



# **PORT OF SEATTLE PUBLIC-FACING BIOMETRICS POLICY**

## **BIOMETRICS FOR TRAVELER FUNCTIONS BY PRIVATE SECTOR ENTITIES USING PROPRIETARY SYSTEMS RECOMMENDATIONS**

**DRAFT AS OF July 24, 2020**



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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Biometrics is the measurement and analysis of physical and behavioral characteristics that are used to identify individuals through technology. Examples of physical characteristics include the unique features of an individual's face or their fingerprint, while examples of behavioral characteristics includes an individual's voice, signature, or how they walk.

Due to technological advances, perceived customer benefits and federal requirements, there is a significant increase in public-facing biometric technology deployment by public and private sector users, including in airport and seaport settings. In fact, biometrics are already being used at dozens of U.S. airports and cruise terminals, by those who see the technology as a major benefit to travelers – both because of a faster and more efficient travel experience, as well as a more accurate security process. However, many members of the public and various advocacy organizations have expressed concerns about the rapidly expanding use of biometrics. These stakeholders have raised issues around privacy, equity and civil liberties, as well as the potential for unregulated “mass surveillance.”

Public-facing biometrics are already used in various forms at the Port of Seattle's aviation and maritime facilities, such as 1) CLEAR, a private company providing an option to those customers who want expedited screening at U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoints to voluntarily supply their biometric data in order to verify their identities, 2) U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) use of biometrics at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) to validate departing international traveler identities, and 3) use of biometrics on Norwegian Cruise Line ships docked at Pier 66 to validate the identities of disembarking passengers. CBP will also use facial recognition technology to screen almost all arriving international passengers once SEA's International Arrivals Facility (IAF) opens in the coming year.

In advance of any expansion of biometric uses at Port of Seattle facilities by the Port or its private sector tenants, the Port of Seattle Commission desires to develop proper policy frameworks and clear guidelines to reduce potential misuse and abuse of biometrics, while improving public understanding of the benefits and risks of this technology in various applications. On December 10, 2019, after holding two Study Sessions, conducting stakeholder outreach and doing multiple site visits, the Port Commission adopted seven “biometrics guiding principles,” and directed staff to translate those principles into tangible, enforceable policies. Specifically, the Port strives to balance operational needs, business priorities and regulatory mandates with protections for the interests and rights of passengers, employees and other visitors to our facilities.

Since the start of 2020, a working group of Port staff has collaborated with an external advisory group of key stakeholders to accomplish that task. **One of the key findings from this process is that the various use cases of biometrics require separate analysis as to how the Port should (consistent with local, state and federal requirements) apply the biometrics guiding principles to develop policy.** One unified set of policies is not practical because of key differences from one use case to another, such as who manages the data, requirements imposed by state or federal law, and the benefits and risks associated with each use.

**This set of recommendations is specific to any proposed use of biometrics for traveler functions by private-sector entities using proprietary systems.** As an example, an airline use of their own biometrics system for traveler access to their corporate lounge would be covered under this use case, but an airline use of CBP's Traveler Verification System (TVS) for international departing passenger ticketing or bag

check would be covered under a different use case. In addition, because these policies only apply to private sector uses at Port facilities, they are not governed by the legislation passed by the Washington State Legislature in March of this year that sets standards for how and when local governments like the Port of Seattle can use facial recognition technology.<sup>1</sup>

The recommendations that have resulted from the working group and external advisory group process are listed below, along with concerns from some external advisors who do not support some of these recommendations. All sides of the discussion are represented here to provide Port Commissioners full information prior to adoption of any policies.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Passed%20Legislature/6280-S.PL.pdf?q=20200316151028>

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Port's Biometric Working Group is to translate the seven biometrics principles adopted by the Port Commission into tangible, enforceable policies that ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that the use of public-facing biometrics Port practices at Port facilities conform to these principles.

It is important to note that the Port has broad authority to establish policies that govern the activities of Port staff and the use of Port resources, to the extent such policies are consistent with federal law. Private sector stakeholders operating at Port facilities (such as airlines) are also subject to the Port's policies, to the extent that the Port's policies do not conflict with private stakeholders' own federal obligations and/or the terms of their agreements with the Port – such as lease agreements or operating agreements with the Port, which may vary on a case-by-case basis. The Port has very limited authority to influence, much less direct, the activities of federal agencies.

**This set of recommendations is specific to any proposed use of biometrics specifically for traveler functions by private-sector entities using proprietary systems not connected to federal systems.** As an example, an airline use of their own biometrics system for traveler access to their corporate lounge would be covered under this use case, but an airline use of CBP's Traveler Verification System (TVS) for international departing passenger ticketing or bag check would be covered under a different use case. In addition, because these policies only apply to private sector uses at Port facilities, they are not governed by the legislation passed by the Washington State Legislature in March of this year that sets standards for how and when local governments like the Port of Seattle can use facial recognition technology.<sup>2</sup>

Where the Port lacks authority to mandate compliance with particular policies, the recommendation is to work collaboratively with these stakeholders to achieve voluntary compliance where appropriate, and/or highlight how these stakeholders' own policies match Port principles. The Port should also advocate for the adoption of new laws and regulations that align with the Port's biometric principles.

Finally, while the recommendations below represent the thinking of Port staff, there is not consensus among all members of the Port's External Advisory Group on these recommendations. Therefore, stakeholder concerns about each recommendation are also included below so that the Port Commission can consider all perspectives before they adopt any final policies. Ultimately, the Port Commission is the governing body that can approve any recommendations and adopt policies.

## 3. BASICS OF BIOMETRICS FOR TRAVELER FUNCTIONS USING PRIVATE-SECTOR PROPRIETARY SYSTEMS

Some private sector operators at Port facilities see biometrics as a tool to automate and expedite normal customer functions. These potential uses are driven entirely by perceived efficiency or effectiveness benefit, and not required by any local, state or federal regulation. The Port has significant control over whether and how these companies can implement biometrics for these purposes at Port facilities.

