

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Additional Estimates 2006-2007, 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2007

**Question: HS7**

**Department/Agency: DHS**

**Outcome 1, Output 1**

**Topic: Access Card biometric information**

**Hansard Page/Written Question on Notice: F&PA 18**

**SENATOR STOTT DESPOJA** asked on 16/02/07:

[In relation to Access Card biometric information]

**SENATOR STOTT DESPOJA:** Are we aware of any comparable mass storage of biometric photographs? I know that there are other countries with national identity cards. Is there another precedent or a country of which we are aware that has the same level of storage or tried to store the same amount of biometric information?

**Ms Scott:** Information has been gathered on biometric systems because we are interested in how other places do their biometrics, but we do not have that document with us today. So we will take that question on notice.

**ANSWER:**

Yes. Examples of countries where facial biometric data matching systems with more than 16 million photographs have been implemented are: Taiwan (24 million), Pakistan (34 million) and the US, where the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles manages a database of 52 million photographs and the federal employees and contractors ID card system (FIPS 201<sup>1</sup>) which will have a biometric database with potentially over 20 million card holders.

There are also 27 countries that have implemented or are in the process of piloting International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) standard passports with biometric photos and/or other biometrics such as finger print scanning. Some of these databases are potentially well in excess of 16 million images expected in the Access Card database.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 10 hours at an estimated cost of \$538.

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<sup>1</sup> **FIPS 201** (Federal Information Processing Standards Publication 201) is a US federal government standard that specifies Personal Identity Verification requirements for Federal employees and contractors.