



INFORMATION MATCHING BULLETIN

March 2004 Information Matching Newsletter from the Privacy Commissioner

An American IMPIA?

A recent article by Richard Wood (www.stuff.co.nz 8 December 2003) dealt with the addition of biometric information to New Zealand passports. In responding to some overseas enquiries about that article, we looked at the alternative – entering the U.S. on a visa. And found an interesting new information matching programme at the core of the first stage of the US-VISIT (United States Visitor and Immigration Status Indicator Technology) initiative. It is the subject of a [Privacy Impact Assessment](#) available through the Department of Homeland Security's website (<http://www.dhs.gov>). What follows is our understanding of material on that site.

Information for US-VISIT will be stored in three existing databases that will be modified to provide integrated real-time access to their records. The three existing databases are the Arrival and Departure Information System (ADIS), the Passenger Processing Component of the Treasury Enforcement Communications System (TECS), and the Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT).

Individuals wishing to enter the United States on a non-immigrant visa will now be required to provide a photograph and fingerprints in addition

to the information that has previously been collected. The biometric information will be entered into the IDENT system. Individuals who do not provide such information will be considered inadmissible to the United States.

Modifications to the databases include; expansion of the number of possible data fields, new interfaces with other systems including enabling the transfer of biometric information between systems, capturing biometrics at the primary port of entry, generating reports, and facilitating identity verification.

Transfers of information will take place between IDENT and ADIS and between ADIS and TECS. Interfaces will also be built to enable transfer of information about changes in the immigration status of individuals from the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and the Computer Linked Application Information Management System (CLAIMS 3) to ADIS. Access to the information in US-VISIT will be primarily by five federal agencies but any federal, state, local, or foreign government agencies may also have access “when needed to carry out their law enforcement responsibilities”.

The PIA provides a high level diagram of the system and addresses the

security threats it faces. Risks to privacy and actions to mitigate those risks are also outlined. Data integrity risks and the resulting possibility of incorrect enforcement actions are highlighted more than once.

Now that is a large and complex information matching programme!

E-government Authentication

In December 2003, the State Services Commission released the report of an independent privacy impact assessment on the proposed E-government identity authentication scheme. The Privacy Commissioner welcomed this “as demonstrating the Commission's commitment to openness and transparency in the development of this scheme.”

While not an IMPIA as such, the operation of such a scheme will likely involve information matching and the PIA report may be of interest to our readers. The report can be found on the SSC website at

<http://www.e.govt.nz/docs/authent-pia-200312/>

Report from the Trenches

The Commissioner's Annual Report was presented to Parliament on 13 November 2003 and simultaneously made available on the Clerk of the House's website. We expect simultaneous release again next year.

In FY 2002-03, the number of active Authorised Information Matching Programmes grew by 50%, from 16 to 24. The Ministry of Social

Development is the user agency for ten of those programmes and provides the source information for another three programmes. Runners-up were the Electoral Enrolment Centre as the user agency in five matches and Inland Revenue as the source agency in five matches.

Total Authorised Information Matching Programmes (including the 24 active matches) are also growing steadily although not at quite the frantic pace that we saw in FY 2001-02. Last year, there were nine new authorisations and we have seen five more since the start of this fiscal year.

Last year the Commissioner approved one application for the use of on-line transfers in the Educational Institutions/ MSD Student Loans & Allowances match. As noted in the Annual Report, this was the first such approval requested for several years and only the second approval since 1994. The previous approval granted was for a match that was subsequently discontinued. The second request was the start of a trend which is now well underway.

This year approvals have already been granted for the following four matches:

- DIA(Citizenship)/DIA(Passports) Passports Application Processing
- BDM/DIA(Passports) Passport Application Processing Match
- Centrelink (DIMIA)/MSD Periods of Residence Match
- Customs/MSD Periods of Residence (CUSMOD) Match

The Report also noted qualitative changes in the character of the matches. While detecting illegal behaviour is still the dominant activity, we are seeing an increase in the use of information matching for determining

eligibility and entitlement such as in the Electoral Enrolment Centre's new operating matches.

The Annual Report is available in printed or electronic form by contacting the Office of the Privacy Commissioner or by emailing enquiries@privacy.org.nz or from <http://www.privacy.org.nz/recept/annrep03.pdf>.

Please note: the electronic format in pdf is in excess of 10 Mb.

Privacy Act Reprinted

The Privacy Act 1993 has been reprinted in the new clearer legislative format and includes updated schedules.

Copies are available from Bennetts Government bookshops, at \$16.95.

Publications

There are a number of publications and reports available from the Privacy Commissioner that may be of interest to those involved in information matching. These are listed on the Privacy Commissioner's web site at: <http://www.privacy.org.nz>

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