

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



November 15, 2013

Reply to Attn of: OLIA/2013-00625:JP:eel

The Honorable Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial
and Contracting Oversight
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

Dear Chairman McCaskill:

The Administrator has asked that I respond to your letter of October 28, 2013, with regard to NASA's use of Eid Passport Incorporated's RAPIDGate system.

NASA takes our responsibility seriously to ensure that access to Agency facilities and resources is granted only to qualified individuals for specified periods of time and levels of access, depending on closely scrutinized need for access. NASA deploys a multi-layered security system that reduces the risk to the Agency and maximizes the likelihood that potentially damaging acts will be deterred. NASA access badges are issued only after each Center's Chief of Security performs a risk-based assessment of NASA employees and visitors. Each Chief of Security may also employ security measures such as limited entry points and escort requirements. Additionally, there are multiple layers of security (perimeter fences, closed circuit television, electronic readers, etc.) at each NASA facility to deter workers and visitors from entering areas outside the scope of their authorized access. NASA's protective services personnel also conduct roving foot patrols of buildings and random vehicle inspections during both business and after-hours.

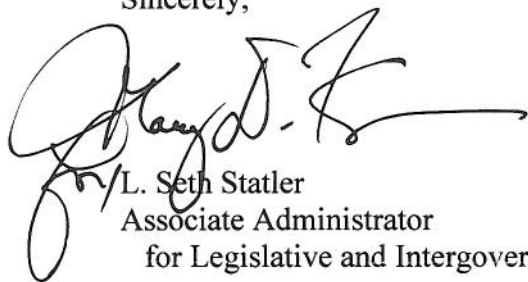
Currently, two NASA locations allow short-term contractor access where approval was obtained through the RAPIDGate system. These locations are NASA's White Sands Test Facility in New Mexico and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in California which is a Federally Funded Research and Development Center operated on behalf of NASA by the California Institute of Technology (Caltech). Both White Sands and JPL have used RAPIDGate to vet low-risk, non-civil servant workers who need short-term access to NASA facilities such as delivery drivers, service workers and construction crews. Use of RAPIDGate is permitted only for workers who are U.S. citizens who do not have a need to access to NASA information technology resources.

Prior to the receipt of your letter, NASA had already determined that the RAPIDGate system being used at White Sands did not meet Agency security requirements, in that Eid International Inc. issued users a RAPIDGate badge (non-NASA issued) for access to White Sands when used in conjunction with RAPIDGate-provided hardware at NASA access points. NASA security procedures require that only NASA-issued badges be used by NASA visitors unless a waiver for a different type of badge is approved by Headquarters security officials. Therefore, White Sands security personnel have already begun phasing out the use of the RAPIDGate system. Any contractors previously provided access via RAPIDGate are being re-vetted by NASA officials and will be provided NASA-issued badges once they successfully complete the appropriate background checks. This action is scheduled for completion by November 30, 2013.

With regard to JPL, Caltech management officials have told NASA that Caltech's General Services Agency Schedule order with Eid Passport Inc. for use of the RAPIDGate system is effective through November 1, 2014. Further, Caltech officials have informed NASA that they do not intend to renew that order and are considering alternatives to the RAPIDGate system in advance of November 1, 2014. NASA Headquarters security officials will continue to work with Caltech during this review.

In conclusion, NASA will continue to follow well-established Agency procedures and Federal laws that govern access to NASA facilities and resources, and we will thoroughly and quickly investigate allegations about security violations, seeking prosecution when necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Seth Statler", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

L. Seth Statler
Associate Administrator
for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

October 28, 2013

Major General Charles Frank Bolden, Jr.
Administrator
NASA Headquarters
300 E Street SW
Washington DC 20024-3210

Dear General Bolden:

I am writing regarding NASA's management and oversight of contractor access to NASA facilities.

On September 16, 2013, the Defense Department's Inspector General released a report regarding the Navy Commercial Access Control System (NCACS), which provided routine access to Navy installations to contractor employees. The Navy administered NCACS through a contractor, Eid Passport, who was responsible for performing background checks and issuing credentials using its proprietary Rapidgate system. The Inspector General found that NCACS failed to prevent contractors from receiving access to military installations before full background checks were completed. This resulted in 52 convicted felons having routine, unauthorized installation access, placing military personnel, dependents, civilians, and installations at an unacceptable security risk. The Inspector General recommended that the Navy immediately discontinue its use of Eid Passport's Rapidgate system.

I understand that NASA also relies on Eid Passport's Rapidgate system to provide contractor access to NASA facilities. Given the Inspector General's findings regarding the adequacy of the Rapidgate system, I request that you conduct a review of NASA's reliance on Rapidgate, including whether NASA's use of the Rapidgate system effectively mitigates the risks associated with granting contractors access to NASA facilities. I request that NASA inform me of the results of this review on or before **November 18, 2013**.

The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight is set forth in Senate Rule XXV clause 1(k); Senate Resolution 445 section 101 (108th Congress); and Senate Resolution 64 (113th Congress).

Please contact Cathy Yu with Senator McCaskill's Subcommittee staff at (202) 224-5602 with any questions. Please send any correspondence relating to this request to [Kelsey Stroud@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Kelsey.Stroud@hsgac.senate.gov).

Major General Charles Frank Bolden, Jr.
October 28, 2013
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claire McCaskill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Claire" written in a more compact, looped style, and the last name "McCaskill" written in a more extended, flowing style.

Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial and
Contracting Oversight

cc: Ron Johnson
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Financial and
Contracting Oversight