

# Fort Leavenworth Employs Low-Cost Security Enhancement at Access Control Points

*By Mr. Eric Cashin and Colonel Tim Weathersbee*

In late August 2006, the Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, post commander expressed concern that the post had no effective means at access control points (ACPs) to identify individuals who were barred from entry to the installation. Because all former inmates at the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks are included on the installation's bar list, the list includes several hundred names. The only way security personnel could screen the list at ACPs was to manually search dozens of printed pages filled with names. In addition to simply enforcing the bars, the purpose of identifying and stopping these individuals before they entered the installation was to reduce crime on post. The garrison commander took on the challenge and formed a team that included members of the provost marshal's physical security office (PSO) and personnel from the directorate of information management. Working with limited money and a self-imposed short suspense, the garrison team identified, procured, modified, and employed an effective automated system in three weeks. The system cost less than \$4,000 and in three months identified a dozen barred persons and one individual with suspended on-post driving privileges attempting to illegally enter the post. The manual system used previously identified only an average of six violators per year.

In seeking a solution, the garrison team initially focused on systems it had been assessing for several months. These systems were in use at some other Army installations. The challenges with these systems were that they were expensive, costing up to \$250,000, and in most cases could not perform the necessary task without software modifications. Even if the software could be modified to perform searches for barred persons, the cost of these systems was simply too great.

In an effort to find a more economical solution, the garrison team began looking to the civilian sector to find businesses that might be screening for individuals on watch lists. The garrison team identified a potential solution being used to check identification (ID) cards at casinos, nightclubs, bars, and other

establishments that developed local watch lists or screened for underage persons. Although this system required some software modifications, it was a low-cost system that could be fielded almost immediately. The initial intent was to use this off-the-shelf system as a short-term solution until funds could be obtained to purchase a more permanent system similar to those in use at some other Army installations.

In September 2006, Fort Leavenworth began using handheld ID card readers at ACPs to screen for individuals who were barred from post or had suspended driving privileges. The initial system consisted of handheld ID card readers and a stand-alone computer. The PSO analyzed the system's capabilities and developed protocols for importing the lists of those who were barred from post or had suspended driving privileges and for extracting and recording every transaction that occurred in each reader. Using this system, Fort Leavenworth security personnel have been able to scan Department of Defense and other government ID cards and U.S. driver's licenses. Information from the ID card is matched against databases of individuals who are barred from the installation or have suspended driving privileges. The readers are deployed in the ACP lanes for vehicles without installation decals. When the name on a scanned ID card matches a name on the bar list, a screen pops up and gives a list of potential matches. The security personnel then verify the name on the printed copy of the lists kept at the ACPs.

Because the system has been so successful, Fort Leavenworth is building on it instead of simply using it as an interim solution. The PSO has expanded the initial capability of the readers to include scanning for "most wanted" terrorists and criminals on lists from national agencies, several surrounding states, and nearby metropolitan areas. The PSO will continue to build these watch lists to enhance security and reduce crime on the installation. Although no direct linkage can be drawn between the use of the ID card readers at the ACPs and the number of shoplifting cases at the post exchange (PX), detected cases of

shoplifting at the PX over similar three-month periods before and after use of the system were down by 95 percent. Additionally, Fort Leavenworth will procure and employ scanners in the decal lanes at the ACPs now that the concept has proven successful.

To learn more about the system in use at Fort Leavenworth or to make recommendations to improve the system, please contact Mr. Eric Cashin, PSO, Office of the Provost Marshal, at (913) 684-3536 or via e-mail at <[eric.cashin@us.army.mil](mailto:eric.cashin@us.army.mil)>.