



In This Issue

CBP On the Hill: Implementing Biometric Exit	1
CBP Interdicts \$210 Million MSRP in Counterfeit Handbags	1
CBP Thwarts Ultralight Smugglers with Technology and Coordination	2
CBP Donates Intercepted Corals to the National Aquarium in Baltimore	2
Postponed: 2013 East Coast Trade Symposium	2
CBP Enforcement News	2

Office of Congressional Affairs
202.344.1760

Michael J. Yeager,
Assistant Commissioner

Kim M. Lowry,
Deputy Assistant Commissioner

Branch Chiefs

- Joe Croce
– Budget & Appropriations
- Angie LaTour
– Strategic Planning & Outreach
- Stephanie Talton
– Border, Air & Marine Operations
– Field Operations & Intelligence
- Chase Wollenhaupt
– Trade & Agriculture



Vigilance
★
Integrity
★
Service to Country

www.cbp.gov



Acting Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Wagner testifies as a September 26 hearing on biometric exit

CBP On the Hill: Implementing Biometric Exit

On September 26, 2013, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Office of Field Operations Acting Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Wagner testified before the House Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security, for a hearing titled “Fulfilling a Key 9/11 Commission Recommendation: Implementing Biometric Exit.” In a joint written statement, Wagner and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations National Security Investigations Assistant Director John Woods emphasized the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) critical work in implementing a biometric entry/exit system.

“[T]he United States did not build its border, aviation, or immigration infrastructure with exit processing in mind,” explained the witnesses. Through initial pilots, DHS found that, for a biometric exit program, in the air environment alone, the lack of infrastructure plus the limitations of existing technology would require more than \$3 billion in investments and would cause significant disruptions to passengers and airlines.

However, the witnesses stated that despite significant challenges “[t]he Department has built and is improving on a[n exit] system that is effective today – and one which we will continue to enhance in the future.”

For example, in March 2013, CBP and the DHS Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) initiated a joint Air Entry/Exit Re-Engineering (AEER) project to determine how and when a biometric air exit concept would be feasible. The purpose of the project is to analyze, develop, test, pilot, and evaluate integrated approaches to biometrically confirm the departure of non-U.S. citizens at U.S. airports, as well as to introduce more efficient traveler facilitation processes and technologies to screen travelers entering the United States.

The full written testimony is available on the [CBP Website](#). For additional information, please contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

CBP Interdicts \$210 Million MSRP in Counterfeit Handbags



CBP seized 16,053 counterfeit Hermes handbags, with a total MSRP value of \$210 million, from nine shipments.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers and import specialists at the Los Angeles/Long Beach Seaport complex seized 16,053 counterfeit Hermes handbags in nine shipments from June 6 through September 17, 2013. All were in violation of the Hermes protected trademark.

Had the handbags been genuine, the estimated manufacturer suggested retail price would be more than \$210 million, illustrating the potentially high profit margins in such an illegal venture.

“CBP officers are trained to identify and interdict counterfeit goods, and this is a great example of how their training and expertise are employed every day in our ports of entry,” said CBP Director of Field Operations in Los Angeles Todd C. Owen. “These counterfeiters are not only cheating the legitimate designers and manufacturers of protected trademark merchandise, but also the public and the U.S. government,” he added.

Eight of the shipments were coming from China, one from China via Hong Kong. Five different importers sent the shipments and two of them attempted to conceal the counterfeit products by packing legitimate, non-infringing merchandise behind them.

CBP seized approximately \$1.26 billion worth of counterfeit goods in 2012. Nationwide, handbags and wallets comprised the greatest number of counterfeit items seized by CBP last year, with the value of seizures up 142 percent compared to 2011. Of the approximately \$511 million in handbags and wallets seized, more than \$446 million came from China.

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 Thwarts Ultralight Smugglers with Technology and Coordination



Ultralight aircraft, like this one, are sometimes used to smuggle drugs across the border.

