



News Release

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BMO Announces Interagency Workshop for Biometrics Standards

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 25, 2004 –Department of Defense Biometrics, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and other government agencies are hosting a U.S. Government Workshop on “Biometric Standards in Support of the Global War on Terrorism” on May 25 in Arlington, VA. This one-day Workshop will bring together over fifty participants, representing thirty U.S. Government organizations, to determine the work and coordination required to ensure that biometric standards development efforts effectively support ongoing U.S. efforts in the Global War on Terrorism.

“Biometrics must be part of an integrated, interoperable DoD-wide enterprise approach, and we must work, in coordination with other U.S. Government initiatives,” said LTG Steven Boutelle, the Army Chief Information Officer. “To the extent possible, USG agencies must leverage biometric standards in a consistent manner such that agencies collect and store biometric data that can be efficiently accessed and exchanged between agencies, as appropriate.”

The Department of Homeland Security uses biometrics in a wide variety of applications, including airport security, the adjudication of asylum claims, and for establishing and verifying the identity of illegal immigrants apprehended crossing the border. Specific Department of Homeland Security biometric initiatives include the United States Visitor and Immigration Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT) program and the Transportation Worker Identification Card.



BIOMETRICS

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

“When dealing with the vast amount of biometric data that is associated with these biometric applications, it is imperative that they are captured, stored, used and controlled in a consistent manner,” said Brad Wing, Director of Technical Standards and Biometrics for the Department of Homeland Security’s US-VISIT program. “Therefore, the Department has taken an active role in the development of biometric standards and is implementing these newly approved national and international standards.”

“We wholeheartedly support the goals of this conference and hope that it provides a basis for further coordination and cooperation in the application of biometric standards throughout the entire US Government,” Mr. Wing added.

John D. Woodward, Jr., the Director of the DoD Biometrics Management Office, said, “The Department of Defense has taken an active role in furthering interagency cooperation for biometrics. We have received excellent and enthusiastic support from our U.S. Government colleagues.” He added, “For example, earlier this year, working in close coordination with the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Criminal Justice Information Services Division, the DoD CIO issued guidance requiring U.S. military compliance with the internationally accepted standard for electronic transmission and storage of fingerprint data from detainees and other foreign persons of interest as national security threats. This step will enhance our ability to identify known and suspected terrorists in the Global War on Terrorism.”

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The Department of Defense (DoD) Biometrics Management Office (BMO) is responsible for leading, consolidating, and coordinating the development, adoption, and use of biometric technologies for the Combatant Commands, Services, and Agencies, to support the warfighter and enhance Joint Service interoperability. The BMO reports to the Army Chief Information Officer who acts on behalf of the DoD Executive Agent for Biometrics, the Secretary of the Army. The recently formed Identity Management Senior Coordinating Group provides senior-level, DoD-wide strategic guidance to the BMO, given its mission to oversee efforts in the areas of Biometrics, Public Key Infrastructure, and Smart Cards.