

Disruptive Technologies: Biometrics

Exploratory research submitted by U.S. Customs and
Border Protection

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WCO Permanent Technical Committee



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Overview

- Introductory Information
 - Biographic v. Biometric Data
 - Applicability to Customs
- Potential Future Uses for Customs
- Considerations for Establishing a Biometrics Program
- Concerns About Security/Use of Biometrics



Introductory Information

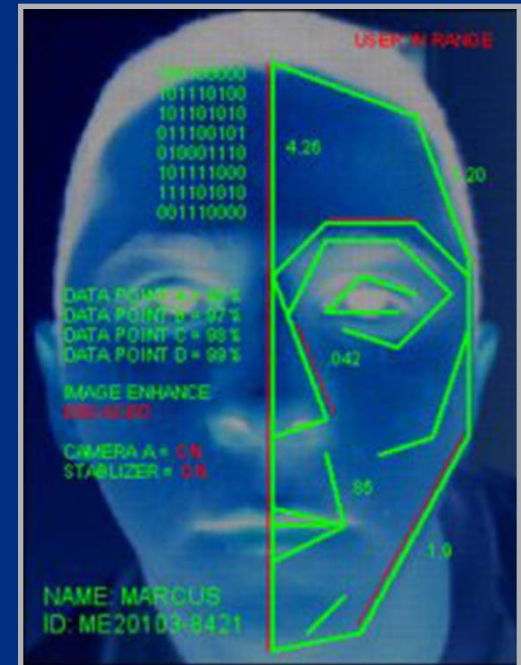
- Biographic v. Biometric Data
- Applicability to Customs



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Potential Future Uses for Customs

- Verify identities and control access of Customs operators
- Ensure the identity of Customs actors
- Reduce the ability of shadow companies to exploit the international supply chain for illegal gains
- Strengthen existing security systems or regimes



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Considerations for Establishing a Biometrics Program

- Realities of biometric data gathering/use may guide implementation
- Legal authorities/barriers
- Non-compatibility of information-sharing systems between agencies
- Physical barriers to implementation
- Expectations and business practices of the trade and travelers
- Sufficient IT and personnel resources
- Political will



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Concerns About Security and Use of Biometrics Data

- Cancelable biometrics
- Burdens of hardware
- New danger to individuals
- Merely stop gap in information or location security



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Conclusion

- Biometrics can offer innovative opportunities for law enforcement; but it also requires more of the basics that Customs agencies are always seeking to achieve, i.e. coordination, information sharing, and mutual support and trust.
- International forums like the WCO will be important forums for sharing success stories and cautionary tales on biometrics, and the determination of needed international standards, for fostering cooperation, mutual assistance, and information sharing.





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