

October 24, 2003

USVISIT (ENTRY/EXIT) IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS - UPDATE

USVISIT is a program designed for international arrivals to the USA to enhance security and facilitate legitimate travelers.

The initial milestone involves international visitors, with Visas arriving by air or sea after January 4, 2004, who will be required to have 2 index fingerprints and a digital picture taken upon Entry and 2 index fingerprints upon Exit.

For January 5, 2004, USVISIT will be operational at 115 airports and 14 seaports (those with cruise ship facilities) for Entry and for Exit at the top 30 airports and 1 seaport (Miami as a pilot). Entry prints and picture will be taken at the primary booth (tests have shown that the USVISIT process does not add dwell time at the booth) as it is done by the officer while conversing with the visitor. Exit prints will be self taken at a kiosk off line near a TSA checkpoint, after sliding in ones Visa document. A contractor attendant will be present to assist and direct.

The Exit process is required of all individuals who entered the country under the USVISIT program. Each person is responsible to go to the exit kiosks (if they are operational) at the airports or seaport they are utilizing. Therefore, Exit will not involve or impede people in their normal flow (who are not subject to Entry/Exit).

The USVISIT process commences with Visa issuance covers pre-entry, Entry at the port, Exit and post visit analysis. The State Department is now starting to take the 2 fingerprints and digital photo during the Visa issuance process at selected Consuls and plans to do so at all 211 Consuls issuing Visas by October 26, 2004.

The process establishes the identity of a person. Upon their first Entry their biometrics are checked against the watch list and one against many data base to establish their identity and status. Entry is granted if clear. Upon subsequent entries the biometrics are checked one to one to affirm identity and also checked against the current watch list. A photo is taken at each Entry as the international standard is facial recognition.

Additional USVISIT milestones are:

Machine readable documents issued in all Visa waiver countries on or before Oct. 26, 2004

USVISIT operational at 50 largest land border ports-of-entry December 31, 2004

USVISIT operational at balance of land border ports-of-entry December 31, 2005

The strawman plan for land border ports-of-entry is to require all Visa and Visa Waiver international arrivals at the land borders to proceed through primary to secondary where the 2 fingerprints and digital picture will be taken for initial entry or verified if previously taken in the same manner and process as sea and air. **NO BIOMETRIC ACTIVITY WILL OCCUR AT PRIMARY.**

At the same time at the land borders, use of “digitized radio frequency dedicated lanes” and technology for use by non USVISIT individuals (enrollment in NEXUS at the Northern border and SENTRI at the Southern border) will be encouraged and maximized resulting in increased facilitation of low-risk people crossing the land borders. The delineation of these two categories allow further development of “streaming” so that low-risk individuals and USVISIT individuals are separated from approach to the land border port to completion of the crossing. It is expected that this in fact will result in reduced queues and delays from the present process for low-risk travelers who make up a majority of the land border port activity. Further the process for USVISIT travelers should also be more efficient as their identity will be verified quickly by placing their 2 index fingers. They can then return to their vehicle and proceed.

The Exit collection alternatives at the land borders are being studied.

The intent has now been stated for NEXUS programs to have 1 card per traveler with multiple biometrics to provide use in the various modes of travel.

The Department of Homeland Security has declared the achievement of the twin goals of the USVISIT program one of its top priorities. It has been determined that the successful development and management of the USVISIT program is critical. An authorized staff of 115 is currently being assigned.