There are only a few current applications of biometrics for this kind of use at SEA, most notably CLEAR, which allows travelers to use fingerprint and iris scans as identity verification to advance to the front of

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<sup>2 2</sup> <http://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Passed%20Legislature/6280-S.PL.pdf?q=20200316151028>

TSA checkpoints. Examples of other potential future biometric (including facial recognition) applications for traveler functions could include:

- Boarding of domestic flights, or boarding of departing cruise ships;
- Ticketing and bag-check for airlines or cruise lines;
- Access to tenant-controlled facilities such as an airline passenger lounge;
- Access to a rental car at the Port’s rental car facility;
- Use of biometrics for payment at airport restaurants or retail stores in lieu of credit card or cash; or
- Use of biometrics to inform dynamic signage targeting information or advertisements to travelers.

The COVID-19 pandemic may spur additional attention toward potential applications of biometric technology so as to avoid direct interactions that could spread the virus. To that end, it is even more important for the Port to anticipate potential needs and provide clear policy guidance.

In March 2020, the Washington State Legislature passed legislation explicitly setting policy guidelines for use of facial recognition biometrics by state and local governments; it did not pass legislation regulating private sector usage. However, the policy recommendations below reflect many of the policies that were considered by the State Legislature for private sector operators, so that – if state laws are eventually enacted regulating private sector use of facial recognition biometrics – Port policies already either meet or exceed those thresholds.

## **4. APPLYING THE PORT’S PUBLIC-FACING BIOMETRICS GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO THE USE OF BIOMETRICS FOR TRAVELER FUNCTIONS BY PRIVATE SECTOR ENTITIES USING PROPRIETARY SYSTEMS**

### **a. Justified**

The Port Commission’s Biometrics Motion states that:

*Biometric technology at port facilities should be used only for a clear intended purpose that furthers a specific operational need. The port does not condone biometrics for “mass surveillance” – for example, use of facial recognition on large groups of people without a lawful purpose, rather than single-use for travelers.*

#### **1. Key Issues to address**

The Justified principle essentially speaks to two key issues of concern: 1) requiring an explicit operational reason to use biometrics that outweighs potential risks, and 2) ensuring that biometrics are not used for “mass surveillance” at Port facilities. The Commission motion defines mass surveillance as scanning large groups of people without lawful purpose, rather than use on one person at one time with their active participation.

As it relates to a specific operational reason, private sector operators would point to increased processing speeds and customer conveniences such as not having to take identification documents out. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic may spur additional attention toward potential applications of biometric technology so as to avoid direct interactions that could spread the virus. However, there needs to be a net benefit for the use of this technology to be considered a justified use; in other words,

the benefits should outweigh potential costs like cybersecurity, data privacy risks, and any other potential harm that customers might experience from biometrics.

The Port does not condone mass surveillance, and so any proposed biometrics would only fit this definition if all biometric capture was done with an individual’s awareness and willing participation. For example, the use of dynamic signage to personalize advertising to a traveler would not fit with this principle unless that person previously agreed to have their biometrics used in this way and the system doesn’t scan other people in the process of looking for those who have opted-in; for example, someone would have to walk up directly to a screen and actively request targeted advertising.

Recommendations for protecting against unintended image capture of other individuals are included under the Voluntary principle.

## 2. Working Group Recommendations

<b>“Justified” recommendations at a glance</b>	
<b>Port</b>	<b>Private Sector</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a Port Managing Director receives a request by a private sector operator for implementation of biometrics for traveler functions using a proprietary system, they must consider certain criteria in deciding whether or not to approve the implementation. If the risks from the biometric implementation are deemed significant, then the Managing Director should deny the application.</li> <li>• If the Managing Director plans to approve the request after considering all the above criteria, they must first notify the Port Executive Director and the Port Commission at least three (3) weeks before providing that formal approval to the private sector applicant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A private sector operator proposing to implement biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities must receive approval from the relevant Managing Director. The request for this implementation must explicitly articulate how the implementation will comply with the Port’s Biometric Principles and any associated policies governing the use of biometric technology at Port facilities. In addition, it must explicitly state why biometrics are preferable over existing manual processes, and the cost-benefit analysis of utilizing biometrics.</li> <li>• A private sector operator already operating biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities must apply for approval from the Aviation or Maritime Managing Director for continued operation at least six months in advance of the expiration of its existing lease, contract or operating agreement.</li> </ul>

### **For Port**

**Recommendation 1a:** If the Port’s Aviation Managing Director, Maritime Managing Director or Economic Development Managing Director receives a request by a private sector operator for implementation of biometrics for traveler functions using a proprietary system, they must consider the following criteria in deciding whether or not to approve the implementation:

- Demonstrated operational benefit, which is defined as increased efficiency or effectiveness in passenger processing vs existing manual processes
- Compliance with all Port principles and policies
- Alignment with the Port’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion standards
- Net benefit-cost to travelers – both overall and for specific subsets of travelers – of the added customer facilitation vs. potential privacy and other risks. If the risks are deemed significant, then the Managing Director should deny the application regardless of the net-benefit calculation.

The Managing Director should also seek feedback from the Technology Ethical Advisory Board, once it is established (see recommendation under Ethical).

**Recommendation 2:** If the Managing Director plans to approve the request after considering all the above criteria, they must first notify the Port Executive Director and the Port Commission at least three (3) weeks before providing that formal approval to the private sector applicant.

**For Private Sector Operators**

**Recommendation 1b:** A private sector operator proposing to implement biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities using a proprietary system must receive approval from the relevant Managing Director. The request for this implementation must articulate how the implementation will comply with the Port’s Biometric Principles and any associated policies governing the use of biometric technology at Port facilities. In addition, it must explicitly state why biometrics are justified, using the above-listed criteria.

**Recommendation 1c:** A private sector operator already operating biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities must apply for approval from the Aviation or Maritime Managing Director for continued operation at least six months in advance of the expiration of its existing lease, contract or operating agreement. The request for this continued operation must explicitly articulate how the service does or will comply with the Port’s Biometric Principles and any associated policies governing the use of biometric technology at Port facilities.

**3. Stakeholder Concerns**

- Stakeholder feedback: Justified principle should apply an equity perspective and should go beyond “operational benefit” to address and advance justice.
  - Port staff response: Added a criterion in Recommendation 1a that the application should be in alignment with the Port’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion standards
  - Added a requirement in Recommendation 1a that – if the risks are deemed significant – then the Managing Director should deny the application regardless of the net-benefit calculation.
- Stakeholder feedback: Port confirmed there will be no grandfathering-in of existing systems once the policies are approved. Will there be a suspension period?
  - Port staff response: Added recommendation 1c to address this concern.

