

# OBIM's VIEW ON BIOMETRICS

INTERVIEW WITH  
SHONNIE LYON

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ACTING DIRECTOR,  
OFFICE OF BIOMETRIC IDENTITY MANAGEMENT  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY



## **What are some of the challenges or changes to come in regards to OBIM operations and future capabilities?**

One of OBIM's challenges is technology. The Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT), the central Department of Homeland Security (DHS) repository for matching, storing, and sharing biometric and associated biographic information, was developed in the 1990s. It continues to perform well, but the need for biometric services across the government continues to expand, stretching the legacy system to its limits. The number of stored biometric identities in IDENT has grown from hundreds of thousands to more than 200 million. To serve the increasing needs of DHS and its mission partners, OBIM are planning for IDENT's replacement with a new system, Homeland Advanced Recognition Technology (HART). HART will deliver more robust performance, greater capacity and functionality, and multimodal matching, storing, and sharing capabilities

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Another challenge for OBIM is the pace of change in the biometrics and identity space. Technological advances and customer demands are moving so quickly that in many cases an overall policy framework has not yet been developed. We continue to work diligently to ensure we comply with existing policies and help to develop new ones as required.

An additional challenge relates to balancing privacy and mission needs. Privacy protection is of utmost importance. OBIM embeds privacy protections into its biometric identity services, strictly adheres to U.S. privacy laws, and treats personal information with respect. Balancing the natural tension between a commitment to privacy protections, and the need to exchange biometric data with partners and

customers to support DHS mission needs, means we need to be especially vigilant in what data is shared with whom.

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## **What are some of the lessons learned and directions forward that are addressing these challenges?**

The development of HART is planned to address technological issues of system scalability and performance. It will provide DHS with a flexible, scalable, and more efficient biometric system that supports core DHS missions and operations for the future.

We continue to work with the Department and our Federal partners to properly implement policies regarding the collection, matching, storing and sharing of biometric data.

As we plan for HART, we are building in enhanced capabilities for privacy protections, building on IDENT's already strong privacy capabilities. We are working closely with the DHS Privacy Office and others on this.

Another challenge is addressing the public perception of biometrics. Sometimes viewed negatively, one way to combat this view of biometric collection is by promoting the security guidelines designed to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII) and the positive impact biometrics plays in securing the homeland.

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## **How many requests does OBIM process per day on average? How does OBIM intend on increasing its processing and matching capabilities to maximize efficiency and return on value?**

OBIM processes approximately 300,000 biometric transactions per day, most of them in an automated fashion through IDENT. The remainders are reviewed by expert fingerprint examiners in OBIM's Biometric Support Center.

Between 80,000 and 100,000 of the biometric transactions we process each day interface with the FBI's Next Generation Identification (NGI) system to check for criminal background information.

Down the road, HART will greatly increase OBIM's processing and matching capabilities. It will provide DHS with a flexible, scalable, and more efficient biometric system that supports core DHS missions and operations for the future.

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**Last but not least, OBIM's perspective on best practices and inter-agency cooperation in maintaining its position protecting the nation by providing biometric identification services that help federal, state, local and international government decision makers by accurately identifying people they encounter and determine whether those people pose a risk to the United States.**

Interagency cooperation is critical in this mission space as it is in so many others. OBIM will continue to foster greater

levels of interagency data sharing among DHS, FBI and DoD, commonly called the Biometric Triad.

We continue to support enhanced data sharing with the U.S. Department of State, and other stakeholders both domestic and international, with the aim of supporting four DHS missions:

- Prevent Terrorism and Enhance Security
- Secure and Manage Our Borders
- Enforce and Administer Our Immigration Laws
- Strengthen National Preparedness and Resilience

As a bedrock principal regarding the biometric data we manage for our customers, we will continue to focus on privacy concerns and the safeguarding of personally identifiable information.

Lastly, we will ensure that the HART system is fully developed and integrated into the outstanding interagency information sharing protocols we already support.



With the increase in mobile biometrics market expected to **grow from USD 4.03 billion in 2015 to USD 49.33 billion by 2022\***, it is critical to understand the transitions and trends of a rapidly evolving innovative market. Driven by the growing demand for government initiatives to improve efficiencies and the adoption of innovation, we bring you this year's summit, **January 23 – 25, 2017** at the Sheraton Pentagon City in Arlington, Virginia. Bringing together an audience comprised of 120+ Secretaries, Directors of Security Agencies, Heads of Acquisition, Biometric Program Managers and Industry Executives from the U.S. and regional partners to discuss the challenges and success shaping security for the current dynamic world and future.

Don't miss this opportunity to meet Senior Level Decision Makers from the DHS, OBIM, CPB and more who are actively looking for the best solutions and to learn about the advancements in Biometrics.

We have exclusive Networking, Branding & Thought Leadership Opportunities available for industry experts. Contact Dionne Vaz, Director of Community Partnerships at [Dionne.Mariavaz@idga.org](mailto:Dionne.Mariavaz@idga.org) or call +1-646-378-6022

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