



Biometric Screening Programs

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What is US-VISIT?

In 2004, US-VISIT became the first, large scale biometrics identification program of its kind, enabling the collection of international travelers' biometrics – fingerprints and a digital photograph – at U.S. ports of entry. Today, the U.S. is not alone in recognizing the benefits of biometrics for immigration and border management.



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Users of US-VISIT's Biometric Identification and Analysis Services



2009 Highlights: Completed 10-Fingerprint Collection

- US-VISIT completed its transition from a 2-fingerprint standard to one based on 10 fingerprints.
- Now all ports of entry have the capability to collect up to 10 fingerprints from international travelers.
- This upgrade will increase fingerprint matching accuracy, and provide the ability to check latent fingerprints picked up by local law enforcement as well as DOD in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other parts of the globe against the US-VISIT system.



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2009 Highlights: Enhanced Interoperability

- This 10 fingerprint upgrade also compliments the work we do with the FBI, making our systems interoperable and allowing for information to be exchanged easily.
- Interoperability also makes initiatives like Secure Communities possible. In 2009, with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as the lead agency, US-VISIT was able to provide the necessary support to open 95 sites in 11 States.
- We supported the identification of more than 11,000 criminal aliens charged or convicted of crimes considered to be ICE's top priority, such as rape, homicide and kidnapping.



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2009 Highlights: Completed Additional Testing of Biometric Exit Procedures

Airports and Seaports:

- DHS completed its test of biometric exit procedures at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport on July 2, 2009.
- DHS will update international travelers about any changes to biometric requirements before they go into effect next year.



Land Border Ports:

- US-VISIT submitted a report to DHS on opportunities and challenges of deploying biometric exit procedures at land border ports of entry



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Interoperability

- Improve coordination and interoperability among our government partners that operate biometric identity management programs.
 - Today, US-VISIT's IDENT and the FBI's IAFIS, are interoperable and we continue to make improvements to how these systems work together.
 - We are also working with DOD to make IDENT and DOD's biometric system ABIS interoperable.
 - Currently we incorporate information from ABIS about known or suspected terrorists into the IDENT watchlist.



Interoperability

- By 2010, all three systems – IDENT, IAFIS, and ABIS – will be interoperable, making information sharing among these systems more seamless.
- The systems will remain separate and access to the information in each system will continue to be limited to authorized officials with a need for the information.
- But their interoperability will make the biometric matching process more efficient.



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Multimodal Biometrics

- Last year, US-VISIT completed an evaluation of multimodal biometric technology, including iris recognition, in collaboration with DHS's Science and Technology Directorate and National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST).
- The results of this evaluation are part of a report that's been shared among interested parties in DHS, DOD and NIST, and it serves as a foundation for making identification technologies even more secure and convenient.



International Collaboration

- Last year, we continued collaborating with foreign governments seeking to incorporate biometrics into their immigration and border management systems.
- We shared best practices with 19 countries in various stages of implementing biometrics for their immigration systems.



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International Collaboration

- Also in 2009, we continued to work closely with the UK, Australia and Canada to test limited biometric information sharing in order to expand to more systematic methods for identifying known or suspected criminals and immigration violators.
- We began work with Germany on a fingerprint exchange program.
- We worked with the G8 countries on best practices.
- In partnership with USCIS, we continued our close collaboration with the UK Border Agency.



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Looking Ahead

- Continue work with the FBI; DOD Interoperability; and continue working with ICE on additional Secure Communities sites.
- Work with increased number of international partners.
- Work with the private sector on new and innovative ways to support our operational stakeholders.
- Prepare for the decision on biometric air exit.



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