**b. Voluntary**

The Port Commission’s Biometrics Motion states that:



*The use of biometrics to identify and validate travelers through port facilities should be voluntary, and reasonable alternatives should be provided for those who do not wish to participate – through a convenient “opt-in” or “opt-out” process, except in specific situations authorized by the port or required by federal law such as U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s (CBP) entry and exit requirements for non-U.S. citizens. Unintended capture of data by biometric technology from those travelers opting out of such biometric data collection, or of any non-travelers or other visitors at the airport, should be prevented; any unintended capture of this data should not be stored.*

**1. Key Issues to address**

There are two main aspects of the Voluntary principle: 1) providing for an opt-in or opt-out procedure, and 2) preventing unintended image capture.

The Port should not approve any private sector applications for biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities using proprietary systems that are not opt-in for travelers, unless there is a demonstrated need to do so – such as a public health mandate. In this context, opt-in refers to both opting-in to the overall system (enrolling your biometrics in a database or gallery) as well as opting in to participating in the system at the point of service (i.e. – at the ticketing counter).

In these limited scenarios for which opt-out is the standard instead, reasonable provisions should still be made for those travelers that would like alternate accommodations.

As related to unintended image capture, the Port can specify requirements for the physical configuration and other aspects of the technology in an effort to prevent unintended image capture during biometric operations.

**2. Working Group Recommendations**

<b>“Voluntary” recommendations at a glance</b>	
<b>Port</b>	<b>Private Sector Operators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Port should not approve any private sector applications for biometrics for traveler functions using a proprietary system that do not include an opt-in provision, unless there is a demonstrated need to do so – such as a public health mandate. In this context, opt-in refers to both opting-in to the overall system (enrolling your biometrics in a database or gallery) as well as opting in to participating in the system at the point of service. In these limited scenarios for which opt-out is the standard instead, the Port should require reasonable provisions for those travelers that would like alternate accommodations.</li> <li>The Port should develop guidelines for where and how biometrics can be used at</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As part of its application for biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities, a private sector operator must submit a plan for implementing “opt-in” or “opt-out” aligned with Port standards, and for minimizing unintended capture of biometrics aligned with Port guidelines if using facial recognition.</li> <li>As part of its application for biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities, a private sector operator must demonstrate that their employees have received training aligned with the Port’s guidelines.</li> </ul>

<p>Port facilities. In particular, these guidelines should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Standards for “opt-in” and “opt-out”; and</li> <li>○ Standards to avoid unintended image capture if facial recognition is implemented.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Port should not approve any applications by private sector entities for biometrics for traveler functions that operate by scanning large groups of people to identify those individuals who have opted in.</li> </ul>	
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**For Port**

**Recommendation 3:** The Port should not approve any applications by private sector entities for biometrics for traveler functions are not “opt-in”, unless there is a demonstrated need to do so – such as a public health mandate. In this context, opt-in refers to both opting-in to the overall system (enrolling your biometrics in a database or gallery) as well as opting in to participating in the system at the point of service. In these limited scenarios for which opt-out is the standard instead, the Port should require reasonable provisions for those travelers that would like alternate accommodations.

**Recommendation 4a:** The Port should develop guidelines for where and how biometrics can be used at Port facilities. In particular, these guidelines should include

- Standards for “opt-in” and “opt-out” to ensure a consistent customer experience, including how to cancel a subscription or other voluntary commitment to a system; and
- Standards to avoid unintended image capture if facial recognition is implemented, such as by positioning a camera in a direction that does not face the main passenger area, use of a screen behind the individual being photographed, or use of a camera with a minimal field view.

**Recommendation 5:** The Port should not approve any applications by private sector entities for biometrics for traveler functions that operate by scanning large groups of people to identify those individuals who have opted in.

**For Private Sector Operators**

**Recommendation 4b:** As part of its application for biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities, a private sector operator must submit a plan for implementing “opt-in” or “opt-out” aligned with Port standards, and for minimizing unintended capture of biometrics aligned with Port guidelines if using facial recognition.

**Recommendation 4c:** As part of its application for biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities, a private sector operator must demonstrate that their employees have received training aligned with the Port’s guidelines.

**3. Stakeholder Concerns**

- Stakeholder feedback: Although the system is opt-in, it is unclear how or the extent to which a consumer can voluntarily remove themselves from the system.
  - Port staff response: This is explicitly included in Recommendation 4a and 10.

- Stakeholder feedback: Regarding recommendation 3, “consensus national best practice” does not seem limiting enough and should be refined.
  - Port staff response: This phrase has been removed.
- Stakeholder feedback: The Port should categorically refuse biometrics (facial/emotional recognition) for advertisement purposes.
  - Port staff response: Added Recommendation 5 to limit applications to one-to-one interactions, which would protect against the issues raised.

### c. Private

The Port Commission’s Biometrics Motion states that:

*Data collected by biometric technology at port facilities or by port employees from travelers through port facilities should be stored only if needed, for no longer than required by applicable law or regulations, and should be protected against unauthorized access. The port opposes this data being knowingly sold or used for commercial purposes unrelated to processing travelers at port facilities without their clear and informed consent. Individuals should be provided a process to challenge instances where they feel their rights have been violated.*

#### 1. Key Issues to address

The Private principle is an essential aspect of travelers’ confidence in their participation in any biometric implementation. Individuals want to know that their data is secure, not being used for any inappropriate purpose, and protected.

The Port has some ability to set and enforce minimum data privacy and cybersecurity standards for private sector operators at Port facilities through lease agreements or vendor contracts. For vendors like CLEAR that have obligations related to U.S. Transportation Security Administration security and data privacy regulations, the Port has the ability to ensure compliance with all Air Security Program rules and requirements.

The issue of giving individuals an opportunity to challenge violations of their rights is covered under the Ethical principle.

