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## Face scanning border tech tested at Manchester airport

Border controls go hi tech, as a new biometric facial recognition system is tested at Manchester Airport.

By Asavin Wattanajantra, 12 Sep 2009 at 19:33



New facial recognition technology is to be trialled at [Manchester Airport](#). The new system will compare passengers' faces to images held in their biometric passports.

Five new gates at Manchester's Terminal 1 will scan a passenger's face and compare it to the photograph stored digitally in biometric passports belonging to UK and European passengers. The move aims to improve security and speed immigration control times.

Biometric passports contain a microchip containing biographical information and images. The BBC said that the system will be introduced at [Stansted Airport](#) in September, and if the trial is successful the technology could be rolled out across the country.

An Iris Recognition Immigration System (IRIS) which checks identity through eye pattern, is already in use at Heathrow, Manchester, Birmingham and Gatwick airports.

The new controls are part of '[e-borders](#)', the Government's attempt at an electronic border system which it hopes will increase security and efficiency. It aims to see every passenger being counted in and out of the UK and checked against immigration and security watch lists by 2014.

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith said: "These checks make up just one part of Britain's triple ring of security, alongside fingerprint visas for three-quarters of the world's population, and the roll-out of ID cards for foreign nationals locking people to one identity."

The Home Office agency in charge – the [UK Border Agency](#) – was formed in April of this year with the aim of improving the UK's security through stronger border protection.

A new hi-tech e-borders centre will be built in Manchester, and by 2010 the scheme aims to monitor nearly all passengers and crew coming in and out of Britain.

*IT PRO* reported last year that [£1.2 billion](#) was given in for the e-borders contract with [Raytheon](#) - led Trusted Borders consortia winning around half of the contract.

So far the e-borders scheme has been successful, with a biometric fingerprint system rolled out [three months ahead of schedule and millions of pounds under budget](#) .