

# Fact Sheet

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## **DHS STREAMLINES COLLECTION OF DATA FOR INDIVIDUALS ENTERING AND EXITING THE UNITED STATES**

On April 27, 2011, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the end of the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) registration process—a critical step forward in the Department’s ongoing efforts to eliminate redundancies; streamline the collection of data for individuals entering or exiting the United States, regardless of nationality; and enhance the capabilities of our security personnel working every day to secure our nation from the threats we face.

Through a notice published in the Federal Register, DHS is removing the list of countries whose nationals have been subject to National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) registration—effectively ending a registration process that has become redundant as we have strengthened security across the board, while at the same time improving and expanding existing systems to automatically and more effectively capture the same information that was being manually collected via NSEERS.

Since NSEERS was first implemented in 2002, DHS has implemented more robust, risk-based, and intelligence-driven targeting processes. When NSEERS began, DHS received most of its information about an individual when he or she arrived at a port of entry. Today, NSEERS no longer provides a unique security value, as DHS now has the ability to obtain information about most individuals before they depart for the United States.

Our improvements to our information collection and analysis capabilities, combined with more robust screening measures for all individuals, have allowed us to better address current threats providing more integrated and effective options for screening individuals for potential ties to terrorism and transnational crime before they enter the United States.

### **Streamlining DHS’ Collection of Entry/Exit Data**

- NSEERS was first implemented in 2002 as a temporary measure in the aftermath of the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 terrorist attacks and was designed to record the arrival, stay, and departure of certain individuals from countries chosen based on an analysis of possible national security threats.

- Since NSEERS was first implemented, more efficient, robust and targeted screening measures have been developed to better identify individuals that might pose a national security threat to the United States.
- When NSEERS was implemented, DHS received most of its information about an individual when he or she arrived at a port of entry. Today, NSEERS no longer provides a unique security value, as DHS now has the ability to obtain information about most individuals before they depart for the United States.
- In January 2009, DHS delegated specific authority to CBP to waive the NSEERS registration requirements for certain individual nonimmigrant aliens.
- DHS is now officially ending the NSEERS registration process because the data that is manually entered at registration is already automatically captured through several other DHS and Department of State systems and processes, which include, among others:
  - The visa application process adjudicated by the Department of State;
  - Information on arrivals and departures, collected by CBP (through Passenger Name Records (PNR) prior to travel), manifests submitted through the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) at the time of travel, and the officer confirmed arrival information, maintained in TECS), and
  - Matching of arrival, departure and status information through the Arrival-Departure Information System (ADIS).
- These and many other improvements to our information collection and analysis capabilities, combined with more robust screening measures for all individuals, have provided us with more integrated yet flexible options for screening individuals for potential ties to terrorism and transnational crime before they enter the United States, and allows us to eliminate the reporting burden placed on the thousands of travelers previously affected under NSEERS.

### **NSEERS Background**

- NSEERS was first implemented in 2002 as a temporary measure in the aftermath of the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 terrorist attacks and was designed to record the arrival, stay, and departure of certain individuals from countries chosen based on an analysis of possible national security threats.
- NSEERS registration and processing applied to certain nonimmigrant nationals or citizens of the following countries upon arrival at U.S. ports of entry: Iran; Iraq; Libya; Pakistan; Saudi Arabia; Sudan; Syria; Yemen.
- Additionally, certain nonimmigrant nationals and citizens of the following countries were at one point subject to a domestic call in registration requirement, and may also have been subject to NSEERS at a U.S. port of entry: Afghanistan; Algeria; Bahrain;

Bangladesh; Egypt; Eritrea; Indonesia; Jordan; Kuwait; Lebanon; Morocco; North Korea; Oman; Qatar; Somalia; Tunisia; United Arab Emirates.

- The domestic registration portion of the NSEERS program required certain individuals to report for registration within 30 days of arrival in the United States, and annually thereafter. Domestic registration ended in 2003.
- The NSEERS registration required approximately 30 minutes in secondary inspection, per person, per arrival. During an initial NSEERS registration, the CBP Officers captured two fingerprints and a photograph, and manually entered more than 70 biographic data elements. Unless exempt from or authorized a waiver of requirements, NSEERS registrants also were required to report to CBP for departure registration at one of the 118 designated ports of departure, limiting travel flexibility.
- In January 2009, DHS delegated specific authority to CBP to waive the NSEERS registration requirements for certain individual nonimmigrant aliens.

#### **Redundancy with Other Systems/Data Collection**

- Since NSEERS was created, DHS has implemented several automated systems that capture arrival and exit information, making the manual entry of this data via the NSEERS registration process redundant, inefficient and unnecessary.
- Additionally, NSEERS no longer provides a unique security value to our security officers on the frontlines, as DHS now has the ability to obtain information about most individuals before they depart for the United States.
- Accordingly, this notice removes all currently designated countries from the list of those subject to NSEERS requirements and ends the NSEERS registration process.

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