to broaden your search.
  - About 0.6% of the records include a wildcard character ( ) in the First Name field and about 2% include a wildcard in the Last Name field. It is possible a name is composed entirely of wildcards.

- There are known gaps in the Flexoline Index. There are about 1.25 million A-Numbers associated with the AR-2 forms that are not listed in the Flexoline Index.

### **III. Questions about the data fields in the Flexoline Index**

#### III.1. Why are there three fields for country of birth? Why does the Country of Birth Code field include the format?

There are three fields that contain country of birth information in the version of Flexoline in AAD: Country of Birth (format B), Country of Birth Code (format A and C), and Country of Birth (all formats) (NARA added). The Country of Birth (format B) and Country of Birth Code (format A and C) fields are part of the original records. NARA added the Country of Birth (all formats) (NARA added) field to the version of the records prepared for AAD.

The format of the Flexoline strips changed over time, generating three different formats. The agency designated these formats with the letters A, B, and C for the purpose of automation. For more information about the formats, see [Question I.5. What are the differences between the three original record formats?](#)

In Format A and Format C records, the agency used coding systems for the country of birth. These codes were originally captured in the COBCODE field. However, the agency used a different coding system for each format, thus the meaning of the country code depends on the format type. NARA combined the COBCODE and FORMAT fields to create a code list of unique values consisting of the format and country codes for the Country of Birth Code field for AAD.

In Format B records, the country of birth was captured as text. This information is captured in the Country of Birth field.

NARA added the Country of Birth (all formats) (NARA added) field to create a single field that contains the country of birth information to facilitate searching in AAD. The field was created by merging the country of birth information from the Country of Birth (format B) and Country of Birth Code (format A and C). Where possible, the field contains the translated meanings of the coded values.

In some records, the Country of Birth (format B) and Country of Birth Code (format A and C) fields may be populated despite the field not being appropriate for the record's respective format. It is possible these values may be due to data entry errors.

#### III.2. Why are there two fields for port of entry?

The format of the Flexoline strips changed over time, generating three different formats. For more information about the formats, see [Question I.5. What are the differences between the three original record formats?](#)

The port of entry fields appear only in Formats B and C. In Format B, the agency records the information as a narrative place name in the field Port of Entry (format B) [POETEXT]. In Format C, the agency used a code number to populate the field Port of Entry Code (format C) [POECODE].

In some records, the Port of Entry (format B) and Port of Entry Code (format C) fields may be populated despite the field not being appropriate for the record's respective format. It is possible these values may be due to data entry errors.

### III.3. Why do some fields contain “Unreadable” or “Unreadable Record”?

These electronic records were created by staff contracted by the INS to manually key in data from the microfilmed Flexoline strips. During that process, in cases where the Flexoline strip was completely unreadable, the data was captured as “UNREADABLE” or “UNREADABLE RECORD” in the affected field(s). In cases where some of the characters could be deciphered, staff substituted a wildcard (originally an asterisk) in place of the illegible letter or number.

### III.4. What are the City of Registration Meaning (NARA added), State of Registration Meaning (NARA added), and County of Registration Meaning (NARA added) fields? Why do some contain [Undefined code]?

The City of Registration Meaning (NARA added), State of Registration Meaning (NARA added), and County of Registration Meaning (NARA added) fields are not part of the original Flexoline Index. Staff added these fields to the version of the Index prepared for AAD due to the complexity involved in translating these codes and technical limitations of AAD. They contain the translated meanings for the City of Registration Code (format A) [POECITYCODE], State of Registration Code (format A) [POESTATECODE], and County of Registration Code (format A) [POECOUNTNYCODE] fields.

To search by place of registration, search on the meaning fields (City of Registration Meaning (NARA added), State of Registration Meaning (NARA added), and County of Registration Meaning (NARA added)) versus the code fields.

The agency code list does not provide meanings for all codes that populate these fields. In those cases, the field is populated with [Undefined code]. The code list is available for download via the Catalog, see [Question I.10. How can I access a copy of the full file?](#)