

Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee (COAC)

Secure Trade Lanes Subcommittee: Remote and Autonomous Cargo Clearance Working Group Government Issue Paper

December 2019



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection

Office of Field Operations, Cargo Manifest and Conveyance
Remote and Autonomous Cargo Processing Working Group (RACPWG)
November 20, 2019

Action Required:

- Informational Only

Background:

- Drones, driverless vehicles, captainless ships – autonomous delivery is already operating within borders to deliver goods to customers. The first autonomous cargo ship will sail in Norway this year. Autonomous trucks are already being spotted on American interstates. Reasons for the transition to autonomous conveyance range from labor shortages to minimizing risk. What will autonomous conveyance look like in the land, air, and sea environments? How can CBP and PGAs benefit from autonomous conveyance? What are the risks? What is a prototype for customs operations in each of these environments? As CBP embarks on autonomous processes and conditions, it needs to realize impacts and benefits to industry.
- On October 2nd, a government and COAC Remote and Autonomous Cargo Processing Working Group (RACPWG) leadership conference call was held with the newly formed working group leaders Jody Swentik, Director, Global Logistics & Trade Compliance, Briggs & Stratton and Heidi Bray, Manager, US Customs Compliance, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA). The government lead of the RACPWG is Acting Director Efrain Solis from the Office of Field Operations. Maranda Kan represents the Office of Trade on the working group. Steven Graham is the Office of Trade Relation's Alternate Designated Federal Officer. The Statement of Work was discussed on this call.

Issues:

- The objectives and scope of work layed out in the Statement of Work for the working group are to establish a clear vision of autonomous conveyance in each environment and to speculate how customs operations should be built to afford efficiencies both to traders and to the U.S. government.
 - Illustrate autonomous conveyance in each environment
 - Provide a cost/benefit/risk analysis and identify the tipping point at which this technology will be widely adopted.
 - Provide a cost/benefit/risk analysis from the USG perspective that would establish the business case to enable this technology.
 - Determine what Customs operational processes need to be modernized so that trade will see efficiencies from this technology.
 - Identify individual approaches that need to evolve as the trade moves to autonomous conveyance and CBP moves toward automated cargo ports of entry.
 - Recognize the need to achieve outcomes that continue to uphold the role of the USG to ensure safe, secure, and fair trade.
 - Consider the feasibility of implementation by CBP and partner

- The first two conference calls with the full COAC membership were held on October 2 and October 29. The working group agreed to segment the work by the four modes of transportation. Additional consideration will be given to ocean port terminals, airports, Foreign Trade Zones, bonded facilities and drones.

Next Steps:

- The working group will endeavor to meet via Webinar on a bi-weekly basis. An office site, in-person meeting is being planned to obtain a tour of the Long Beach Container Terminal in February 2020. This terminal is one of the most autonomous ports of entry in the world.

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