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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Secure Communities

April 27, 2010

Get the Facts: Secure Communities

Background:

Secure Communities is a comprehensive Department of Homeland Security (DHS) initiative to modernize the criminal alien enforcement process. It supports public safety by strengthening efforts to identify and remove the most dangerous criminal aliens from the United States. Congress appropriated \$1.4 billion to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for criminal alien enforcement efforts.

Secure Communities is built on three pillars that address the frequent challenges associated with accurately identifying and successfully removing criminal aliens from the United States.

- Identify criminal aliens through modernized information sharing;
- Prioritize enforcement actions to ensure apprehension and removal of dangerous criminal aliens; and
- Transform criminal alien enforcement processes and systems to achieve lasting results.

Here's how it works:

When someone is booked into local custody, their fingerprints are taken. Those fingerprints are checked against FBI databases [DOJ's **Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System** (IAFIS)] for criminal history. With Secure Communities, those fingerprints will also be checked against the DHS databases [DHS's Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT)].

- When fingerprint submissions match immigration records, local ICE officers are automatically notified and can promptly determine if enforcement action is required.
- Criminal history and immigration information can also be shared with state law enforcement agencies. State law enforcement may provide this information to the local booking agency if the agency has the technical capability to receive such information.

Facts:

- Since its inception in October 2008, Secure Communities has identified more than 18,000 aliens charged with or convicted of Level 1 crimes, such as murder, rape and kidnapping — 4,000 of whom have already been removed from the United States.
- At the root, Secure Communities is about information sharing with local law enforcement agencies so they and the federal government have all the facts about the people in their jails
- Secure Communities gets the job done without imposing a major cost or resource burden on local law enforcement.

Allegations of racial profiling:

- To date, ICE has not received any complaints of racial profiling.
- Secure Communities is a color blind system. Fingerprint-matching databases do not lie and they can not tell what race a person is.
- Secure Communities reduces the opportunity for allegations of racial and ethnic profiling

What is Secure Communities?

[About Secure Communities](#)

(http://www.ice.gov/secure_communities/)

[Contact Us](#)

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[Leadership](#)

(http://www.ice.gov/secure_communities/leadership.htm)

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(http://www.ice.gov/secure_communities/mission.htm)

[Careers](#)

Deployment

[Overview](#)

(http://www.ice.gov/secure_communities/deployment/)

[Deployment by Fiscal Year](#)

(http://www.ice.gov/doclib/secure_communities/pdf/sc_dep.pdf)

(PDF | 1 MB)

[Success Stories](#)

(http://www.ice.gov/secure_communities/success_stories/)

[MOA with States](#)

(http://www.ice.gov/doclib/foia/secure_communities/securecommunitiesmoat)

(PDF | 50 KB)

Civil Rights & Civil Liberties

[Complaint Process](#)

(http://www.ice.gov/secure_communities/complaint_process.htm)

News About Secure Communities

[Press Release Archive](#)

(<http://www.ice.gov/pi/news/newsreleases/index.htm?top25=no&year=all&month=all&state=all&topic=14>)

Resources

[Secure Communities brochure](#)

(http://www.ice.gov/doclib/secure_communities/pdf/sc_brochure_508.pdf)

(PDF | 1 MB)

[Secure Communities brochure](#)

(Spanish)

(http://www.ice.gov/doclib/secure_communities/pdf/sc_brochure_sp_508.pdf) (PDF | 1 MB)

(PDF | 1 MB)

[Fact Sheet](#)

(http://www.ice.gov/doclib/pi/news/factsheets/secure_communities.pdf)

(PDF | 90 KB)

Headline News

4/27/2010 Washington, DC

Secure Communities: Get the

Facts

(http://www.ice.gov/pi/news/factsheets/secure_communities-

aliens can no longer hide behind a long list of aliases.

- ICE encourages reporting of any allegations of racial profiling, due process violations, or other violations of civil rights or civil liberties related to the use of IDENT/IAFIS Interoperability. All complaints should be filed with the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL), on the [CRCL complaint intake Web site](#).
- ICE regularly meets with NGOs, including those organizing this week's events such as the National Day Laborers Organizing Network, Immigration Policy Center, the ACLU and the Rights Working Group, among others.

Communities initiative to enhance identification and removal of criminal aliens
<http://www.ice.gov/pi/nr/1004/100426orlando.htm>

4/26/2010 Palm Beach, FL
 Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office joins ICE Secure Communities initiative to enhance identification and removal of criminal aliens
<http://www.ice.gov/pi/nr/1004/100426palmbeach.htm>

4/22/2010 Richmond, VA
 Additional Virginia jurisdictions to benefit from ICE strategy to enhance the identification, removal of criminal aliens
<http://www.ice.gov/pi/nr/1004/100422richmond.htm>

4/14/2010 Sarasota, FL
 Sarasota County Sheriff's Office joins ICE Secure Communities initiative to enhance identification, removal of criminal aliens
<http://www.ice.gov/pi/nr/1004/100414sarasota.htm>

4/13/2010 Fairfax, VA Secure Communities activated in more Virginia communities
<http://www.ice.gov/pi/nr/1004/100413fairfax.htm>

Frequently Asked Questions:

If Secure Communities is prioritizing the identification and removal of criminal aliens charged with or convicted of Level 1 offenses, why is ICE identifying and removing more aliens charged with or convicted of Level 2 and 3 offenses?

- ICE is identifying more aliens charged with or convicted of Level 2 and Level 3 offenses because more individuals commit and are arrested for crimes falling under these levels. However, ICE prioritizes the removal of aliens charged with or convicted of Level 1 offenses, which is demonstrated by the overall higher removal percentages for aliens charged with or convicted of Level 1 offenses, versus the percentage of removals of aliens charged with or convicted of Level 2 and 3 offenses.

Why does interoperability sometimes identify criminal aliens for potential removal who are simply charged with crimes instead of focusing solely on those actually convicted of crimes?

- ICE has the authority to take enforcement action toward any alien subject to removal.
- Interoperability identifies aliens charged with or convicted of crimes at the earliest possible opportunity—when they are arrested booked into jail or prison. By identifying these individuals early in the criminal justice process, ICE has the necessary time to determine appropriate enforcement action against aliens who pose a threat before they are released from local custody.
- Interoperability also reveals previous criminal history information to ICE officers which may make the individual in custody charged with a crime subject to removal based on prior convictions.

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.

ICE comprises four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities. For more information, visit www.ICE.gov. To report suspicious activity, call 1-866-347-2423.

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