



accenture

and

LLA

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PART I. BACKGROUND

In June 2023, Los Angeles County awarded a massive \$8.6 million contract to design pretrial services for the county to Accenture, a global consulting firm known for its role in expanding the surveillance state, enhancing policing powers, and profiting off the Prison Industrial Complex.

Accenture has been instrumental in establishing, expanding, and profiting off of the surveillance state. They created and helped maintain the world's two largest databases of biometric data. Their surveillance systems have been used to justify the secret detention, deportation, and torture of foreign nationals. They have a long and storied history of corruption and failed contracts. And the staff for the Los Angeles County contract are specifically people who have long profited off the Prison Industrial Complex, including former prosecutors, judges, police officers and probation officers. None of these people have either the incentives or expertise offer real solutions to the problems our community face.

In this zine, we'll expose Accenture's troubling history with building and establishing the types of biometric databases that massively expanded state surveillance power, contributed to the detention and deportation of migrants and foreign nationals, and inspired modern day LASD and LAPD surveillance tactics and biometric data warehousing. And then we'll provide some resources to take action to demand Los Angeles County keeps Accenture and their surveillance regime out of the county.

PART II. ACCENTURE'S HISTORY OF SURVEILLANCE

POST 9/11 "SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING" TOUR

9/11 served as the catalyst for the massive expansion of the United States' surveillance and information sharing capabilities, with the government's expressed mandate of creating an information sharing environment, what we've called the STALKER STATE. The resulting fervor to amplify surveillance capabilities to feed this information sharing environment created an opening for multinational management consulting firms, private military contractors, and private security firms, to extract hundreds of billions of dollars in contracts, including organizations that would later become infamous for their operation of extraction and detention sites like Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay.

In 2003, US Secretary for Homeland Security, Tom Ridge, organized a series of town halls around America to preach the need for citizens to join the war against terrorism by engaging in constant acts of surveillance of their neighbors and communities.

Accompanied by management consultants like Accenture, Ridge instructed Americans to be vigilant on public transportation systems, in workplaces, neighborhoods, and in the home. The town halls aimed to foster a 'see something, say something' culture, framing constant surveillance and racial profiling as the responsibility of all citizens, creating a fear culture that would sustain Accenture's profitability. These calls have been echoed as dog whistles, emboldening white supremacists to commit violence against Muslim community members.

Recorded instances of violence against Muslims increased over 1600%

from 2000 to 2001. Since, they have consistently remained at rates greater than 465% of pre-9/11 levels.

PATRIOT ACT EXPANDS SURVEILLANCE POWERS

To facilitate the expansion of the surveillance state, Congress passed The PATRIOT ACT and The Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act, which gave sweeping powers to the federal government to expand surveillance, border monitoring, and biometric data collection. As part of these acts, Congress mandated the creation of biometric technology to warehouse data about every non-citizen who entered or exited the country via any port of entry.

Accenture was one of the big winners of the PATRIOT Act regime, scoring a \$10 BILLION contract to create the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) biometric surveillance system for foreign nationals.

ACCENTURE WAREHOUSES DATA OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS WITHOUT DUE PROCESS

Accenture's **\$10 billion biometric ID** contract with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was for the purpose of modernizing and integrating the **United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology** (US-VISIT) program. This program functions to collect, maintain, and share biometric data on foreign nationals entering and exiting the United States at ports of entry. Under this contract, Accenture developed the world's **second largest biometric database**, which tracks, stores, and analyzes the personal and biological information of **over 200 million people**. The first largest, which Accenture built in 2008, is in India – which stores the biometrics of **1.3 billion people**. The data collected is analyzed according to secret risk assessment algorithms, which then instruct TSA officials to pull travelers for extra screening, detention, or deportation.

GLOBAL CONSULTANTS AND LOCAL POLICE

Local Police Surveillance Programs

Under Accenture's US-VISIT regime, the Department of Homeland Security forged agreements with local police to share biometric data. This data has been used to track, surveil, and harass foreign nationals, for instance over small discrepancies in immigration forms, which can lead to detainment or deportation.

