



EMAIL BULLETIN

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY ANNOUNCES TERRORIST SCREENING CENTER**

*22 September 2003*

On September 16, 2003, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) announced the creation of the Terrorist Screening Center (TSC). The TSC, which will be administered by the FBI, will consolidate terrorist watch lists in order to provide operational support for federal screeners across the United States and around the world. The move will help ensure that all federal screeners have access to the same unified database of anti-terrorist information when screening subjects for potential terrorist ties.

While creation of the TSC does not authorize any new law enforcement or information collection powers, the mere existence and use of a unified database of information regarding potential terrorists should enable screeners to access greater amounts of data for use in rendering determinations regarding visa issuance and admissions to the United States. This could mean a greater number of false "hits" for individuals with common names from certain high-risk countries. When such "hits" occur, false or not, the screener will have to take additional steps to clear the hit prior to issuing the visa or permitting entry into the United States. Applicants should plan for the potential delays in obtaining clearance of hits and factor in additional time whenever possible when applying for a visa abroad.