

ICE IS USING THIS TECH DEVICE IN RAIDS-HAVE YOU SEEN IT?



Photo of ICE Agent using the EDDIE device to capture a person's fingerprint data during a raid. Image obtained through FOIA.

EDDIE and Biometrics Scanners: the New Age of Tech-Based ICE Enforcement

ICE is taking facial recognition and fingerprinting on the road to conduct raids and surveil immigrants. EDDIE is a large component of how ICE sees immigration enforcement - through

militarized police and surveillance technologies. The following information was gathered through a multi-year investigation conducted by Mijente and Just Futures Law after a multi-year [lawsuit](#) filed in 2017 against ICE and DHS under the Freedom of Information Act.

What Is EDDIE?

EDDIE, which stands for “EAGLE Directed Identification Environment,” is a little known program of ICE developed to capture the biometrics information of individuals that ICE encounters, questions, and detains in raids. Through the use of these tech devices and a smartphone, ICE agents capture biometric data of those that it detains such as face, iris and fingerprints information. Then, it stores and crosschecks the biometric information in federal and local government databases through fingerprint and face identification.

This type of biometric technology was developed in wartime; now these militarized technologies are being used on Black and Brown communities to make arrests and interrogations more “efficient.” Records reveal that ICE agents enjoy using these tech machines during raids because of how quickly people can be stopped, fingerprinted and photographed. As one ICE supervising officer explained in FOIA records:

The Eddie scanners are portable biometric data collection and comparison devices that greatly increase the effectiveness of officers. They allow an officer that is “Out in the field” the ability to quickly identify a person based on their fingerprints. This device can be used when screening large groups, as in a detention center, or small groups of individuals encountered “On the street”. In conjunction with our service issued iPhones, the device is connected to the

These operations are devoid of government oversight and yet Congress continues to aggressively increase DHS funding for invasive technology and mass surveillance, giving little consideration to the impact on immigrant communities, civil rights and racial profiling.

Tech Corporation Behind EDDIE NeoScan:

NEC Corporation is the dominant supplier of biometric scanners for ICE’s EDDIE NeoScan device. NEC Corporation is one of the biggest biometrics companies in the world and a leading supplier of facial recognition technology.



How Frequently Does ICE Use this Device?

According to FOIA records, the EDDIE tech-device is used by ICE agents in all 24 of ICE's Enforcement Removal Operation Field Offices as well as Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Criminal Alien Program, and 287g officers.

Additionally, HSI International and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) are funding and training **other law enforcement officers in other countries** to deploy these devices in their own country and on their own residents. That program is called BITMAP. All data collected by foreign police counterparts is then captured and stored in US government databases. As of 2020, the biometrics of 176,000 people were already enrolled in BITMAP.

Some of the numbers discovered through FOIA:

- Approximately 2,000 ICE officers are enabled to use the device.
- Around 800 EDDIE devices are operational in the field. This means around 30 devices for each field office.
- In 2016, ICE captured the biometrics data of approximately 10,000 people using EDDIE.



On the Netflix documentary *Immigration Nation*, ICE refers to the EDDIE device as “**technology at its best.**”

Why Is EDDIE Troubling?



Stop-fingerprint-photograph raids.

Tech programs and devices, like EDDIE, promote indiscriminate street and vehicular stops by ICE agents where individuals are stopped, fingerprinted, and photographed. This tech is being increasingly deployed against Black and Brown communities for mass biometrics collection and surveillance. Mobile fingerprinting

and facial scans means that more police activity is secret - giving rise to more abuses - even in cities which have passed policies limiting collaboration with ICE. It raises serious concerns about violation of the Fourth Amendment and our privacy. For example, in at least one case in 2017, the Escondido police and ICE agents conducted joint traffic checkpoints in which ICE fingerprinted drivers using EDDIE. This led to 333 ICE arrests and 13 prosecutions for criminal reentry.

Privacy and surveillance. ICE's own data shows that its "match" or "hit" rate hovers around 55%. This means that about half of the time, there is no immigration history or criminal history for the individuals that ICE scans, further evidence that ICE is conducting sweeping biometrics collection and surveillance. Biometric information can be stored indefinitely - pictures, fingerprints, and any and all biographic information like home address, employment, friends and family information. Lastly, ICE has exempted itself from all age-limits on biometric capture.

ICE Fuels Surveillance Capitalism: Surveillance tech is the fastest growing part of DHS' budget. EDDIE has cost nearly \$40M to execute. ICE buys hundreds of millions of dollars of surveillance tech from companies, like NEC, DataWorks Plus, Clearview, and Palantir, which take, store, or sell biometric data or create increasingly invasive surveillance technology. They should not profit off deportations and criminalization.

What Can You Do?

1. Assert Your Rights: “I Do Not Consent to Fingerprinting”

For those directly impacted and living in communities often the target of ICE raids, community self-defense is critical. During a street or vehicular stop, an ICE agent may take out an EDDIE device to fingerprint individuals. *Agents almost never seek verbal permission to do so.* You can and should assert your right not to be fingerprinted. ICE agents need a criminal warrant to take a person’s fingerprints. However, ICE agents often avoid the warrant requirement by obtaining “consent” from the person.

* Note: DO NOT physically resist the fingerprinting if the officer goes ahead with it. It can be dangerous and considered obstructing an investigation.

Remember to assert all your civil rights and civil liberties. Here’s a more detailed primer on how: <https://mijente.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2017-04-19-kyr-english-final.pdf>.

2. Document and Report the Encounter

For organizers and community groups, incorporate documentation of tech-based enforcement in raid response and documentation. It may be critical to a person’s defense from deportation. Here is an example: <https://mijente.net/raid-evidence-collection-form/>.

3. Demand that DHS halt biometrics collection for raids and Congress Cut Funding to EDDIE Device and Other Tech-Based Enforcement and Conduct Oversight Hearings

We can collectively demand that Congress stop funding DHS technologies and surveillance. Current levels are in the multi-millions for the technology, contractors and maintenance. Companies that make EDDIE products, like NEC and DataWorks Plus corporation, should not profit from building vast new surveillance systems when we have no accountability and oversight over ICE. Moreover, we need a moratorium on biometrics collection because these programs aggressively take our personal and private information without accountability.

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