

First responders to get biometric IDs

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About 200,000 first responders in the Washington region will be issued biometric smart card IDs under a new program to be deployed by the Homeland Security Department, in partnership with state and local agencies in the Washington region, Lee Holcomb, DHS chief technology officer, said today.

The initiative will involve police, fire and emergency response agencies in the District of Columbia, Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, Holcomb said at a forum on interoperability at the FOSE trade show in Washington.

The new cards will comply with last August's Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12, requiring computerized data images of two index fingers, among other specifications, Holcomb said.

He said the state and local agencies will do the vetting for the smart cards while the federal government will provide the systems.

The initiative is being spearheaded by the department's Office of National Capital Region Coordination, established by Congress to oversee security for the District of Columbia and 12 suburbs in Maryland and Virginia. Details were not immediately available on when the cards would be issued.

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