The following is an extract from the October-December 2007 Biometrics issue of the Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin published by U.S. Army Intelligence Center and Fort Huachuca (USAIC&FH). The full bulletin can be accessed at https://icon.army.mil/ and requires AKO or CAC credentials to enter the site.

WARNING: The full Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin is a 9MB PDF document that can take a long time downloading depending upon your connectivity.

Biometrics Support: Today's and Tomorrow's Vision

by the GISA Biometrics Support Team

Introduction

The Department of the Army (DA) G2 Ground Intelligence Support Activity (GISA) facility located on Fort Bragg, North Carolina, is instrumental in supporting the biometric community within the vision for the Army and the Department of Defense worldwide biometrics enterprise. GISA's support roles for biometrics are:

o Operate the biometric equipment replacement depot for Biometrics Automated Toolset (BAT) and the Handheld Interagency Identification Detection Equipment (HIIDE).
o Provide data storage for the National Ground Intelligence Center's (NGIC) Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) database.
o Host the BAT Registration Center (BRC) for the Language Technology Office, U.S. Army Intelligence Center, Fort Huachuca, Arizona.

Future plans include expanding the roles for the Biometrics Enterprise Service Center/Helpdesk, adding equipment replacement support for the Biometric Identification System for Access (BISA), and providing data recovery support for the national biometric records that are currently contained at the Biometric Fusion Center. There will also be a GISA biometrics team member positioned in theater for Operation Iraqi Freedom support.

Mission Support: BAT and HIIDE

Two years ago DA G2 gave GISA the mission to provide equipment support through depot and lifecycle management of the existing items within the BAT program. At that time the program was focused on fielding and development with no formal logistical support plan. At the same time, the HIIDE program completed its research and development phase and would soon enter into production. Thus, additional depot and life-cycle support for HIIDE was added to the mission. The goal was to provide quality and timely support to BAT and HIIDE field support engineers (FSE) with operational biometric replacement items to support deployed units and others in the War on Terrorism. Procedures, outlined below, were established for accountability and shipping processes for continuous world-wide tracking of items being shipped via commercial and military means. To replace broken or damaged equipment items, operators first have their FSE notify GISA that a problem exists with the equipment and requires replacement. Then the FSE accesses and completes the online request forms located on the NIPRnet at http://biometricsc.mi.army.mil. The forms provide information such as points of contact and location information as well as details about the failed part or parts and work order status. The GISA biometric support team will contact the FSE and coordinate shipping instructions to ensure a safe and timely delivery to the GISA warehouse. Once the items arrive at GISA, a fully operational replacement is shipped back to the FSE within a week to minimize the operator downtime. The broken item is researched for warranty coverage and if found that the warranty is still valid, the item is sent back to the manufacturer for repair. Each equipment item is tracked by serial number on multiple equipment databases. The PM Biometrics' E-Tracker, and the DA G4's PBUSE programs are accessed on a daily basis to manage the growing inventory. This ability to manage item location and status is vital for accountability and for life-cycle management.

Other Support to the Biometric Community

In concert with NGIC, GISA currently hosts the backup ABIS data. Future plans include GISA hosting additional data as required by the Program Manager and the Biometrics Fusion Center in Clarksburg, West Virginia.

Because of the dedicated system administration and network support afforded at GISA, the BRC is also stored and maintained for world-wide BAT system identification. As each BAT terminal is activated, it automatically associates itself to the BRC with a BAT Identity String and operating location. This is useful when searching through records following a positive identification of a latent print and the originating point of reference is required. GISA also supports the biometric community with a 24/7 Service Center. Centralized support includes automated diagnostic capabilities that provide both a rapid response and a preventive measure capability for hardware, software, and communications problems. All customer problems are tracked via an automated trouble ticket tracking system. A historical database of problem resolutions is maintained to further the ability to rapidly respond to customer problems. The centralized function of the Service Center/Help Desk eliminates and minimizes system down time. The highly trained team of service center analysts, system administrators, database managers, instructors, programmers, hardware engineers, and communications technicians are all focused on solving problems and providing continual support. GISA works with other intelligence community help desks to resolve problems that cannot be resolved internally.

Contact Information

To access the GISA Biometric Support websites go to:

http://biometricsc.mi.army.mil (NIPRnet)

http://biometricesc.gisa.army.smil.mil (SIPRnet) Guidance regarding equipment maintenance, general operating procedures and training information can be found there. Access to the procedures and required forms for replacing BAT, HIIDE, or BISA biometric equipment is located on the GISA Biometric Support website at the following address: http://biometricesc.mi.army.mil/helpdesk/default.aspx . Points of Contact for GISA, BAT, and HIIDE are listed at http://biometricesc.mi.army.mil . The GISA Service Center phone is DSN 236-6511; commercial (910) 396-6511 or 1 (800) 416-8014.