New American

Written by **Thomas R. Eddlem** on August 6, 2014

Leaker: Spy Agencies' Databases Tracking One Million People

A new source of information for investigative reporter Glenn Greenwald has revealed that the federal government's spy agencies are now tracking more than one million people and have partnered with state governments to scoop up driver's license pictures for their databases.

Greenwald was the recipient of much of the intelligence revealed through former NSA contractor Edward Snowden, but a current report on Greenwald's website The Intercept contains a secret document published after Snowden left the country.

The document reveals that "On 28 June 2013, the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE) passed a milestone of one million persons in TIDE," including some 730,000 "biometric files" such as fingerprints, retina scans, DNA, and the like.

The document, *Directorate of Terrorist Identities, Strategic Accomplishments 2013*, is clearly a 2014 publication. And at 13 pages, it's also a short list of accomplishments that does not include any attempt to claim it had prevented a terrorist incident or assisted in capturing a terrorist.

The document does report some vague fuzzies about how the Directorate of Terrorist Identities (DTI) supposedly helped with the Boston Marathon bombing investigation. "DTI Support to Boston Bombing Investigation: In the wake of the Boston Marathon bombings, NCTC/DTI was deeply involved with all facets of the response." Of course, it had zero impact on the apprehension of bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, who was only captured when Watertown, Massachusetts resident Dave Henneberry went outside to look at his boat after a government curfew had ended. Interestingly, the DTI boasted that it "recognized the need to ensure that watchlisted US persons included available facial images and fingerprints." Of course, Boston Marathon bombing mastermind Tamerlin Tsarnaev was not an American, but retained Russian citizenship.

Getting more private information on Americans as well as innocent foreigners seems to be the focus of the document's list of alleged successes. The Intercept reported August 5 that of the 680,000 people on the active watchlist (some 320,000 are deemed inactive but still in the database), "more than 40 percent are described by the government as having 'no recognized terrorist group affiliation.' That category — 280,000 people — dwarfs the number of watchlisted people suspected of ties to al Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah combined." Greenwald's reporters, Intercept authors Jeremy Scahill and Ryan Devereaux, note that the list included more than 15,000 American citizens as of August 2013.

Scahill and Devereaux added that one does not necessarily have to be on the watchlist to be a subject of warrantless federal surveillance. "The DTI also worked on the subsequent Chicago Marathon, performing 'deep dives' for biometric and other data on people in the Midwest whose names were on the TIDE list. In the process, the directorate pulled the TIDE records of every person with an Illinois,

Indiana, or Wisconsin driver's license."

And pulling driver's license pictures from state governments is a new initiative that federal spies have been accessing for permanent storage as well. According to *Directorate of Terrorist Identities, Strategic Accomplishments 2013*,

> To fulfill the biometric enhancement mission within DTI's Identity Intelligence Group (IIG), the Biometric Analysis Branch (BAB) began an outreach/partnership effort with the larger law enforcement community to collect facial images associated with driver's license data. With support from FBI partners and NCTC's Domestic Representatives, this enhancement mission took on significant growth in FY13. BAB now coordinates directly with the following states: Arizona, Texas, New York, Maryland, Delaware, Washington DC, Florida, California, Virginia, Oregon, Massachusetts, Nevada, Georgia, Colorado, Washington and Rhode Island. This effort has resulted in 2,400 Driver's License facial images added to TIDE in FY13.

That's just the beginning. Expect the number to be in the tens of millions in a year or two unless strict legislative curbs are placed on it.

And acquiring driver's license photos is only one aspect of the insatiable appetite for private information on Americans of the Directorate of Terrorist Identities. "DTI has continued to enhance several 'non-traditional' biometric data fields in TIDE, for FY13 has shown the following growth: Handwriting (32%); Signatures (52%); Scars/marks/tattoos (70%); DNA strands (90%)."

The DTI is set for a massive infusion of new biometric information, according to the report. The "Standard Nomination Tool" for inclusion in the surveillance database has been "upgraded" so that it "allows nominating agencies to provide more data than previously disseminated." The document boasts that it is set to "ingest large datasets for automatic exploitation and enhancement of TIDE records."

As if to spoof the villains in the *Captain America* movie series, The Intercept's reporting revealed that the CIA has a program known as "Hydra" which spies on the computer networks of other countries to get information for the TIDES database. The Hydra program is particularly alarming, as Americans could potentially be put on the terrorist watchlist if they encounter the disfavor of foreign governments.

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