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TWIC Program Deploys This Week with Help of Mobile Biometrics

*Handheld card readers already aiding U.S. industrial and government sites
comply with TWIC regulations*

WAYNE, Pa. (April 15, 2009) — Today's compliance deadline for the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) initiative marks a new era in Homeland Security for U.S. ports. Starting now, all personnel requiring unescorted access to secure areas in facilities and vessels regulated under the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002 will be required to have their TWIC card — a biometric-enabled ID — in their possession.

The TWIC program is the largest single initiative to provide better security to U.S. ports and transportation workers. To date, more than one million port workers, longshoremen, truckers and other personnel have enrolled in TWIC; more than 765,000 TWIC cards have been issued. While estimates vary on the number of workers who eventually will be required to carry a TWIC card, the figure generally is expected to top 1.2 million. This number includes those who require access to ports, commercial vessels and offshore platforms.

By leveraging their existing security systems with mobile biometrics, ports can establish a layered security strategy that will allow them to build toward higher benchmarks while complying with important TWIC measures.

“Creating TWIC security strategies using mobile biometric card readers permits government and commercial agencies to comply more quickly with TWIC without replacing their current security infrastructure,” said Joe Delaney, vice president of sales and marketing for Datastrip.

Mobile biometric devices for reading TWIC cards can now load data from the TWIC card into existing security systems and carry out recurring credential validation testing. The solution ties existing components together, enabling legacy infrastructures to be linked to

the security-rich TWIC component. This allows ports to take advantage of the increased security provided by TWIC without giving up existing efficiencies.

“Datastrip, along with many security integrators, agree that linking TWIC cards to legacy physical access control systems will allow ports to comply with TWIC guidelines in a quick and comparatively cost-effective way,” Delaney said. “Additionally, operators and agencies would have a groundwork infrastructure on which to build to meet future TWIC rule changes, should they occur.”

Datastrip supports potential future applications of TWIC beyond ports and U.S. borders. There may be some movement by organizations to extend TWIC as an approved credential for admitting transportation workers into other secure facilities such as petrochemical and nuclear power plants.

“For now, the future will rest in how the TWIC implementation is rolled out beyond being a card and utilized to verify the identity of those who possess it,” Delaney said.

About Datastrip

Datastrip is a world leader in field-proven handheld biometric readers for identity verification. Datastrip specializes in providing secure, multimodal biometric solutions that provide on-the-spot ID verification for government, military, law enforcement, travel, security and Fortune 500 commercial markets. Datastrip products support applications requiring facial, fingerprint and iris biometrics; 2D barcode and smartcards; and travel documents, including passports, visas and e-passports. Visit www.datastrip.com or call (800) 548-2517 for more information.

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