

US-VISIT UPDATE



February 4, 2008

US-VISIT in 2008: Collaboration Remains Key to Success

As US-VISIT begins its fifth year of operation, I want to thank all of you for your ongoing interest in the program. Your insights and suggestions are invaluable. This has been a remarkable transition year, and we at US-VISIT are looking toward an exciting year ahead.

Since US-VISIT began collecting biometrics from international visitors to the United States in January 2003, we've gone beyond the call to set up biometric entry capabilities at all air, sea and land border ports of entry and have become the Department of Homeland Security's go-to innovator for developing partnerships that use biometrics to further homeland security, both at home and abroad. Just four years after we began, US-VISIT is rapidly becoming the U.S. government's primary identity management services provider and a global model for deployment of biometric technology.

We attribute much of US-VISIT's success to our efforts to ensure that people who touch US-VISIT in any way understand how the program works and how it will affect them. As we move forward, outreach will remain a critical part of our initiatives, which include publishing a regulation that paves the way for biometric exit procedures at airports and seaports, and another that expands the number of non-U.S. citizens who will be processed through US-VISIT. And, by the end of the year, we will take our biometric identification capability to the next level, collecting all 10 fingerprints, instead of just two, from visitors to our country.

Let me give you an example of just one tactic of our outreach to educate travelers as we phase in the 10-fingerprint collection process at 10 U.S. airports this winter. To ensure our international visitors know what to expect when they arrive at ports with the 10-fingerprint collection process in place, we are working closely with organizations that communicate with travelers directly in those

countries. As ports begin the new collection process, we issue a press release in the countries from which most international travelers arrive. These press releases, like the one you'll find below, have been or will be issued in the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, China, Colombia, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom and Venezuela. So far, many travelers' reactions are positive. To see a video with travelers' reactions to the new 10-fingerprint process, [click here](#).

All of the initiatives I've mentioned above, coupled with our collaborative efforts government-wide, will bolster US-VISIT's ability to provide authorized decision makers with the information they need, when and where they need it.

We are very proud of how far we've come in the last four years. We know US-VISIT's success is dependent upon the valuable, and sometimes critical, input from so many people from all corners of the globe. Thank you for all you have done to help us keep America's doors open and our nation secure. We hope you will remain with us in 2008 and beyond as we continue to meet the challenges that test our nation's security and prosperity. Indeed, we are counting on your participation.

On behalf of US-VISIT, I wish you all the best in 2008.

With warmest regards,

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