



In This Issue

Secretary Announces Southern Border and Approaches Joint Task Forces	1
U.S., Singapore Sign Customs Agreements	1
CBP Launches Border Wait Time App	
Trans-Atlantic Partnership Seeks to Crush Illegal Vehicle Trade	2
CBP Supports Border Management Tour for Moroccan Police and Security Delegation	2

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Secretary Announces Southern Border and Approaches Joint Task Forces



Secretary Johnson announced the establishment of three new joint task forces on December 15, 2014.

On November 20, 2014, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Jeh Johnson directed the creation of the Southern Border and Approaches Campaign, a unified approach to improve how DHS protects the homeland across our borders. The campaign will harness and more effectively coordinate the assets and personnel of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and other DHS resources.

The intent of the campaign is to promote effective enforcement and interdiction across land, sea, and air; to degrade transnational criminal organizations; and to do these things while still facilitating the flow of lawful trade, travel, and commerce across our borders.

In support of this new strategy, on December 15, 2014, the Secretary announced the establishment of three new joint task forces to direct the combined resources of CBP, ICE, USCIS, and USCG. Joint Task Force-East, to be led by USCG Vice Admiral William “Dean” Lee, will be responsible for the maritime approaches to the United States across the southeast, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Caribbean. Joint Task Force-West will be led by CBP Commander Robert Harris and be responsible for the southwest land border from Texas to California. Supporting the work of the other two task forces will be a standing Joint Task Force for Investigations led by ICE Special Agent in Charge David Marwell. Peter Verga will be responsible for the implementation of the joint task force models and serve as the primary coordinator on behalf of the Secretary.

For additional information on the Southern Border and Approaches Campaign, please visit the [DHS Website](#), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

U.S., Singapore Sign Customs Agreements



CBP Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske and Singapore Customs Director General Ho Chee Pong signed a CMAA and MRA on December 1, 2014.

On December 1, 2014, the United States signed three agreements with Singapore, ensuring greater cooperation and mutual assistance on Customs enforcement and the facilitation of lawful trade and travel. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske and Singapore Customs Director General Ho Chee Pong signed a U.S.–Singapore Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement (CMAA) and a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) between CBP’s Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) and Singapore’s Customs’ Secure Trade (STC) Partnership.

"The signing of the MRA and CMAA between the United States and Singapore demonstrates the partnership and commitment of each country to combatting customs fraud and to a secure global supply chain," said CBP Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske.

[CMAAs](#), bilateral agreements between countries and enforced by their respective Customs administrations, provide the legal framework for the exchange of information and evidence to assist countries in the enforcement of Customs laws, including duty evasion, trafficking, proliferation, money laundering, and terrorism-related activities. The MRA between [C-TPAT](#) and STC will link the two industry partnership programs, so that together they create a unified and sustainable security posture that can assist in securing and facilitating global cargo trade.

Also signed by Commissioner Kerlikowske and Singapore’s Commissioner of Immigration & Checkpoints Authority Clarence Yeo is a joint statement regarding [Global Entry](#), a CBP program that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travelers upon arrival in the United States.

These agreements mark a significant milestone in collaboration on security, and the facilitation of trade and travel between the two countries.

For additional information, please visit the [CBP Website](#) or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

The Office of Congressional Affairs (OCA) serves as the single point of contact within CBP for communications between CBP and Congress.

OCA is committed to addressing any question or concern you may have related to CBP’s complex mission. Please contact us:

Phone: (202) 344-1760; Fax: (202) 344-2152; E-mail: OCAInquiry@cbp.dhs.gov.

Please visit CBP’s [Congressional Resources](#) webpage for Frequently Asked Questions, News and Events, and other CBP Resources.



CBP Launches Border Wait Time App

On December 16, 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) launched the Border Wait Time app making it easier for travelers to plan their trip across the border. The app provides travelers with estimated wait times and open lane status at the three closest land ports of entry and then maps the best route to the crossing of their choice. Travelers can download the free app from Apple's App Store and Google Play.

"CBP continues to deploy technology that enhances the travel experience at all of our ports of entry," said Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske. "The launch of this app will provide travelers crossing the land border with more information when and where they need it."

