Homeland Security

US-VISIT
Keeping America's Doors Open and Our Nation Secure

DHS COMPLETES FOUNDATION OF BIOMETRIC ENTRY SYSTEM
Represents Major Advance to Immigration and Border Management

WASHINGTON, DC - Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) US-VISIT program has completed installation of biometric entry capabilities at 104 land border ports, as mandated by Congress. Biometric entry capabilities are now deployed at all fixed ports of entry open to US-VISIT travelers.

"The U.S. Government's efforts to strengthen our nation's immigration and border management system have taken a giant leap with the deployment of US-VISIT entry capabilities at all our ports and visa-issuing posts abroad," said DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff.
"US-VISIT is making America safer by enhancing our border management system with next-generation technologies and processes to address the emerging threats, challenges and opportunities of our 21st century world."

US-VISIT installed biometric entry procedures at the 50 busiest land border ports along the U.S.-Canada and U.S.-Mexico land borders as of December 29, 2004; meeting the December 31, 2004 deadline. The deployment of biometric entry procedures to each of the remaining 104 land border ports of entry is also ahead of the congressional deadline of December 31, 2005.

US-VISIT is a continuum of security measures that collect biometric and biographic information from visitors at U.S. visa-issuing posts upon their arrival and departure from U.S. air, sea and land border ports. The program enhances security by verifying each visitor's identity and by comparing their biometric and biographical information against watch lists of terrorists, criminals and immigration violators.

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Please forward to colleagues who may be interested in US-VISIT.

MORE INFO
US-VISIT Fact Sheet

US-VISIT Brochure

WEB SITE LINK
www.dhs.gov/us-visit

Since January 2004, US-VISIT has processed more than 44 million visitors, which makes the program the largest-scale application of biometrics in the world. Biometrics have enabled US-VISIT to intercept, at U.S. ports of entry, more than 970 people with histories of criminal or immigration violations, including federal penitentiary escapees, convicted rapists, drug traffickers, individuals convicted of murder and numerous immigration violators.

Additionally, the State Department's BioVisa program, which is fully integrated with US-VISIT, has resulted in over 14,000 hits on individuals applying for visas to travel to the United States.

At many land border ports of entry, US-VISIT has decreased processing time in secondary inspection as a result of the automation of Form I-94 issuance process and US-VISIT's simple, fast and clean biometric processes.

US-VISIT currently applies to all visitors entering the United States, regardless of country of origin or whether they are traveling on a visa, with certain exemptions. Canadian citizens are exempt, as are most Mexican visitors who apply for admission using a Border Crossing Card, also known as a laser visa and travel within the border zone during the 30 day time limit.