#### 2. Working Group Recommendations

<b>“Private” recommendations at a glance</b>	
<b>Port</b>	<b>Private Sector Operators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Port should develop minimum biometric data security and privacy standards for all private sector operators proposing to utilize biometrics for traveler functions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For any proposed private sector implementation of biometrics for traveler functions, the proprietary system must meet or exceed the Port’s minimum standards for biometric data security and privacy guidelines.</li> <li>• For any proposed implementations of biometrics for traveler functions that have obligations related to U.S. Transportation Security Administration security and data</li> </ul>

	<p>privacy regulations, the proposal must demonstrate full alignment with all of the Port's Air Security Program rules and requirements.</p>
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**For Port**

**Recommendation 6a:** The Port should develop minimum biometric data security and privacy standards for all private sector operators proposing to utilize biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities. Those standards should address data privacy protections at the point of service as well as throughout the proprietary system, such as potential data breach and data sharing. The standards should include requirements that any data collected should be used only for those purposes explicitly communicated to those individuals who participate in the biometric process, and that unauthorized third parties will not have access to any such data. These guidelines should be based – to the extent possible – on national and global standards already developed for evaluating the security of these technologies, such as the Center for Internet Security's Controls and Benchmarks or any relevant statutes from the California Consumer Privacy Act and the European Union General Data Protection Regulation.

**For Private Sector Operators**

**Recommendation 6b:** For any proposed implementation of biometrics for traveler functions, the proposal must meet or exceed the Port's minimum biometric data security and privacy standards.

**Recommendation 6c:** For any proposed implementations of biometrics for traveler functions that have obligations related to U.S. Transportation Security Administration security and data privacy regulations<sup>3</sup>, the proposal must demonstrate full alignment with all of the Port's Air Security Program rules and requirements.

**3. Stakeholder Concerns**

- Stakeholder feedback: Need to consider privacy impacts both at the point of service & externalities regarding data usage and protection beyond the system.
  - Port staff response: Added this explicitly into Recommendation 6a.

**d. Equitable**

The Port Commission's Biometrics Motion states that:

*The port opposes discrimination or systemic bias based on religion, age, gender, race or other demographic identifiers. Biometric technology used at port facilities or by port employees should be reasonably accurate in identifying people of all backgrounds, and systems should be in place to treat mismatching issues with proper cultural sensitivity and discretion.*

**1. Key Issues to address**

The Equitable principle essentially speaks to two key issues: 1) concern that biometrics (specifically facial recognition technology) does not perform as effectively on individuals who are not male Caucasians, and that 2) regardless of why the technology identifies a mismatch, systems should be in place to resolve the issue with minimal impact to the customer.

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<sup>3</sup> i.e. - CLEAR

A recent study by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) found that facial recognition technology’s ability to identify individuals with diverse characteristics varies significantly based on the algorithm at the heart of the system, the application that uses it, and the data inputs.<sup>4</sup> However, the NIST report does identify some algorithms as highly effective in terms of accuracy rates – both overall and across multiple characteristics. The NIST report provides an important baseline for performance levels that proposed implementations of biometric technology at Port facilities must meet to be considered for approved use at Port facilities.

Treating no-matches or mismatches with “cultural sensitivity and discretion” requires that individuals subject to additional document review are treated in a manner and location that draws the least possible attention to the situation and does not create a feeling of fear or discomfort for the customer. Where possible, mismatch issues should be handled at the point of service rather than removal to a secondary location. The Port also has an obligation to institute and/or ensure compliance with standards for minimizing mismatch likelihood, such as lighting, image capture angles and camera quality.

## 2. Working Group Recommendations

<b>“Equitable” recommendations at a glance</b>	
<b>Port</b>	<b>Private Sector Operators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Port should develop biometric training guidelines for personnel who will be administering biometric technology on travelers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When requesting implementation of biometrics for traveler functions, the private sector operator must verify that their employee training for operating biometrics meets the Port’s training guidelines.</li> <li>When requesting implementation of biometrics for traveler functions, the private sector operator must verify that their technology demonstrates high levels of accuracy both overall and between various characteristics.</li> <li>A private sector operator requesting implementation of biometrics for traveler functions must agree as a part of its application to make available an application programming interface (API) or other technical capability.</li> </ul>

### **For Port**

**Recommendation 7a:** The Port should develop biometric training guidelines for personnel who will be administering biometric technology on travelers. The training must include – but not be limited to – the capabilities and limitations of biometrics, as well as how to deal with mismatching issues with sensitivity and discretion. For example, the training should suggest that – where possible – mismatch issues should be handled at the point of service rather than removal to a secondary location. The training should also

<sup>4</sup> <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/ir/2019/NIST.IR.8280.pdf>

include standards for minimizing mismatch likelihood, such as lighting, image capture angles and camera quality.

### **For Private Sector Operators**

**Recommendation 7b:** When requesting implementation of biometrics for traveler functions, the private sector operator must verify that their employee training for operating biometrics meets the Port’s training guidelines, including understanding of the capabilities and limitations of biometrics, and how to deal with mismatching issues with sensitivity and discretion.

**Recommendation 8:** When requesting implementation of biometrics for traveler functions, the private sector operator must verify that their technology demonstrates high levels of accuracy both overall and between various characteristics – particularly those relevant to biometric identification – as identified under the Washington State definition of “protected class.”<sup>5</sup> These demonstrations of accuracy must result from testing in operational conditions.

**Recommendation 9:** A private sector operator requesting implementation of biometrics for customer functions must agree as a part of its application to make available an application programming interface (API) or other technical capability, to enable legitimate, independent, and reasonable tests of those biometric technologies for accuracy and unfair performance differences across distinct subpopulations. Making an application programming interface or other technical capability does not require providers to do so in a manner that would increase the risk of cyberattacks or to disclose proprietary data; providers bear the burden of minimizing these risks when making an application programming interface or other technical capability available for testing.

### **3. Stakeholder Concerns**

- Stakeholder feedback: In general, high accuracy rates should not be a definition for equity. What constitutes a “high accuracy rate” needs to be clear, implementable, and considerate of relative differences between groups.
  - Port staff response: Added equity as a fundamental criterion under Recommendation 1a. Port staff is open to using a more specific definition of “high accuracy rate,” and welcomes feedback on what that might be.
- Stakeholder feedback: Recommendation to use Washington State’s definition of “protected class” rather than the federal definition. Selection should be made for the protected classes that are most relevant to biometric (including facial recognition) accuracy.
  - Port staff response: Changed in Recommendation 8.

## **e. Transparent**

The Port Commission’s Biometrics Motion states that:

*Use of biometric technology for passenger processing at port facilities should be communicated to visitors and travelers. Individuals should be notified about any collection of their biometric data to facilitate travel at port facilities, and how that data may be used, in easily understood terms. Reports*

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<sup>5</sup> The groups protected from discrimination by law. These groups include men and women on the basis of sex; any group which shares a common race, religion, color, or national origin; people over 40; and people with physical or mental handicaps.

