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## CBP On the Hill: The U.S. Government Response to Ebola



In response to the current outbreak, CBP and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are conducting enhanced Ebola screening at five U.S. airports – JFK, Chicago O’Hare, Dulles, Atlanta, and Newark – which have been designated for the arrival of all passengers who have recently traveled from, or through, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and, as of November 17, Mali. The enhanced screening includes:

- Identifying travelers from the Ebola-affected countries and isolating these travelers from the rest of the traveling public while the individual completes a questionnaire and contact information form and medically-trained personnel take his or her temperature;
- Referring travelers with symptoms and those who may have been exposed to Ebola to CDC for a public health assessment. CDC will then determine whether the traveler can continue to travel, is taken to a hospital for further evaluation, or is referred to a local health department for further monitoring; and
- Encouraging the traveler to seek health care at the first sign of any potential illness.

During the hearing, the Commissioner stressed that, “Ensuring the health and safety of CBP employees is an absolute priority in responding to the Ebola outbreak.” CBP officers receive public health training on how to identify the symptoms of ill travelers and how to apply universal precaution procedures for infection-control when encountering potentially ill individuals or when examining potentially contaminated items in baggage.

Please visit the [CBP Website](#) for the Commissioner’s full written statement. For additional information on the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) coordinated response to Ebola, please visit the [DHS Website](#) or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

## U.S., Mexico Sign Mutual Recognition Arrangement



U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske and Mexico’s Tax Administration Service (SAT) Chief Aristóteles Núñez Sánchez recently signed a mutual recognition arrangement that allows stronger collaboration between CBP’s Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) and SAT’s New

Certified Companies Scheme (NEEC). The goal of the mutual recognition arrangement is to 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.

The arrangement provides tangible and intangible benefits to program members to include: fewer exams when shipping cargo, front-of-the-line processing, and a faster validation process. The arrangement also increases efficiency for Customs and business and transparency between Customs administrations.

C-TPAT is a voluntary government-business initiative to build cooperative relationships that strengthen and improve overall international supply chain and U.S. border security. C-TPAT recognized that CBP can provide the highest level of cargo security only through close cooperation with the ultimate owners of the international supply chain such as importers, carriers, consolidators, licensed customs brokers, and manufacturers. The C-TPAT program is one layer in CBP’s multi-layered cargo enforcement strategy.

In addition to Mexico, the United States has mutual recognition arrangements with New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Korea, Israel, Jordan, the European Union and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office.

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](mailto:OCAInquiry@cbp.dhs.gov).

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

## CBP Seizes Nearly \$2 Million in Counterfeit Handbags



On October 6, 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers at the Port of Savannah, GA, seized 198 counterfeit Hermès Birkin handbags. The shipment, manifested as polyurethane handbags, arrived at the Port of Savannah from China and was destined to an address in Atlanta.

Had the goods been genuine Hermès Birkin handbags, CBP import specialists estimated that the merchandise would have had an estimated manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) of \$1,861,200. The counterfeit handbags will be destroyed.

"Counterfeit goods pose a potentially serious safety threat to consumers and economic loss to U.S. businesses," said Lisa Beth Brown, Area Port Director in Savannah, GA. Enforcing Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) remains a top trade priority for U.S. Customs and Border Protection."

The seizure is the Port of Savannah's third multi-million dollar seizure of counterfeit goods this year. In July, CBP officers seized 377 cartons of [counterfeit sunglasses](#) with an estimated manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) of \$1,619,550. In April, CBP officers seized more than \$1 million in [counterfeit soccer apparel](#).

CBP protects businesses and consumers every day through an aggressive IPR enforcement program. CBP targets and seizes imports of counterfeit and pirated goods, and enforces exclusion orders on patent-infringing and other IPR violative goods.

For additional information on CBP's IPR enforcement program, please visit the [CBP Website](#) or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

## CBP P-3 Leads to Joint Interdiction of \$9 Million in Cocaine



On October 25, 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Office of Air and Marine (OAM) agents aboard a P-3 Orion aircraft assisted Nicaraguan authorities in the interdiction of a go-fast vessel in the Caribbean Sea south of Corn Island. The interception resulted

in the seizure of more than 679 pounds of cocaine, with an estimated street value of \$9,240,000. Nicaraguan law enforcement also arrested three suspects and recovered two AK-47 rifles that were onboard.

This seizure was, in part, due to the strong alliance formed under Operation MARTILLO. Under this year-round international counter trafficking initiative, military and law enforcement agencies from the United States and regional partner nations patrol the air and sea environments in the Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico, and the Eastern Pacific in an effort to counter transnational organized crime and interdict illicit traffickers. Joint Interagency Task Force – South (JITF-S) oversees the detection and monitoring of illicit traffickers and assists U.S. and partner nations' law enforcement agencies with interdiction efforts.

CBP P-3s have been an integral part of the successful counter-narcotic missions operating in coordination with the JITF-S. The P-3s patrol in a 42 million-square mile area known as the Source and Transit Zone, which includes more than 41 nations, the Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, and seaboard approaches to the United States.

In Fiscal Year 2014, CBP's P-3s operating out of Corpus Christi, TX, and Jacksonville, FL, flew more than 5,900 hours in support of counternarcotic missions and detected 149 suspected smuggling vessels and aircraft. These activities resulted in the seizure or disruption of 112,224 pounds of cocaine worth nearly \$8.4 billion.

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

## CBP Enforcement News



### CBP Seizes Marijuana Hidden in Religious Decorative Statue

Cincinnati, OH – On November 14, 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers conducting operations at the DHL express consignment facility discovered more than \$20,000 of marijuana concealed in a religious decorative statue. During the early morning inspection of incoming shipments, CBP Canine "Freddy" alerted to the odor of narcotics emanating from a package manifested as a "religious figure." The package originated from Mexico and was destined for delivery to San Juan, PR. An x-ray scan of the package indicated anomalies within the plaster figurine. CBP officers drilled into the statue revealing a green leafy substance. Test results confirmed the presence of marijuana. In total, CBP officers seized more than 26 pounds of marijuana.

– Visit the [CBP Newsroom](#) for the full story.



### CBP Intercepts First in Port Beetle

Baltimore, MD – On November 13, 2014, a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) entomologist confirmed that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agriculture specialists discovered a new pest in the Baltimore area when they intercepted *Xylotrechus rufilius*, a type of longhorn beetle, while inspecting a container of ceramic tile from China. According to USDA, the beetle, native to Asia, can pose a significant agriculture threat to orchard trees and are also known to attack forest and landscaping trees, boring holes into their trunks and eventually killing them. The shipment of tile will be re-exported.

– Visit the [CBP Newsroom](#) for the full story.

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