On October 15, 2013, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) personnel collaborated to seize 210 pounds of marijuana dropped by an ultralight aircraft near McNeal, AZ.

Early that morning, CBP's Office of Air and Marine alerted Border Patrol agents at the Douglas Border Patrol station of a possible ultralight aircraft in the area. Border Patrol agents, utilizing remote video surveillance cameras, were able to detect the ultralight aircraft and monitor its location as it

crossed the border into the United States. Border Patrol agents followed the ultralight as it proceeded north several miles where it dropped what appeared to be several bundles of suspected narcotics. The plane then returned to Mexico.

Douglas Border Patrol agents searched the area and located nine bundles containing marijuana weighing a total of 210 pounds.

As CBP security efforts improve along the border, criminal organizations are attempting to traffic their illicit cargo utilizing alternative methods including underground tunnels as well as aerial and water ventures. CBP continues to be vigilant in identifying and interdicting these attempts. This is an example of how coordinated efforts utilizing technology are playing a key role in preventing illegal activity along the border.

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



Nine bundles of marijuana dropped by an ultralight plane on October 15, 2013.

CBP Donates Intercepted Corals to the National Aquarium in Baltimore



Photo by: Bryan Barnes, National Aquarium

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) recently donated a shipment of illegally imported corals to the National Aquarium in Baltimore, MD. The corals are being used as educational tools in the Aquarium's new

Blacktip Reef Exhibit as well as for the Aquarium's conservation outreach efforts, school science programs, and fabrication templates.

The shipment, containing 20 pieces of *Seriatopora hystrix* (or "birds nest coral") and 22 pieces of *Pocillopora damicornis*, was seized by CBP, in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, at the port of Tampa, FL, for violation of the Endangered Species Act. The corals were cut from the reefs off the coast of the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific.

Corals play a critical role in the ecosystem as they provide nursing habitats for marine species, protect against shoreline erosion and provide local benefits for fishing and tourism industries. Most species of coral are protected under the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES).

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



Postponed: 2013 East Coast Trade Symposium

It is with deep regret that we inform you of the need to postpone the much-anticipated East Coast Trade Symposium, previously scheduled for October 24-25, 2013, in Washington, DC.

The protracted lapse in appropriations significantly impacted our ability to prepare for and commit the resources necessary to hold the event as planned. We are committed to hosting the event at a later date and look forward to announcing the new dates for this event as soon as possible.

For the registrants who have completed and paid for their symposium registration, we will be refunding your registration fee.

We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience that this postponement has caused you. We look forward to your participation once this event is rescheduled. Please continue to check the [CBP Website](#) for updated information on the symposium.

CBP Enforcement News



CBP Officers Discover 744 Pounds of Marijuana in Commercial Cargo Shipment

El Paso, TX – On October 22, 2013, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers working at the El Paso Port of Entry seized 744 pounds of marijuana hidden inside a shipment of plaster. After an x-ray scan of the trailer showed anomalies in the appearance of the commodity, a CBP drug-sniffing dog searched the trailer and alerted to the bags of plaster. CBP officers removed 68 marijuana-filled packages from inside the bags of plaster. The drugs have an estimated street value of \$595,200.

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



Border Patrol Agents Seize More Than 3,800 Pounds of Marijuana Hidden in Frozen Mango Pulp

Falfurrias, TX – On October 21, 2013, U.S. Border Patrol agents from the Rio Grande Valley Sector seized more than 3,800 pounds of marijuana hidden in frozen mango pulp. During an immigration inspection of the driver of a tractor-trailer, at the Falfurrias Checkpoint on U.S. Highway 281 North, a Border Patrol K-9 alerted to the presence of narcotics. Upon further inspection, agents found marijuana hidden within one-gallon buckets of frozen mango pulp, which ended up weighing more than 3,800 pounds, with an estimated value of more than \$3 million.

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

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.