

# Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee (COAC) Government Issue Paper: Forced Labor

December 2020



U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection



Trade Remedy Law Enforcement Directorate/Office of Trade

Forced Labor

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**Action Required:** Informational

**Background:**

- CBP enforces Section 1307 of the Tariff Act of 1930, which prohibits the importation of merchandise mined, produced, or manufactured, wholly or in part, with forced labor, forced child labor, or indentured labor under penal sanctions.
- CBP issues Withhold Release Orders (WROs) when information reasonably but not conclusively indicates that merchandise within the purview of 19 U.S.C. § 1307 is being, or likely to be, imported. CBP lists all active WROs on [CBP.gov](https://www.cbp.gov).
- The Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee (COAC), through the Intelligent Enforcement (IE) Subcommittee, Forced Labor Working Group (FLWG), provides advice and recommendations on improving forced labor enforcement.
- The December 2020 meeting presents an opportunity for CBP and COAC to discuss existing recommendations, but also identify additional areas of collaboration and draft a new Statement of Work (SOW) for the FLWG.
- The COAC, in Calendar Year (CY) 2020, put forth 12 recommendations in three areas: the e-Allegations portal user interface, contents of the allegation submission template, and capabilities of the system.

**Issue:**

- CBP is working with the COAC to develop a new FLWG SOW for CY 2021.

**Current Status:**

- The FLWG leadership team met on November 10, 2020 to discuss proposed lines of effort for CY 2021 and the upcoming November 19 presentation to the FLWG during the first call of the quarter.
- The proposed lines of effort were reviewed during the monthly IE Subcommittee Conference Call on November 23, 2020.

**Next Steps:**

- FLWG leadership team will draft and coordinate the new SOW for the FLWG prior the end of the CY.
- The FLWG will also assess prior Working Group recommendations to identify renewed and/or additional lines of effort for CY 2021.
- CBP will continue to engage with the COAC IE FLWG to explore opportunities to enhance implementation of the agency's forced labor enforcement mandate.