



### Background

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) recently concluded a field test of facial comparison technology, using U.S. ePassports, at Washington Dulles International Airport. Testing successfully demonstrated that this technology significantly improves CBP's ability to ensure that the person presenting a passport at entry is the true owner of that document. CBP previously established, for certain non-U.S. citizens, biometric screening procedures to confirm a traveler's identity based on fingerprints.

### Description

CBP's 1-to-1 Facial Comparison Project focuses on a large set of unique facial landmarks, often distinguishing over 80 facial features: distance between the eyes, width of the nose, depth of the eye sockets, shape of the cheekbones, and length of the jaw line.

When a traveler is processed in an inspection lane equipped with facial comparison technology, their photo will be taken and compared to the image stored in the presented ePassport to verify that they are the true owner of the document. A CBP officer, not the technology, will make all decisions concerning entry into the United States.

The digital photo stored within an ePassport was provided by the passport owner as part of the

passport application process. The photo is there to enable the use of biometric comparison for border security, law enforcement, counterterrorism, and fraud prevention. This new process applies to U.S. citizens and first-time Visa Waiver Program (VWP) travelers. The images taken will only be used to assist the CBP officer in determining that the traveler is the true owner of the document. CBP is dedicated to protecting the privacy of all travelers.

### Benefits of facial comparison include:

- For the traveler, secure an individual's identity through the use of biometrics;
- For the CBP officer, enhance the ability to match a traveler to their travel document;
- For the public, this additional screening will enhance our Nation's security by confirming the identity of travelers seeking entry into the United States.

CBP officers will use the results, in addition to existing methods, to verify that the person applying for entry into the United States is the same person to whom the ePassport was legally issued.

### Next Steps

CBP is considering deployment of this new capability nationwide to air, land, and sea ports of entry. ■