The Border Wait Time app is just one example of CBP's effort to create a traveler-friendly processing environment. CBP has deployed [Automated Passport Control](#) (APC) kiosks to more than 25 airports, including most recently at preclearance locations in Edmonton, Canada and Aruba. Much like APC, CBP launched [Mobile Passport Control](#), the first authorized app to expedite a traveler's entry into the United States, at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport this summer. CBP has also enrolled more than three million travelers in [Trusted Traveler programs](#) such as Global Entry, NEXUS and SENTRI. These programs allow CBP officers to process travelers safely and efficiently while enhancing security and reducing operational costs.

For additional information, please visit the [CBP Website](#) or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

Trans-Atlantic Partnership Seeks to Crush Illegal Vehicle Trade



CBP destroyed an illegally imported and unsafe Mini Cooper following a seizure at Newark Seaport.

On December 11, 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) destroyed an illegally imported and unsafe Mini Cooper at a salvage yard in New Jersey following a recent seizure at the Newark Seaport. CBP officers had seized the Mini Cooper after discovering the vehicle identification number (VIN) on the vehicle was fraudulent. This Mini is

just one of dozens of vehicles intercepted at ports of entry across the United States.

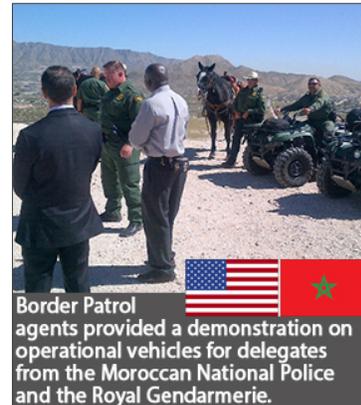
Over the past year, CBP has increased targeting and inspections of suspect imported vehicles, specifically Minis and Land Rover Defenders, as part of "Operation Atlantic," a trans-Atlantic partnership between the United States and the United Kingdom to intercept potentially unsafe, illegally imported vehicles. Since Operation Atlantic was launched in March 2014 by CBP's Commercial Targeting and Analysis Center, U.S. and U.K. regulatory and law enforcement officials have been working together to identify illegal shipments of vehicles at ports of entry across the United States and the United Kingdom. Following inspections of more than 500 vehicles, the operation has led to several criminal investigations in both countries.

These illegal vehicles have fraudulent VINs and are represented on import entry documents as being 25 years or older, but may be newer, illegally reconfigured vehicles, or even reconstructed from stolen vehicle parts. Those attempting to illegally import these vehicles try to use exemptions within the statutes and regulations administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency that allow older vehicles to be imported without restriction.

CBP encourages buyers who suspect fraudulent activity to report the suspected trade violations via CBP's [e-Allegations](#) website. All information submitted is voluntary and confidential.

For additional information, please visit the [CBP Website](#), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

CBP Supports Border Management Tour for Moroccan Police and Security Delegation



Border Patrol agents provided a demonstration on operational vehicles for delegates from the Moroccan National Police and the Royal Gendarmerie.

On October 13-17, 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) supported a border consultation tour in El Paso, TX, and Artesia, NM, for a delegation representing the Moroccan National Police and the Royal Gendarmerie. The Moroccan National Police and the Royal Gendarmerie are responsible for the management of Morocco's border protection. Organized by the Department of State's Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program office and CBP's Office of International Affairs, eight

delegates participated in a one-week informational tour aimed at learning CBP best practices in border protection and management.

The delegation toured numerous sites, including the "International Bridge El Paso" Point of Entry, Border Patrol's Special Operations Group facility, the Department of Justice's El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), and the Department of Defense's Joint Task Force North (JTF-N). In Artesia, the delegation visited the Border Patrol Academy located within the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

At each of the site locations, the delegations observed in real-time CBP targeting and risk management techniques. They received demonstrations of devices that included a thermal detection apparatus and border monitoring tools, and training in non-intrusive inspections and green border tracking. At the Border Patrol Academy, the delegates received training in tactical maneuvers to stop suspected vehicles.

This event reinforced CBP's strategic principle that effective protection of U.S. borders encompasses a strong and reliable partnership with both our interagency and foreign partners.

Last year, CBP signed a [Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement](#) (CMAA) with the Kingdom of Morocco, a legal framework that assists in the investigation of customs offences and enhances overall information sharing between our two nations.

For additional information on CBP's international training and assistance activities, please visit the [CBP Website](#) or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.