*on the performance and effectiveness of the technology should also be made public to ensure accountability.*

**1. Key Issues to address**

The Transparent principle essentially speaks to three key issues: 1) the need for any use of biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities to be clearly communicated to anyone visiting Port facilities, 2) the need to ensure that travelers participating in biometrics for these functions are informed in a clear, concise manner about how the biometrics are used, and their rights related to the system, and 3) the need for accountability reports to be created and published for the public. This requires clear, consistent and standardized communications protocols, in coordination with private sector operators.

Similarly, information about the system must be continuously verified. Performance data should be a key aspect of the Port’s review of any biometric implementation taking place at its facilities, and publicly verified and approved findings should be made public.

**2. Working Group Recommendations**

<b>“Transparent” recommendations at a glance</b>	
<b>Port</b>	<b>Private Sector Operators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the Port approves the implementation of any biometrics for traveler functions, it should develop a comprehensive communications plan.</li> <li>• If the Port approves the implementation of any biometrics for traveler functions, the Port should work with the Technology Ethical Advisory Board to produce an annual accountability report.</li> <li>• The Port should periodically conduct performance evaluations to ensure that private sector operators are following all Port policies, including those related to privacy, customer service, communication and unintended image capture. If private sector operators are consistently violating the Port’s policies after more than two notifications asking for corrective action, the Port reserves the right to withdraw its approval of the biometric implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the Port approves the implementation of any biometrics for traveler functions, that private sector operator should partner with the Port on implementation of the Port’s biometrics communications plan.</li> <li>• If the Port approves the implementation of any biometrics for traveler functions, the private sector operator should share to the extent possible all requested information for inclusion in the accountability report, including its assessment of compliance with the Port’s principles and policies, and any known or reasonably suspected violations, including complaints alleging violations. The operator should also share, to the extent possible, the Port’s annual accountability report through relevant communications channels.</li> </ul>

**For Port**

**Recommendation 10:** If the Port approves the implementation of any biometrics for traveler functions, it should develop a comprehensive communications plan that notifies the general public of the implementation and all related information, including their rights with regard to the program, how to remove themselves from the program, and recourse in case of violations of those rights and/or data

breaches. The communications plan should include specific communications on-site, including announcements, signage, flyers and web content.

**Recommendation 11a:** If the Port approves the implementation of any biometrics for traveler functions, the Port should work with the Technology Ethical Advisory Board to produce an annual accountability report that includes all approved, publicly available information on topics such as:

- A description of the biometrics being used, including the name of the biometric vendor and version;
- The system's general capabilities and limitations;
- How data is generated, collected, and processed;
- A description of the purpose and proposed use of the biometrics, and its intended benefits, including any data or research demonstrating those benefits;
- A clear use and data management policy, including protocols for:
  - How and when the service will be deployed or used and by whom including, but not limited to, the factors that will be used to determine where, when, and how the technology is deployed, and other relevant information, such as whether the technology will be operated continuously or used only under specific circumstances.
  - Any measures taken to minimize inadvertent collection of additional data beyond the amount necessary for the specific purpose or purposes for which the service will be used;
  - Data integrity and retention policies applicable to the data collected using the service, including how the operator will maintain and update records used in connection with the service, how long it will keep the data, and the processes by which data will be deleted;
- The Port and the private sector operator's privacy guidelines;
- Traveler rights with regard to the biometric system;
- The Port's biometric training guidelines;
- The operator's testing procedures, including its processes for periodically undertaking operational tests of the service;
- A description of any potential impacts of the service on civil rights and liberties, including potential impacts to privacy and potential disparate impacts on marginalized communities, and the specific steps the agency will take to mitigate the potential impacts and prevent unauthorized use of the service;
- Procedures for receiving feedback, including the channels for receiving feedback from individuals affected by the use of the service and from the community at large, as well as the procedures for responding to feedback;
- Any known or reasonably suspected violations of the Port's and the operator's rules and guidelines, including complaints alleging violations;
- Other relevant data, including any publicly available data about the accuracy and effectiveness of the system;
- Benchmarking data against the operational results of the biometric system at other ports;
- An assessment of compliance with the Port's Biometrics Principles and policies;
- Any Port conducted performance evaluations;
- Feedback about the public's experience, sought proactively in customer surveys, including whether travelers believe that they fully understand the information about the system;
- Any available information on data sharing within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, such as what data is requested and by whom, within the limitations of the Port to require this information; and
- Any private sector operator's disclosure of individuals' biometric data, within the limitations of the Port to access and disclose law enforcement activity.



This accountability report should be shared publicly through appropriate Port communications channels.

**Recommendation 12:** The Port should periodically conduct performance evaluations to ensure that Port staff and/or private sector operators are following all Port policies, including those related to privacy, customer service, communication and unintended image capture. In particular, the Port should ensure that images are retained no longer than necessary, and not used only for their intended purpose. For any implementations of biometrics for passenger processing that have obligations related to U.S. Transportation Security Administration security and data privacy regulations, the Port should ensure compliance with all Air Security Program rules and requirements. If private sector operators are consistently violating the Port’s policies after more than two notifications asking for corrective action, the Port reserves the right to withdraw its approval of the biometric implementation.

### **For Private Sector Operators**

**Recommendation 9b:** If the Port approves the implementation of any biometrics for traveler functions, that private sector operator should partner with the Port on implementation of the Port’s biometrics communications plan.

**Recommendation 11b:** If the Port approves the implementation of any biometrics for traveler functions, the private sector operator should share to the extent possible all requested information for inclusion in the accountability report, including its assessment of compliance with the Port’s principles and policies, and any known or reasonably suspected violations, including complaints alleging violations. The operator should also share, to the extent possible, the Port’s annual accountability report through relevant communications channels.

### **3. Stakeholder Concerns**

TBD

## **f. Lawful**

The Port Commission’s Biometrics Motion states that:

*Use of biometric technology and/or access to associated biometric data collected should comply with all laws, including privacy laws and laws prohibiting discrimination or illegal search against individuals or groups.*

### **1. Key Issues to address**

The Lawful principle essentially speaks to compliance with any relevant local, state and federal laws regarding the use of biometrics, consumer data privacy and other privacy and consumer protection laws. There are several efforts in Congress regarding regulation of biometrics use by state and local government as well as the private sector. However, there is not currently a comprehensive federal legal framework regulating biometrics and associated data; as the law develops, the Port and its private sector partners will adjust accordingly.