Between 2013 and 2020, the DHS began to phase out US-VISIT in favor of a next-generation biometric database called the Homeland Advanced Recognition Technology (HART). HART will include multiple forms of biometrics from face recognition to DNA, data collected from police encounters, and data about an individual's "associations."

This expansion is significant because of the wide scope of information about people's identities and relationships that these data warehouses will store, the possibility this data could be leaked and exploited for profit, and because DHS, border patrol, and local police will gain significant tools to pursue people based on their immigration status, supposed gang affiliations, or other interactions/impressions by law enforcement officials that are stored in the system permanently. HART is expected to store data on up to half a billion individuals.

As with all information from public agencies and private contractors (like Accenture) funneled into the Stalker State, this biometric data will be stored and used to facilitate the future criminalization of the same Black and brown communities that are historically targeted.

Los Angeles County already maintains a county database called LACRIS, which includes roughly 6.5 million mugshots and 3 million records of tattoos, marks, and scars, accessible to the LAPD.

In addition to tracking features such as tattoos, the database has facial recognition technology capabilities that have historically misidentified and led to the wrongful conviction of Black individuals.

The Consultants Supporting Local Surveillance Programs

Accenture has a long, documented history of hawking supposed “alternatives” to policing and incarceration that strengthen the surveillance state. For example, Accenture has designed “predictive policing” systems for Seattle and London and advocated for “Green Prisons,” and their CEO is on the Atlanta Police Foundation board, which is funding Cop City. In other words, Accenture is one of the state’s key vendors for outsourcing the co-optation of reformist movements into increased surveillance.

Accenture’s \$10 billion contract with DHS to create what, at the time, was the world’s largest biometric data warehouse has been the inspiration for a slew of other global consultant firms, working at all levels of government, to push for surveillance systems that promise safety at the expense of stalking and targeting of people of color and others deemed to be ‘risky’ to the state.

PATHE’s Risk Management and Accenture’s Approach

At the core of Accenture’s design of US-VISIT for DHS was the idea of risk management. Risk management is a security framework that says people can be understood as vectors of risk and their likely risk can be calculated by an algorithm. People who are deemed to be ‘risky’ are subject to additional searches, detentions, and possibly deportations while people who are deemed to be ‘safe’ are fast tracked through security. In reality, these systems generate cover for targeting populations deemed to be inherently more risky to the state, like those perceived to be of Arab descent, people of color, and women.

Biometric ID can have devastating consequences for the people who are flagged by the obtuse, unappealable algorithms. For example, in the years following 9/11, there were **hundreds of cases** of flight and

service discrimination against people perceived to be Arab or Muslim. Worse, there were **over 1,200 foreign nationals**, most of whom were Arab or Muslim, secretly detained, questioned, and deported based on minor discrepancies in their immigration status, all without access to recourse or appeal.

This regime of risk management that Accenture piloted at the federal level in the wake of 9/11 has come to permeate local policing approaches, for example through LAPD's youth surveillance program, Providing Alternatives to Hinder Extremism (PATHE). This program, rooted in counterterrorism and radicalization theory, is part of a Department of Homeland Security framework called Countering Violent Extremism. Now funded by a DHS grant called Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP), PATHE recruits Los Angeles area teachers, therapists, counselors, and other caretakers to monitor youth and report any expressing 'risk factors' for violent behavior to the police.

Part III. IMPLICATIONS OF ACCENTURE'S APPROACH

Accenture's implementation of a 200-million person biometric database for DHS has several troubling implications for the increase of surveillance, "see something, say something" culture, and the expansion of the police state.

- 1)** Accenture has developed a Global Biometric Database
 - a.** In addition to the US-VISIT program, Accenture has created the largest biometric data warehouse in the world for India, which stores over 1.3 Billion people's biometric data.
 - b.** Accenture is working on a biometric technology system for **registering and verifying the identities of displaced**

persons around the world, giving them further access to people's biometric data and furthering the idea that people can only access basic needs if they consent to having their personal, biological data harvested.

