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## Bio passport 'hacked'

BY LOUISA BARNETT

A COMPUTER expert is claiming to have hacked into a biometric passport used by Britain and other countries.

The scheme to load British passports with high-tech information such as fingerprints and iris patterns could be the subject of renewed questions amid claims that the code can be cloned by hackers. On Friday Lukas Grunwald, a German computer security expert, demonstrated that data could be copied to fake passports. There had been assurances that such information stored in passports could not be duplicated.

Herr Grunwald said: "If there is an automatic inspection system, I can use this card to enter any country."

The research is the latest to raise concerns about radio-frequency identification, which allows merchandise, livestock and documents to beam electronic data to computers equipped with special antennas.

Herr Grunwald, who says he made his discovery within two weeks of trying to copy the data, believes that his methods could be applied by hackers to any new British passport.

Last night the Home Office defended the biometric passport, saying that while it might be possible to copy data, it could not be modified or manipulated.

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