



IR Testimony to Senate Subcommittee Reports That Hand Geometry Biometric Systems Offer Proven Results for Airport Security

WOODCLIFF LAKE, NJ, November 5, 2001 – Members of Congress and aviation authorities are being inundated with proposals for new technologies to make the nation's air transportation system safer. But of all the biometric systems currently in use, hand readers are the technology that best meets the tests of performance and reliability required in airport environments, a senior Ingersoll-Rand executive testified to a U.S. Senate subcommittee today.

Martin Huddart, general manager of Recognition Systems, Inc. (RSI), a unit of Ingersoll-Rand, submitted this written testimony before a Senate aviation subcommittee hearing on airport security, held at West Virginia University, Morgantown, W.Va. Noting that in recent years, inexpensive microprocessors and advanced imaging electronics have greatly reduced the cost of biometric devices, while increasing their accuracy, Huddart said that the most reliable system currently in use is a biometric hand reader that turns an individual's hand into a forgery-proof identification card.

"For nine years, San Francisco International Airport has been using RSI HandReaders to meet the challenge of securing access to sensitive areas of the facility," Huddart said. "Only technologies that already have been proven in the field and have an established reputation for reliability should be in the forefront of our decision-making process as we consider how to proceed in the weeks and months ahead. Biometric hand readers offer a valuable solution to enhancing security for Americans who depend on our air transportation system."

Ingersoll-Rand is a leading provider of comprehensive, integrated security and safety solutions, featuring advanced access control technologies, including electronic and biometric solutions (such as hand geometry readers and facial recognition systems). IR's comprehensive access control solutions are used to secure some of the world's busiest airports. In addition to San Francisco International, these facilities include New York's Kennedy International, Los Angeles International Airport, Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv and the newly constructed Incheon Airport, outside Seoul, South Korea.

Biometric hand readers simultaneously and instantaneously record 90 separate measurements of an individual's hand – including length, width, thickness and surface area – to verify that the person using the device really is who he or she claims to be. The hand reader compares this information with a "template" of the person's hand that has been recorded previously and stored in a secure database. The reading and verification process takes less than a second.

"Our biometric HandReaders, when used with "smart card" technology, can form an integral part of an airport's integrated security system," Huddart testified. "A worker can mistakenly lose an ID card or key. But a biometric hand reader will not fall asleep on the job. It will never take a day off. It won't allow airport employees to "piggy back" behind authorized workers and it won't "loan" its ID card or access code to cousins, friends and co-workers."

Huddart also suggested that, for the same reasons, biometrics can play an important role in addressing the shortcomings of the nation's immigration and visa systems. He spoke approvingly of legislation introduced by Senators John Kyl (R-AZ) and Diane Feinstein (D-CA) that would mandate the development of "SmartVisa" cards that foreign nationals would swipe upon entering or exiting the United States. Huddart's complete testimony is available at IR's web site, www.irco.com.

IR is a leading innovation and solutions provider for the major global markets of Security and Safety, Climate Control, Industrial Productivity and Infrastructure. The company's diverse product portfolio encompasses such leading industrial and commercial brands as Schlage locks and security solutions, Thermo King transport temperature control equipment, Hussmann commercial and retail refrigeration equipment, Bobcat compact equipment, Club Car golf cars and utility vehicles, Torrington bearings and components, PowerWorks microturbines, and Ingersoll-Rand industrial and construction equipment. In addition, IR offers products and services under many additional premium brands for customers in industrial and commercial markets. Further information on IR can be found on the company's Web site at www.irco.com.