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U.S. Law Enforcement Gains Direct Access to Interpol Criminal Databases

WASHINGTON – The U.S. National Central Bureau of INTERPOL(USNCB) today announced that it has provided the Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Law Enforcement Support Center (ICE LESC) in Burlington, Vermont, with direct access to criminal records from law enforcement agencies in 186 INTERPOL member countries.

LESC is a critical point of contact for the U.S. law enforcement community. It operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide information on the immigration status and identities of individuals who have been arrested or are under investigation for criminal activity. In 2006, the Center supported 800,000 inquiries from state and local law enforcement nationwide. At the touch of a button LESC law enforcement technicians will now be able to search INTERPOL’s indexes on foreign Fugitives, Stolen Vehicles and Lost/Stolen Travel Documents.

Historically, U.S. access to INTERPOL databases was limited to the USNCB, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice and the official U.S. point of contact for all INTERPOL matters. In an effort to bolster homeland security through enhanced information sharing, the USNCB has initiated an ambitious connectivity program to provide the 18,000 U.S. law enforcement agencies with direct query access to INTERPOL data.

LESC’s access to Interpol data is made possible through a customized international query on the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS). With more than 500,000 devices in the U.S. and Canada, NLETS seamlessly connects 18,000 law enforcement agencies with close to 1 million users, and transmits more than 50 million messages each month. The USNCB is pursuing agreements with each state to incorporate INTERPOL database queries for all NLETS users within a state’s jurisdiction.

LESC joins an ever-expanding list of U.S. police departments having direct query access through existing law enforcement networks: New York City, Chicago, Los

Angeles, Boston, Miami-Dade, Houston, San Diego, Los Angeles and most recently the Virginia State Police.

“Our goal is to provide direct, international query capability to each federal, state, and local law enforcement agency in the United States and, ultimately, to the officer on the street. LESC connectivity directly supports this goal.” said USNCB Director Martin Renkiewicz. Renkiewicz is a senior ICE Agent, currently serving a three-year term as USNCB’s Director.

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