



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection
(/)

CBP to Implement a Facial Comparison Technical Demonstration at the Port of San Luis for Pedestrian Travelers

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SAN LUIS, Arizona — U.S. Customs and Border Protection announced today a facial comparison technical demonstration will begin at the San Luis Port of Entry for pedestrian travelers. CBP will deploy a facial comparison system comprised of a camera to test and evaluate taking photographs of pedestrians entering the United States and comparing those images to the photos associated with the travel documents the travelers present.

“This technical demonstration will help inform the agency on next steps to developing and implementing biometric entry/exit in the land border pedestrian environment,” said Petra Horne, Acting Director of Field Operations, Tucson Field Office. “Similar to how this technology has had a positive impact on traffic flow in the air environment, we anticipate the same in the pedestrian environment.”

A camera will be placed at the processing booth. As the traveler approaches, the camera will automatically take a photo. The CBP officer will then review and query the traveler’s travel document, which will retrieve the photo from government holdings. The photo of the traveler will be compared to the travel document photo.

It is not mandatory for U.S. citizens to have their photo taken. If they wish to undergo alternative screening procedures, they should advise the CBP officer when they approach primary.

CBP will expand this technical demonstration to the Port of Nogales Dennis DeConcini Crossing later this year and will add an exit technical demonstration in Spring 2019.


CBP is committed to its privacy obligations and has taken steps to safeguard the privacy of all travelers. CBP has employed strong technical security safeguards and has limited the amount of personally identifiable information used in the new biometric process. Photos of U.S. citizens will be deleted after an individual is matched to a U.S. citizenship document. CBP will not retain photos of U.S. citizens. Photos of foreign nationals will be stored in a secure DHS system.

Facial biometrics will improve CBP's entry and exit identification of travelers, which will enhance CBP's ability to secure the border, identify persons of interest, and improve reporting and analysis of travelers entering and departing the United States. This technology demonstration is a direct result of recommendations from the 9/11 Commission, and addresses Congressional mandates to biometrically record the entry and exit of non-U.S. citizens.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between official ports of entry. CBP is charged with securing the borders of the United States while enforcing hundreds of laws and facilitating lawful trade and travel.

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