



Why This Matters

Radio frequency identification (RFID) technology is a form of automatic identification and data capture technology that uses radio frequencies to transmit information. United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) produces and issues permanent resident cards that are equipped with RFID capabilities. The use of RFID technology has introduced new security risks to information systems. The risks of USCIS using RFID technology must be addressed to ensure that personal information of card holders is adequately secured.

DHS Response

USCIS concurred with all of our recommendations and is taking action to address these recommendations.

Radio Frequency Identification Security at USCIS Is Managed Effectively, But Can Be Strengthened

What We Determined

We determined that USCIS has effectively managed the implementation of RFID technology by establishing an infrastructure to protect personal information and introducing safety measures to minimize the risk of using RFID enabled permanent resident cards. For example, USCIS has granted its card production system the authority to operate, evaluated privacy implications of using the system, and ensured that no personal data is transmitted by permanent resident cards. However, USCIS had not deployed timely security patches on the servers and workstations that support RFID processes, assessed annually on the effectiveness of security controls implemented on the system that produces RFID cards, or ensured employees producing these cards receive the mandatory annual privacy awareness training.

What We Recommend

We are making three recommendations to the Chief Information Officer to expedite system integration to ensure security updates are deployed timely, perform periodic assessments of security controls, and ensure that system users receive privacy awareness training annually.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202)254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@oig.dhs.gov