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U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Memorandum

TO: International Operations Staff

FROM: Joanna Ruppel
Chief, International Operations

DATE: March 29, 2011

SUBJECT: **Updated Background Identity and Security Check Requirements for Refugee/Asylee Following-to Join Processing**

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APPENDIX 2 – SECURITY CHECK SYSTEMS OVERVIEW

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Systems Overview

<u>TECS</u>: TECS is an automated enforcement and inspection lookout system that combines information from multiple agencies, databases, and system interfaces. Data in TECS covers Known and Suspected Terrorists (KSTs), other national security risks, public safety issues, wants and warrants, travel information, and other law enforcement concerns.

<u>FBI Name Check</u>: The FBI's National Name Check Program (NNCP) researches and disseminates information contained in the FBI's Automated Case System. FBI Research Analysts return pertinent derogatory information to USCIS in the form of a Letterhead Memorandum (LHM), a report, or a Third Agency Referral.

<u>FBI Fingerprint Check</u>: The FBI Fingerprint Check provides summary information of an individual's administrative or criminal record within the United States, based on an automated search of the subject's fingerprints in the FBI's Advanced Fingerprint Identification Technology (AFIT), a database housing state, local, and federal law enforcement information.

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<u>US-VISIT / IDENT</u>: The United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT) program, a program under the National Protection & Programs Directorate (NPPD) of DHS, manages the Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT) database. IDENT includes biometric information related to the travel history of non-USCs, and biometric watchlist (KST) information. This system is used to confirm identity, determine previous interactions with immigration officials (e.g., asylum office applications) and detect imposters.

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<u>DoD / ABIS</u>: The Department of Defense's Automated Biometrics Identification System is a biometric database containing information collected by DoD personnel stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and includes both derogatory datasets (such as detainees) and non-derogatory datasets (such as those requiring base access). DoD / ABIS holdings continue to expand.

<u>NCTC</u>: This is a check of the National Counterterrorism Center's information requested for certain refugee populations. NCTC serves as the USG's central and shared knowledge bank on known and suspected terrorists and international terror groups.

<u>CLASS</u>: The Consular Lookout and Support System is a DOS name-check database that contains records provided by numerous agencies and includes information on persons with visa refusals, immigration violations, criminal histories, and terrorism concerns, as well as intelligence information and child support enforcement data. In addition to containing information from DOS sources, sources for information in CLASS includes NCTC/TSC (terrorist watch lists), DHS (IBIS), Interpol, DEA, HHS and FBI (extracts of the NCIC Wanted Person, Immigration Violator, Foreign Fugitive Files, VGTOF, and the Interstate Identification Index).

<u>SAO</u>: The Security Advisory Opinion process is a higher level name check conducted on certain categories of refugee and visa applicants and identifies those with a criminal history or those who may pose a national security concern.

<u>BBSS</u>: The Benefits Biometric Support System (BBSS) supports the electronic transmission of data between the FBI's AFIT, automated AFIT search response processing, national database data insertion, and long-term storage of all biographical and response data, including rap sheets and civil applicant responses.