

NewsRelease

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PASSPORT SUPPLY CHAIN IS SECURE

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) would like to respond to the ABC News and The Center for Public Integrity story on the manufacturing and production of U.S. passports, which appeared on *World News with Diane Sawyer*, by presenting key facts that seem to have been omitted. The men and women of GPO are proud to have been producing the passport for the Department of State (DOS) since the 1920s.

- GPO manufactures U.S. passports in conjunction with the DOS at two government owned locations in the United States: GPO's secure plant in Washington, D.C. and GPO's secure production facility in Stennis, Mississippi. While some components may come from overseas, the printing, manufacturing and assembly of passports are done in the United States. DOS personalizes blank passports provided by GPO.
- GPO and the DOS work together in establishing security procedures for the electronic passport supply chain. **There has been no security breach in the electronic passport supply chain.**
- GPO and the DOS seek out the best technologies to develop this global document. Some of the very best components and technologies for the electronic passport do not reside in the United States or are owned by American companies. GPO included Buy America Act requirements in the first procurement for the electronic passport; however no vendor responding to the Request For Proposal (RFP) offering domestic made products met the rigorous compliance testing mandated by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).
- The subcontractor Smartrac, which does the inlaying of cover materials, operates a plant in Thailand. Smartrac established a second production facility for the inlay of cover materials in Minnesota in late 2008. The Minnesota facility currently produces 80 percent of the stock and by July, Smartrac expects to produce 100 percent of the stock here in the United States.
- The Government Accountability Office concluded in a January 2010 report on Border Security that: "The U.S. e-passport chips have security features that minimize the threat of tampering during the manufacturing and production process. GPO and State have also taken steps to assure the security of the embedded computer chips in the U.S. e-passports."
The full report: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d1096.pdf>

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