

# Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee (COAC) Government Issue Paper: Trade Modernization Subcommittee E- Commerce Working Group

February 2018



U.S. Customs and  
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Trade Policy & Programs /Office of Trade  
Trade Modernization Subcommittee/E-Commerce Working Group  
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**Background:**

- In early 2017, the Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee (COAC) formed an E-Commerce Working Group (ECOM) under the Trade Modernization Subcommittee. The working group consists of companies representing various industries, sectors, and small business interests.
- The goal of the group is to identify operational challenges centered on changing business models, the increased volume of small packages, complexities for small businesses and evolving enforcement issues. The group seeks to find workable solutions to these issues, creating a streamlined path forward for CBP, businesses, consumers, and the public to educate and aid in the facilitation of international trade.
- On February 13, 2018, the working group met to discuss ongoing e-commerce work. The group is focusing on international trade standards, small business education outreach, data exchange, and understanding the changes e-commerce has on CBP processing. This work will support CBP enforcement and its ability to adapt to evolving e-commerce challenges. The work will also focus on public outreach and compliance.
- CBP continues its active engagement with the World Customs Organization (WCO) on the topic of e-commerce, and is participating in working groups focused on e-commerce. CBP co-chairs the Safety & Security Working Group along with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Association (FIATA).
- CBP Office of Trade Deputy Executive Assistant Commissioner Whittenburg and Director Michael B. Walsh participated in the Global Cross-Border E-Commerce Conference co-organized by the WCO and China Customs in Beijing, China, in February 2018.
- On October 19, 2017, The U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security signed a memorandum of agreement for the two agencies to work together to facilitate international e-commerce and strengthen the enforcement of U.S. customs laws. The rapidly changing e-commerce environment requires this type of collaboration on policies and programs to help U.S. businesses compete in international markets.

**Issue:**

- The COAC E-Commerce Working Group has updated its Statement of Work, and has created three teams within the working group based around: 1) Standards and Process; 2) International Facilitation and Compliance Enforcement; and 3) International Trade Standards and Educational Outreach.
- CBP has updated its webpage on [CBP.gov](http://CBP.gov), with the goal of better interacting with stakeholders and new importers.
- CBP attended WCO e-commerce meetings in January 2018. The WCO e-commerce sub-working groups are developing a WCO Cross-Border E-Commerce Framework of Standards with the goal of developing solutions that supports the international E-Commerce supply chain. The draft document was circulated internationally for input, and comment.

**Next Steps:**

- CBP is working with the WCO, COAC, and the interagency to develop a U.S. response to the WCO Cross-Border E-Commerce Framework of Standards. COAC is submitting comments to CBP.
- The COAC E-Commerce working group will be developing a series of process diagrams for CBP on e-commerce.

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