

Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee (COAC) Government Issue Paper: 21st Century Customs Framework - Unified Entry Process

June 2020



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection



Office of Trade
21st Century Customs Framework (21CCF)
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Action Required: Informational

Background:

- The 21st Century Customs Framework (21CCF) is an aspirational and comprehensive modernization effort that will position U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) for the future of trade.
 - This landmark effort shall update antiquated laws, policies, and processes, akin to the Customs Modernization Act passed in 1993 as part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).
- Through this engagement with the trade community, government subject matter experts, and other internal and external stakeholders, CBP has organized this initiative around five key pillars:
 1. Enhance Facilitation and Security through 21st Century Processes
 2. Define Customs and Trade Responsibilities for Emerging and Traditional Actors
 3. Ensure Seamless Data Sharing and Access
 4. Employ Intelligent Enforcement
 5. Protect and Enhance Customs Infrastructure through Secure Funding
- Each pillar of the 21CCF framework identifies initiatives and actions that involve statutory, regulatory, and policy updates, each with their own execution plans and timelines, that will enable the successful execution of the 21CCF strategic goals.

Issue:

- While developing the framework, CBP received substantial feedback regarding the need to rethink the entry process. Established for a different era of commerce, the current entry process requires a comprehensive update to keep pace with the many new challenges presented by the modern trade environment.
- The trade community seeks an entry process that embraces emerging technology and harmonization across the government.

Current Status:

- The Unified Entry Process (UEP) is a major component of our first pillar. It is a reimagining of the entry process that will expedite release decisions, improve data collection, align authorities across agencies, and streamline business processes.
- The concept is based in the premise that state-of-the-art technology, such as distributed ledgers, robotic process automation, and advancements in artificial intelligence, combined with updated statutory authorities, will allow CBP to gain never before realized transparency into the global supply chain. This means that actors, who were historically invisible to CBP's processes, would be able to provide data in near real time, in a secure and verifiable manner.
- The trade is providing input for this updated entry process via the Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee (COAC) UEP working group, which has provided valuable, forward-leaning insights on how a new entry process can operate while ensuring goods continue to enter in a safe, secure manner.

- With this process, the USG can move towards an automated, account-based, data-centric infrastructure where importation, targeting, and analytics processes will continually scale with trade volumes and industry demands.

Next Steps:

- The Working Group will deliver recommendations at a future COAC meeting that include short, mid and long-term actions to address the objectives noted herein to the COAC Next Generation & Facilitation Subcommittee and to the full COAC membership for consideration. The COAC will present the recommendations to CBP during the COAC quarterly public meeting(s).
- For more information about 21CCF, please visit our webpage on CBP.gov:
<https://www.cbp.gov/trade/21CCF>

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