

NewsRelease

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GPO TO OPEN SECOND SECURE PRODUCTION FACILITY

More than 50 jobs will be created

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) has been given approval by Congress to establish a secure production facility on the grounds of the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi. GPO employees will produce blank passport books at this location. This operation will help meet the rising demand by the American people for passports. This facility also meets the Department of State's request for a secure production site for blank passports outside of Washington D.C. More than 50 government jobs will be created in the Gulf coast region. The production facility is expected to be operational this spring.

"This is a tremendous milestone in the production of the Nation's passports. In conjunction with our main facility in Washington, this new operation will help meet the growing need for passports and satisfy the security requirements of the post 9-11 world," said Public Printer Robert C. Tapella. "I would like to thank the Joint Committee on Printing, State Department, NASA and of course GPO employees who worked hard and tirelessly in making this endeavor possible."

"Fueled by increasing international travel, more naturalizations, more Americans using their passport as an identity document for reasons other than international travel, and the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative - we documented more than 18.4 million American citizens in fiscal year 2007 and are well on our way to surpassing this amount in 2008. Thanks to GPO and their efforts, we continue to meet the needs of the U.S. traveling public," said Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Ann Barrett.

The Stennis Space Center is NASA's primary center for rocket propulsion testing and is located in southern Mississippi, approximately 45 miles west of Biloxi and 45 miles east of New Orleans. Stennis Space Center is a multi-agency center with more than 30 resident agencies. GPO will renovate about 80 thousand square feet of space for passport production in a vacant building. The Army Corps of Engineers will serve as the construction manager and oversee the renovations.

"It is my sincere pleasure to welcome GPO to NASA Stennis Space Center," said Stennis Space Center Director Robert Cabana. "I look forward to a long-lasting, productive partnership with the newest member of the Stennis family."

GPO has been producing passports for the Department of State since the 1920s. GPO produced about 20 million passports last year, up seven million from the previous year. GPO switched to production of e-Passports in 2007. The e-Passport includes an electronic chip embedded in the cover that contains the same information that is printed in the passport: name, date of birth, gender, place of birth, dates of passport issuance and expiration, passport number and photo image of the traveler. The e-Passport contains security features to prevent the chips from being read, cloned or changed. GPO's Creative Services team created the page designs.

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