Question: HS8

Department: Department of Human Services

Outcome 1, Output 1

Topic: Access Card biometric information

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SENATOR STOTT DESPOJA asked on 16/02/2007:

[In relation to Access Card biometric information]

Senator STOTT DESPOJA—Again, it is one I am happy to put on notice and get more information on from you, but I am curious as to whether or not our agencies have encountered some of the deficiencies that have been acknowledged around the world, whether it is the difficulty in scanning irises of people who may be over 59 or there may be racial differences in terms of—

Ms M. Johnson—I understand.

Senator STOTT DESPOJA—I have read about fingerprints. They cannot scan fingerprints if your fingers are too big. So I am just wondering, given that a lot of faith is being placed in some of these technologies, whether you can provide us with additional information.

Ms M. Johnson—I understand. We will get the information back to you.

ANSWER:

Iris and finger scanning are not proposed to be used in the Access Card registration process.

Significant research was done in regard to implementation of the facial recognition technology. Facial recognition is one of the most common and reliable biometric testing methods currently available in the world. The advantages of facial biometric technology to the Access Card programme when compared with other biometric modalities are:
  - The effectiveness of facial recognition in identifying duplicate registrations has been proven;
  - The market is well established and offers a range of competitive solutions; and
  - It minimises the biometric information captured, as the biometric photograph is reused for the photograph on the face of the card.

We propose to use the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) standard for the image capture process. Standardising the image capture process has been shown to greatly improve the accuracy of the matching process.

To prepare this answer it has taken approximately 6 hours and 30 minutes at an estimated cost of $377.