- 2) Accenture Facilitated the Capture, Storage , and Risk Assessment of Data with the intent of targeting specific communities for criminalization**
 - a.** Accenture's US-VISIT program captured the biometric data of every US Visa applicant since 2004 and every lawful permanent resident who traveled internationally since 2009.
 - b.** The successor to US-VISIT will continue to build on this information by storing voice data, DNA samples, social media associations, and police "impressions" that can result from stops without the need for a warrant or just cause.
 - c.** Risk Assessment algorithms justify the detention of specific community members.

- 3) Biometric ID and Risk Assessment Systems Discriminate Against People of Color**
 - a.** Biometric ID systems criminalize vulnerable communities (like those perceived to be of Arab descent, people of color, and women) and subject them to behavioral surveillance.
 - b.** DHS's own tests found the systems falsely reject up to 1 in 25 travelers, which can result in consequences ranging from additional screening time at airports to VISA rejections to detention.
 - c.** In addition, women and people of color are misidentified at rates significantly higher than whites and men. In one study on biometric ID accuracy, the rate of misidentification for darker-skinned females was up to 34.7%, while the error rate

for lighter-skinned males was just 0.8%.

4) The Right to Track Everyone, Everywhere

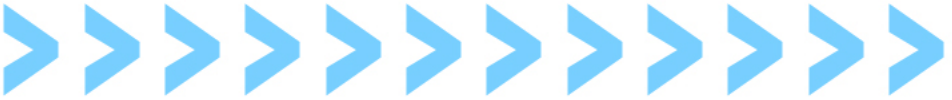
- a.** The logic of Accenture's US-VISIT program insists that the US Government has the right to track, store, and analyze the biometric data of every foreign national and legal permanent resident who has ever traveled to America or even **researched** traveling to America. In fact, the **DHS says**, "the only way for an individual to ensure he or she is not subject to collection of biometric information is to refrain from traveling."
- b.** While the US Government can insist it is only tracking the data of people who are not citizens, the US Government has **data-sharing agreements** with many other international governments, who share information that can be stored and accessed via IDENT/HART. As a result, the US Government can access biometric information of most people who have traveled anywhere in the world, including US citizens, all without ever technically gathering the biometric data of its own citizens.

5) Targeting and Tracking Migrants and Asylum Seekers

- a.** US-VISIT and subsequent related programs capture all migrant workers' biometric information and store it in databases accessible to ICE and local police. This information enhances the ability of the government to criminalize and incarcerate/deport migrants it deems to be immigrating "illegally" or overstaying the bounds of their permits.

To summarize, Accenture's US-VISIT program in the wake of 9/11 was a massive expansion of state power to surveil, to determine risk via unaccountable algorithms, to increase policing and interrogation of people of color and those perceived to be of Arab descent, and

a fundamental insistence on the right of America to track everyone, everywhere. Now, Los Angeles County is putting them in charge of redesigning alternatives to incarceration. We'll describe the current situation in more detail in the next section and follow-up with actions that readers can take to demand that Accenture is not welcome in our county.



Part IV. Summary of Accenture's Contract With LA County

Accenture is the largest consulting firm in the world. Its fastest growing area (\$7.4 billion of \$61.6 billion FY22 revenue) is from contracts with police, military, and defense agencies around the future of “situational awareness” technologies and “data-driven” policing that expands the surveillance of poor people and communities of color.

In June 2023, Los Angeles County awarded a massive \$8.6 million contract to Accenture to redesign Los Angeles County's pretrial strategy.

The contract was negotiated behind closed doors by the County Executive Office without a competitive bidding process or any Board of Supervisors vote, approval, or input. In the first seven weeks (ending August 4th), half a million taxpayer dollars paid for Accenture to deliver 35 interviews, a “log of quick wins” and a \$286,000 powerpoint on the “state of pretrial.” According to the contract terms, \$8.6 million will be spent over the next year and a half.

This includes at least:

- * \$1.56 million for 6 months of pretrial strategy planning
- * \$2.85 million for 18 months of pilots in up to 8 locations
- * \$4 million to support Accenture subcontracts with community based organizations or Accenture staff, with no incentives for the former.

Nobody on Accenture's LA County project team has experience with working in government, with impacted communities, or with a community-based pretrial system. The team will work under an Accenture advisory board with police superintendents, probation officers, and people who have long profited from consulting with police and prisons. And based on their troubling history with surveillance, we have an idea of what to expect from their management of the program.

