

Biometric Consortium 2004 Conference

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Topic: Research Needs in Biometrics - A Federal Perspective

Abstract: Interest in biometrics technologies has significantly increased over the last five years. As interest in biometrics continues to grow, the small cadre of researchers that developed the technologies being discussed at this conference is becoming more and more a minority within the community. Although this has generally been required for a technology to flourish, in the case of biometrics, the research community's actions and influence has diminished disproportionately. This not only impacts technological advancement, but also the potential enhancements in academic studies and the public debate about the societal implications of biometrics. Greater involvement by the research community is needed to reap the maximum benefits of biometrics technology. This presentation takes a look at these issues and suggests methods to get science-based researchers more interested and involved in the advancement of, discussions on and decisions concerning biometrics

Biography: Duane Blackburn is the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Agency Representative to the National Science & Technology Council. As such, he splits his time between the FBI's Engineering Research Facility in Quantico, VA, and the White House's Office of Science & Technology Policy. Mr. Blackburn also serves as co-chair of the Justice Biometrics Cooperative, a collaboration-building working group on biometrics within the Department of Justice. Prior to joining the FBI, Mr. Blackburn worked at the DoD Counterdrug Technology Development Program Office and the DOJ's National Institute of Justice, where he managed RDT&E programs in technology areas such as biometrics, data analysis, interdiction technologies, drug detection and screening, tagging and tracking, communications and GIS systems.

Mr. Blackburn has managed RDT&E programs in biometrics technology since 1998. He established the Face Recognition Vendor Test (FRVT) series of government-managed technology evaluations of face recognition, and co-managed the 2000 and 2002 evaluations. The methodology and procedures that the FRVT team established were recently used by NIST in performing the Fingerprint Vendor Technology Evaluation in 2003. Mr. Blackburn also co-authored the 2002 document "Face Recognition at a Chokepoint - Scenario Evaluation Results" which documented the first large-scale evaluation of biometrics operating in the open-set identification (watchlist) task. Through this document, and the subsequent inclusion of these performance measures in FRVT 2002, Mr. Blackburn pushed the community to describe open-set identification performance using statistics that matched the task.

In 2001/2002 Mr. Blackburn established and co-chaired (with FAA) the Aviation Security Biometrics Working Group and served as the DoD representative on the Department of Transportation Go-Team #9 which established the initial direction of biometric technology within the Transportation Security Administration.

Mr Blackburn established and manages the Biometrics Catalog, a federally-funded online resource that provides free access to government documents, research & evaluation reports, news articles, conference presentations, and vendors/consultants related to biometrics.

Mr. Blackburn holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in Electrical Engineering from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), and was a finalist for a 2002 Service to America Medal.