



## Media Release

### **Australian Government Orders Cognitec's Face Recognition Software for Passport Issuance**

***Dresden / Canberra, November 2, 2005*** – Cognitec Systems, the leading provider of face recognition technology and systems, announced an important purchase order from the Australian Government. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has awarded Cognitec a new contract for face recognition software to be used within the passport issuance process. DFAT is using Cognitec's face recognition technology to reduce fraud in the process of applying for a new passport or renewing an existing one.

The next generation of Australian passport - the 'ePassport' - was introduced on 24 October 2005. A chip embedded in the centre page of the booklet now stores a digitised photograph. Australia is one of the first countries to introduce an ePassport, whereas many countries will follow in the near future.

Coinciding with the release of the Australian ePassport, face recognition technology is being introduced by DFAT. This technology is used to improve identity verification and reduce identity-related fraud. The facial characteristics in a new passport photo of an applicant are compared against facial images in DFAT's database of currently about 6 million portraits from previous applications. This will allow DFAT to detect applicants who are trying to obtain a duplicate passport or someone trying to obtain a passport using a stolen identity. This "one-to-many" facial matching solution employs Cognitec's algorithms.

Cognitec also supplies software to DFAT that is used to check the quality of passport images. Since the introduction of ePassports, an international standard (ISO 19794-5) specifies new quality criteria for passport photographs. Cognitec's software tools help to make sure that these criteria are met before the image is stored in the passport chip.

In a press release issued on 25 October, Australia's Foreign Minister, the Hon. Alexander Downer, MP, said, "This technology represents a quantum leap forward in identity verification and security, providing a much stronger linkage between the individual and his or her identity than traditional systems which rely solely on visual identification. It will bolster the passport issuing process by providing a further safeguard against fraudulent applications."

Alfredo Herrera, Managing Director of Cognitec Systems, said: "We are proud to provide our latest face recognition technology to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for this important passport issuance project. The Australian Government has always been leading in the introduction of new technologies to improve the security and convenience of travellers, the SmartGate border control system being an important



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example. We at Cognitec are happy to be able to deliver our high-performance face recognition algorithms as part of DFAT's new passport issuance system."

### **About the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade issues passports, both in Australia and overseas, to be used as evidence of identity and citizenship by Australians who are travelling internationally, in accordance with the provisions of the Australian Passports Act 2005 and other legislation.

Please go to [www.passports.gov.au](http://www.passports.gov.au) for more information.

### **About Cognitec**

Cognitec Systems, with headquarters in Dresden, Germany, and offices in Herndon, VA; Miami, FL; and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, develops and markets the well-established and world-leading FaceVACS® face recognition software. Cognitec's software experts have been developing face recognition technology since 1995. In various independent evaluation tests including the Face Recognition Vendor Test 2002, FaceVACS® has proven to be the leading technology available on the market. With its products,

- FaceVACS-Entry for access and border control,
- FaceVACS-DBScan for database search,
- FaceVACS-Acquisition for ID photo capturing,
- FaceVACS-Alert for video surveillance, and
- FaceVACS-SDK as a software developer's kit for integrators,

Cognitec has deployed numerous systems for customers from government and industry all over the world.

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