In March 2020, the Washington State Legislature passed legislation explicitly setting policy guidelines for use of facial recognition biometrics by state and local governments. However, private sector activity at Port facilities is not currently addressed by state law.

### **2. Working Group Recommendations**

“Lawful” recommendations at a glance	
Port	Private Sector Operators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before the Port approves the implementation of biometrics for traveler functions, it must ensure that the proposal complies with all relevant state and federal laws, including privacy and discrimination laws.</li> <li>• Port staff should actively track and work with stakeholders to advocate for state and federal laws and regulations that codify the goals of the Port’s biometric principles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of its application to the Port to implement biometrics for traveler functions, a private sector operator must include its compliance with all relevant state and federal laws, including privacy and discrimination laws.</li> </ul>

**For Port**

**Recommendation 13a:** Before the Port approves the implementation of biometrics for traveler functions, it must ensure that the proposal complies with all relevant state and federal laws, including privacy and discrimination laws.

**Recommendation 14:** Port staff should actively track and work with stakeholders, including private sector operators at Port facilities, to advocate for state and federal laws and regulations that codify the goals of the Port’s biometric principles.

**For Private Sector Operators**

**Recommendation 13b:** As part of its application to the Port to implement biometrics for traveler functions, a private sector operator must include its compliance with all relevant state and federal laws, including privacy and discrimination laws.

**3. Stakeholder Concerns**

TBD

**g. Ethical**

The Port Commission’s Biometrics Motion states that:

*The port and its partners should act ethically when deploying biometric technology or handling biometric data. Ethical behavior means actions which respect key moral principles that include honesty, fairness, equality, dignity, diversity and individual rights. In particular, use of biometrics at port facilities should comply with Resolution No. 3747, establishing the port’s Welcoming Port Policy Directive to increase engagement with, and support for, immigrant and refugee communities.*

**1. Key Issues to address**

As mentioned by several of the Port’s external stakeholders, the Ethical principle is an important complement to the Lawful principle, because of the current lack of comprehensive state and federal laws governing biometric technology.

Several of the recommendations on this topic are covered under other principles like Equity (treating people fairly and with dignity), Privacy (protecting individual rights) and Justified (no “mass

surveillance”). However, the most tangible aspect of this principle is alignment with the Port’s “Welcoming Port Policy” (Resolution 3747).<sup>6</sup>

The Welcoming Port Policy commits the Port to “to foster a culture and environment that make it possible for our region to remain a vibrant and welcoming global gateway where our immigrant communities, refugee residents, and foreign visitors can fully participate in – and be integrated into – the social, civic, and economic fabric of our region.” To the extent consistent with federal laws and obligations, the practical applications of this policy include not denying anyone services based on immigration status; prohibiting any Port employees, including law enforcement officers, from unnecessarily asking about citizenship or immigration status; and taking tangible steps to make all visitors to its facilities to feel welcome and safe. As it relates to immigration enforcement, the policy includes calls for the Port – within the restrictions of federal law – to “defer detainer requests from ICE”; restrictions on “providing federal immigration agents with access to databases without a judicial warrant”; and restrictions on carrying out “a civil arrest based on an administrative warrant.”

To that end, it is essential that any use of biometrics for traveler functions at Port facilities address whether and how any data collected will be shared with federal agencies or law enforcement or used for any purpose other than the explicit travel function.

## 2. Working Group Recommendations

<b>“Ethical” recommendations at a glance</b>	
<b>Port</b>	<b>Private Sector Operators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the Port approves the implementation of any use of biometrics for traveler functions, the Port should develop an engagement plan with local jurisdictions, nonprofit organizations and others to educate local immigrant and refugee communities about that biometric program.</li> <li>• If the Port approves the implementation of any use of biometrics for traveler functions, the Port should require that private sector operators do not disclose personal data obtained from a biometric system to a federal or law enforcement agency, except when such disclosure is required or necessary.</li> <li>• If the Port approves any use of biometrics for traveler functions, the Port should work with local jurisdictions, nonprofit organizations and others to inform local immigrant and refugee communities – in multiple languages and in culturally appropriate ways – about resources for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the Port approves the implementation of any use of biometrics for traveler functions, the Port should work with participating private sector operators to inform local immigrant and refugee communities, in multiple languages and in culturally appropriate ways, about resources for concerns about any incidents in which they do not feel they have been afforded their full legal rights and/or their treatment has not been fully respectful.</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.portseattle.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/2018\\_05\\_08\\_SM\\_8a\\_reso.pdf](https://www.portseattle.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/2018_05_08_SM_8a_reso.pdf)

<p>sharing concerns about any incidents in which they do not feel they have been afforded their full legal rights and/or their treatment has not been fully respectful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Port should form a Technology Ethical Advisory Board – composed of community stakeholders, academics, technology experts and other key stakeholders – to advise on the ethical issues raised by implementation of biometric technology and other innovations.</li> </ul>	
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**For Port**

**Recommendation 15:** If the Port approves the implementation of any use of biometrics for traveler functions, the Port should develop an engagement plan with local jurisdictions, nonprofit organizations and others to educate local immigrant and refugee communities about that biometric program. Specifically, the Port should ensure that these communities are fully informed about the program, the technology and their rights – in multiple languages and in culturally appropriate ways.

**Recommendation 16:** If the Port approves the implementation of any use of biometrics for traveler functions, the Port should require that private sector operators do not disclose personal data obtained from a biometric system to a federal or law enforcement agency, except when such disclosure is:

- Pursuant to the consent of the consumer to whom the personal data relates;
- Required by federal, state, or local law or in response to a court order, court-ordered warrant, or subpoena or summons issued by a judicial officer or grand jury;
- Necessary to prevent or respond to a national security issue or an emergency involving danger of death or serious physical injury to any person, upon a good faith belief by the operator; or
- To the national center for missing and exploited children, in connection with a report submitted thereto under Title 18 U.S.C. Sec.2258A.

**Recommendation 17a:** If the Port approves any use of biometrics for traveler functions, the Port should work with local jurisdictions, nonprofit organizations and others to inform local immigrant and refugee communities – in multiple languages and in culturally appropriate ways – about resources for sharing concerns about any incidents in which they do not feel they have been afforded their full legal rights and/or their treatment has not been fully respectful.