Part V. What to Expect with Accenture

Accenture's Approach: Expect Accenture to...

LEAD WITH BIOMETRICS

Accenture has positioned themselves as a leader in biometric surveillance and "risk management." They not only philosophically push for risk management, they also have several business units dedicated solely to developing biometric tracking technologies and profiting from their disbursement.

EMPOWER ICE AND LOCAL POLICE

Accenture has a long history of building data warehouses for use by ICE, CBP, and local police. We cannot trust Accenture to build pretrial services that don't serve as openings for ICE to increase deportations and local police to collect and harvest information so they can target populations they deem to be "risky." Even if we can accept that those agencies won't have actual access to this data – which is always doubtful.

BRING RISK ASSESSMENT TO BAIL AND SENTENCING

When it comes to pretrial services, a risk assessment ideology argues that people should be analyzed for their 'risk' to their communities and receive a determination of whether they deserve to be incarcerated prior to their trial or not. In essence, this sort of risk assessment technology serves as a trial before a trial. The algorithm serves as jury, judge, and executioner. And we know that in practice these types of algorithms consistently discriminate against people of color and the poor. We know that Accenture pushes risk assessment models, and we can expect them to bring this ideology to their role with Los Angeles County.

Part VI. TAKE ACTION

Los Angeles County's contract with Accenture to lead their reforms of pretrial services isn't a mistake, it's part of their strategy to co-opt reformist energy and use it to expand the power of the surveillance state.

Accenture is well known for its promotion of surveillance technology and its role in increasing the reach of biometric data collection in the United States and the world. When the County sub-contracted with

Accenture, it knew it would be working with an unaccountable firm staffed by former prosecutors, police superintendents, and probation officers, whose practice has long been to pair any 'reform' with an increase in surveillance and state power.

If this contract is allowed to continue, we can expect Accenture to develop an architecture of surveillance for the county to employ against our most vulnerable communities. Bolstering the many programs we've become accustomed to fighting like iWATCH, PATHE, LACRIS, and more. Let's take action to cancel the Accenture contract before more surveillance programs embed themselves in LA County's pretrial system.

TAKE ACTION

Tell LA County Supervisors that you oppose their contract with Accenture: one of the world's largest management consulting firms and the firm responsible for much of the modern surveillance state, enabling profiling, additional questioning and harassment, and deportations and detentions. We do not want our money in Accenture's hands, nor do we want our pretrial services to be designed by their consultants.

TELL THE LA COUNTY BOS TO:

***Prevent** \$8.6 million from lining the pockets of former police officers, prosecutors, and judges

***Stop** investing millions in the firms that are profiting off the prison industrial complex and the global expansion of surveillance

***Reject** the notion that the police state's consultant class has any expertise on pretrial justice that can override the lived experience of all the community members and groups who came together to forge the Care First, Jails Last vision and recommendations adopted by the County Board of Supervisors

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

This is not just an expenditure; it's a call to action. The Board of Supervisors did not negotiate this contract and can cancel it at any time. Let the Board of Supervisors know you oppose the expansion of surveillance in the pretrial system.

CALL OR E-MAIL:

Supervisor Hilda Solis

(213) 974-4111

FirstDistrict@bos.lacounty.gov

Supervisor Holly Mitchell

(213) 974-2222

HollyJMitchell@bos.lacounty.gov

Supervisor Lindsey Horvath

(213) 974-3333

ThirdDistrict@bos.lacounty.gov

Supervisor Janice Hahn

(213) 974-4444

FourthDistrict@bos.lacounty.gov

Supervisor Kathryn Berger

(213) 974-5555

Kathryn@bos.lacounty.gov

SAMPLE SCRIPT:

Hi,

My name is **[Full Name]**. I am a resident of **[City]**. I'm contacting you to tell you I oppose JCOD's backroom deal to handover the future of pretrial services to Accenture, a consultant with ties to ICE, Border Patrol, and local police. The Board has the authority to cancel JCOD's contract with Accenture today. I urge you to cancel the JCOD Accenture Contract as soon as possible.



Get in Touch

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