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## Letter from the Acting Assistant Commissioner

I'm Kim Lowry, acting assistant commissioner for CBP's Office of Congressional Affairs. On May 2, CBP launched the [CBP Strategy 2020-2025](#). As we continue to protect the American people from constantly evolving threats and strive to enhance the trade and travel environment, this strategy will guide our actions.

This issue of CBP Access provides an overview of the strategy's three goals and twelve strategic initiatives, as well as four recent stories illustrating how CBP is already turning this strategic document into action. We appreciate Congress' support of CBP's workforce and its mission and look forward to answering your questions about our initiatives and objectives.

## CBP's 2020-2025 Strategic Goals and Initiatives

During the 2020-2025 timeframe, CBP will focus on three goals: mission, team and future.

To advance the mission, we will strive to identify and confront illicit activity, ensure safe commercial activity, enable and expand the use of biometrics across our activities, and improve stakeholder experience. These investments are being made to achieve several outcomes that advance CBP's mission.

To enhance our team, we will concentrate on recruiting, hiring, and retaining the best personnel, equipping them with the necessary skills and support to grow and be resilient, while fostering an environment of collaboration.

To build our future, we will take concerted efforts to harness and apply the power of data, intelligence, and advanced analytics, develop and maintain top-quality IT infrastructure and access, and expand our international and intelligence partnerships to leverage the benefits of interoperability and collaboration.

### Goal 1: Mission

*Protect the American people and facilitate trade and travel*

*Counter Network:* Leverage CBP's unique authorities, data holdings, Intelligence Enterprise, and partnerships as part of a coordinated counter network approach against cross-border threat networks.

*Awareness and Enforcement:* Increase situational awareness to impede and respond to illicit cross-border traffic.

*Secure and Compliant Trade:* Anticipate, identify, and address threats that inhibit cross-border commerce.

*Biometric Identification:* Leverage cutting-edge technology to transform traveler verification and dramatically reduce the need to verify physical travel documents.

*Targeting and Vetting:* Integrate all-source information on travelers across agencies to identify threats.

*Stakeholder Experience:* Champion and improve stakeholder interactions to protect and facilitate lawful travel and business.

### Goal 2: Team

*Build a capable and resilient workforce ready for anything*

*Hiring and Retention:* Recruit, hire, train, and retain the most qualified people.

*Resilience:* Promote physical and emotional health for employees and their families.

*OneCBP:* Create a unified and integrated enterprise working together at all levels to execute the CBP mission.

### Goal 3: Future

*Invest in technology and partnerships to confront emerging threats*

*Data and Analytics:* Maintain reliable data and apply advanced analytics to explore insights that inform critical strategic and tactical decisions.

*IT Infrastructure:* Provide fast and reliable access to resilient, secure infrastructure to streamline CBP work.

*Partnerships:* Expand international and intelligence partnerships to promote economic cooperation, identify and mitigate threats, and extend influence beyond our borders.

## El Paso Sector Border Patrol Encounters New Tactics as Smugglers Keep Sending in Families and Felons

Border Patrol agents have discovered a new tactic in counter surveillance as they continue to apprehend large groups and gang members attempting to illegally enter the United States.

In April, as one agent was monitoring the border at night using an infrared camera, he observed a small airborne object traveling northbound across the boundary. The object traveled approximately 100 yards over U.S. soil and then returned to Mexico. The object repeated this pattern three times. Approximately two minutes after the object returned to Mexico for the third time, a group of 10 subjects made an illegal entry in the same area where the object had been traveling. All 10 subjects were subsequently taken into custody by Border Patrol agents. This is the first

known time in recent history that a drone has been used as a "lookout" to aid in illegal entries in the El Paso Sector.



The same week, El Paso Border Patrol agents arrested Victor Chavez-Ibarra, a 46-year-old Mexican national. During processing, it was revealed that Chavez is a known gang member. After submitting his biometric information through various law enforcement databases, agents discovered a criminal history that includes two felony convictions for illegal reentry into the United States, conviction for burglary of a vehicle in Houston, and arrests for felony burglary and possession of cocaine.

Read the whole story and learn more at [CBP.gov](http://CBP.gov), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.



## Revenue Modernization Efforts Move CBP's Collections into the Future

A new system of collecting fees at ports of entry is helping CBP officers collect those revenues more efficiently, saving time and resources for the U.S. government and commercial businesses. Mobile Collections and Receipts, part of the larger CBP Revenue Modernization program, uses re-engineered business processes and automation to eliminate the need for paper-based collection forms and receipts at seaports. A tablet-based application lets CBP officers track and collect maritime arrival fees electronically and provide electronically generated and emailed receipts. Four ports of entry are currently using the technology, with an expanded roll-out expected in the near future.

The benefits of Mobile Collections and Receipts are noticeable. Between April 2017 and April 2018, the new technology reduced the average vessel processing time from 17 minutes to 11 minutes, saving nearly 350 hours of CBP officer time annually. As of April 2018, there were more than 8,500 electronic receipts issued and \$15.5 million collected through the system. Learn more at [CBP.gov](http://CBP.gov) or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.



## CBP Sees Increase in Unreported Money Seizures

During the first half of fiscal year 2019, CBP officers within the Detroit Field Office achieved a 62 percent increase in the seizure of unreported currency from international passengers as compared to the same period last year. A vast majority of the seizures occurred at Detroit Metro Airport.

From Oct. 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019, CBP seized \$3,852,262 in unreported currency from international travelers, compared to \$2,384,360 during the same time frame in fiscal year 2018. Bulk cash smuggling is the act of concealing currency and/or reportable monetary instruments with the intent of evading currency reporting requirements, in an attempt to transfer or transport the currency or monetary instruments across an international border. While it is not a crime to carry more than \$10,000, federal currency reporting requirements state travelers must report currency or monetary instruments totaling \$10,000 or more to a CBP officer upon entry to or exit from the United States. Learn more at [CBP.gov](http://CBP.gov), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

## CBP and FDA Collaborate to Protect Public Health and Safety

On April 4, U.S. Food and Drug Administration and CBP leaders signed an agreement to maximize inspection and detection capabilities in order to prevent illegal and harmful products from entering the United States through the nation's international mail facilities (IMF) and ports of entry.

The agreement will enhance CBP's ability to disrupt illegal supply chains that exploit the international mail environment, including illicit opioid shipments, and improve information sharing to increase efficiency and facilitate mission responsibilities. An additional focus of this effort will be coordinating shared space and an increased scientific presence at high-risk/high volume IMF locations, helping to facilitate and support real-time entry decisions and increased data sharing. Read the whole story and learn more at [CBP.gov](http://CBP.gov), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

## A Note on Trusted Traveler Program Application Timelines

Trusted Traveler Program applications are being submitted at a rate between 8,000 and 13,000 every day. Specific to Global Entry, 25 percent of applications are approved within zero to 13 days, 50 percent are approved within 33 days, and the remaining balance are being approved, on average, within 72 days. Processing time for program denials escalated to the CBP ombudsman are taking on average 70 days.

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.