**Recommendation 18:** The Port should form a Technology Ethical Advisory Board – composed of community stakeholders, academics, technology experts and other key stakeholders – to advise on the ethical issues raised by implementation of biometric technology and other innovations. This advisory board should be consulted on a regular basis to ensure that Port technology implementation – specifically new biometrics programs – are fully aligned with this principle.

**For Private Sector Operators**

**Recommendation 17b:** If the Port approves the implementation of any use of biometrics for traveler functions, the private sector operators should work with the Port to inform local immigrant and refugee

communities, in multiple languages and in culturally appropriate ways, about resources for concerns about any incidents in which they do not feel they have been afforded their full legal rights and/or their treatment has not been fully respectful.

### **3. Stakeholder Concerns**

TBD

DRAFT

## APPENDIX

### ○ Appendix A – Port Biometrics Working Group

- Matt Breed, Chief Information Officer
- Julie Collins, Director, Customer Experience
- Commander Lisa Drake, Port of Seattle Police Department
- Laurel Dunphy, Director, Airport Operations
- Marie Ellingson, Manager, Cruise Operations
- Eric ffitch, Manager of State Government Relations, External Relations
- Bookda Gheisar, Senior Director, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- James Jennings, Director, Airline Relations
- Ron Jimerson, Chief Information Security Officer
- John McLaughlin, Senior Port Counsel
- Anne Purcell, Senior Port Counsel
- Russ Read, Manager, Maritime Security
- Wendy Reiter, Director, Aviation Security
- Kathy Roeder, Director of Communications, External Relations
- Eric Schinfeld, Senior Manager of Federal Government Relations, External Relations
- Deputy Chief Mark Thomas, Port of Seattle Police Department
- Veronica Valdez, Commission Specialist
- Todd VanGerpen, Manager, Aviation Innovation
- Dave Wilson, Director, Aviation Innovation

## ○ **Appendix B – Port Biometrics External Advisory Group**

- Ian Baigent-Scales, Airport Customer Development Manager - Airport Operations, Virgin Atlantic Airways
- Sasha Bernhard, Legislative Assistant, Office of US Representative Suzan DelBene
- Dana Debel, Managing Director, State and Local Government Affairs, Delta Air Lines
- Adele Fasano, Director, Field Operations, Seattle Field Office, US Customs & Border Protection
- Eric Holzapfel, Deputy Director, Entre Hermanos
- Suzanne Juneau, Executive Director, Puget Sound Business Travel Association
- Scott Kennedy, State and Local Government Affairs Manager, Alaska Airlines
- Jennifer Lee, Technology & Liberty Project Director, ACLU
- Maggie Levay, Director Guest Port Services, Royal Caribbean
- McKenna Lux, Policy Manager, CAIR-WA
- Yazmin Mehdi, Outreach Director, Office of US Representative Pramila Jayapal
- Nina Moses, Stakeholder Relations Manager, US Transportation Security Administration
- Irene Plenefisch, Government Affairs Director, Microsoft Corporation
- Sheri Sawyer, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Washington State Governor Jay Inslee
- Victoria Sipe, Director Shore Operations, Holland America Group
- Rich Stolz, Executive Director, One America
- Elizabeth Tauben, Manager Port Guest Services & Clearance, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings
- Jennifer Thibodeau, Public Policy Manager - Western States, Amazon Web Services
- Jevin West, Director, Center for an Informed Public, University of Washington

## ○ Appendix C – Commission Biometrics Motion

### **MOTION 2019-13: A MOTION OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION**

adopting guiding principles for the public-facing use of biometric technology at Port of Seattle maritime and aviation facilities; establishing a working group to develop policy recommendations governing public-facing biometric use at the port; and establishing deadlines for further actions.

### **AMENDED AND ADOPTED DECEMBER 10, 2019**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Biometrics is the measurement and analysis of physical and behavioral characteristics that are used to identify individuals through technology. An example of a physical characteristic includes the unique features of an individual's face or their fingerprint. An example of a behavioral characteristic includes an individual's voice, signature, or how they walk.

The Port of Seattle has long used various forms of biometrics at its aviation and maritime facilities – for access control and verification of employee, contractor, vendor, and consultant identity. However, biometric technology – particularly facial recognition – is increasingly being deployed on the customer-facing side of airport and cruise operations, as both an identity validation and a customer facilitation tool to speed up check-in, boarding, and screening processes.

As with any developing technology, public sector leaders have an obligation to ensure appropriate and responsible use of not only the technology itself, but the related data that is generated. The port commission believes proper biometric policy should balance operational needs, business priorities, and regulatory mandates with protections for the interests and rights of passengers, employees, and other visitors to our facilities.

#### **TEXT OF THE MOTION**

##### *Port of Seattle Principles for Public-Facing Biometric Technology*

The commission hereby adopts the following principles to guide the use of public-facing biometric technology at Port of Seattle facilities:

- (1) **Justified:** Biometric technology at port facilities should be used only for a clear intended purpose that furthers a specific operational need. The port does not condone biometrics for “mass surveillance” – for example, use of facial recognition on large groups of people without a lawful purpose, rather than single-use for travelers.
- (2) **Voluntary:** The use of biometrics to identify and validate travelers through port facilities should be voluntary, and reasonable alternatives should be provided for those who do not



wish to participate – through a convenient “opt-in” process where possible or “optout” process if “opt-in” is not possible, except in specific situations authorized by the port or required by federal law such as U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s (CBP) entry and exit requirements for non-U.S. citizens. Unintended capture of data by biometric technology from those travelers opting out of such biometric data collection, or of any non-travelers or other visitors at the airport, should be prevented; any unintended capture of this data should not be stored.

- (3) **Private:** Data collected by biometric technology at port facilities or by port employees from travelers through port facilities should be stored only if needed, for no longer than required by applicable law or regulations, and should be protected against unauthorized access. The port opposes this data being sold or used for commercial purposes unrelated to processing travelers at port facilities without their clear and informed consent. Individuals should be provided a process to challenge instances where they feel their rights have been violated.
- (4) **Equitable:** The port opposes discrimination or systemic bias based on religion, age, gender, race, or other demographic identifiers. Biometric technology used at port facilities or by port employees should be accurate in identifying people of all backgrounds, and systems should be in place to treat mismatching issues with proper cultural sensitivity and discretion.
- (5) **Transparent:** Use of biometric technology for passenger processing at port facilities should be communicated to visitors and travelers. Individuals should be notified about any collection of their biometric data to facilitate travel at port facilities, and how that data may be used, in easily understood terms. Reports on the performance and effectiveness of the technology should also be made public to ensure accountability.
- (6) **Lawful:** Use of biometric technology and/or access to associated biometric data collected should comply with all laws, including state and federal privacy and consumer data protection laws and laws prohibiting discrimination or illegal search against individuals or groups.
- (7) **Ethical:** The port and its partners should act ethically when deploying biometric technology or handling biometric data. Ethical behavior means actions which respect key moral principles that include privacy, honesty, fairness, equality, dignity, diversity, and individual rights. In particular, use of biometrics at port facilities should comply with Resolution No. 3747, establishing the port’s Welcoming Port Policy Directive to increase engagement with, and support for, immigrant and refugee communities.

These principles will apply until a more comprehensive policy is put in place, through the working group process laid out below.

#### *Biometric Working Group*

Through this motion, a port working group is established to develop further recommendations governing port policy related to use of public-facing biometric technology, which shall be submitted to the commission by the end of the first quarter of 2020. Issues to be addressed by this working group include the following:

- the strategic use and objectives of biometrics;
- procurement;

- transparency and accountability for biometric implementation;
- auditing of this technology to ensure compliance and accuracy, and auditing prior to approval of expansion of technology;
- commitments or agreements with airlines, cruise operators, and other port tenants and users;
- handling biometric data collected and stored from the technology;
- protection of personally identifying information;
- data security protocols and protection from unlawful or unauthorized access;
- alignment with the port's Welcoming Port Policy;
- state and federal policy priorities;
- outreach and public awareness strategy to prepare travelers and community members;
- and any other relevant topics that arise.

In addition, the working group should develop a comprehensive list of known public-facing biometric implementation being planned at port facilities over the next five years.

The working group will include, but not be limited to, representatives from the following port departments: Aviation Security; Aviation Operations; Airport Innovation; Maritime Security; Maritime Operations; Commission Office; Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Information and Communications Technology; Information Security; Government Relations; Legal; and Police. The working group shall also engage active participation from an advisory group comprised of community partners, travelers, maritime and aviation industry partners, and other impacted stakeholders. The working group shall meet at least once a month. The policy recommendations shall be delivered to commission by the end of the first quarter of 2020. The commission may create a special committee (an ad hoc, limited term commission committee) to oversee these efforts and expects a policy governing the use of public-facing biometric technology to be delivered to the commission by the end of the second quarter of 2020.

*Implementation of Public-Facing Biometric Technology at Port facilities*

Upon adoption of the port's policy by the end of the second quarter of 2020, public-facing biometric technology may be implemented at port facilities if it demonstrates alignment with biometric principles and meets the port's operational requirements. Port leadership will implement an approval process for any proposals for new or expanded use of public-facing biometric technology to ensure alignment with these principles. Any proposal for new or expanded use of public-facing biometric technology will be communicated in advance directly to the port commission and through the port's external communications channels. The use of public-facing biometric technology at port facilities is subject at all times to the port's requirements. The port's biometric policies should be incorporated into commitments or agreements governing the use of biometric technology at port facilities.

Because the port does not have jurisdiction over the use of biometrics by the federal government at our facilities, the port will communicate these principles to CBP and other federal partners such as the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and U.S. Coast Guard. We will not only notify them of our desired standards, but also work with these agencies and Congress to ensure that federal programs in place at port facilities are aligned as closely as possible with port policy regarding utilization of public-facing biometric technology.

**STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION**

Due to technological advances, perceived customer benefits, and federal requirements, there will be a significant increase in public-facing facial recognition technology deployment by public and private sector users over the next few years, including in airport and seaport settings that will impact travelers and other visitors to our facilities. In advance of this expansion, the port commission believes that it has an obligation to institute proper policy frameworks and clear guidelines to reduce potential misuse and abuse, while improving public understanding of the benefits and risks. Specifically, the port must ensure individual privacy, civil liberties, and equity, and that biometric technology and use of the associated data is aligned with state and federal laws intended to protect those rights.

Biometrics are used in various forms at the port's aviation and maritime facilities:

- Across the port, port-issued identification cards currently utilize fingerprint biometrics to access secure or restricted areas or to permit authorized personnel access to port facilities outside of normal business hours or in locations where there is no other monitoring of access. In addition, many port employees are issued iPhones with fingerprint and facial recognition as an alternative to password protection, and facial recognition is also used on Microsoft Windows 10.
- At Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA), airport employees are required to scan their fingerprint at many secure doors throughout the facility. SEA also offers travelers the option of using CLEAR to validate the identity of a traveler as they process through TSA checkpoints using biometric technology instead of using traditional identification and validation methods.
- On the maritime side, biometric data is required by federal regulation for issuance of TSA-issued Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) smart cards that are required to access maritime facilities regulated by the U.S. Coast Guard and cruise terminal operational areas. In addition, the cruise industry is increasingly taking advantage of biometrics as a passenger facilitation tool; for example, Norwegian Cruise Line and CBP have partnered for use of facial recognition for disembarkation of guests at Pier 66.

One of the leading drivers of the expected deployment of public-facing biometrics over the next few years is implementation by CBP of a Congressionally mandated biometric exit-entry screening process for international air passengers. SEA's International Arrivals Facility will incorporate facial recognition for almost all arriving passengers (other than those U.S. citizens who opt out), and CBP is working with the port and its airline partners to incorporate this technology into departing international passenger processes.

Facial recognition is also increasingly being utilized by the port's private sector partners. Delta Air Lines opened the first full biometric airport terminal in Atlanta in November 2018, and is working to bring aspects of their "curb to gate" experience to SEA. Similarly, many of the port's cruise partners are working to streamline the check-in and boarding process for their travelers through facial recognition.

Some members of the public and various advocacy organizations have expressed concerns about the rapidly expanding use of facial recognition. These stakeholders have raised issues around privacy, equity, and civil liberties, although their main focus has been on broad law enforcement use of this technology for "mass surveillance" rather than the kind of customer facilitation uses that are being considered at port facilities. They view the use of appropriate regulation to ensure protections against abuse, discrimination, and unintended consequences to be a condition for approval of the use of these technologies.