Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (CTPAT)
Top FAQs

Q. Is there any analysis of resources needed for a company to maintain a strong CTPAT program depending on the size and supply chain network?

The Five Step Risk Assessment Guide Security and Threat Awareness Mindmap provide a comprehensive overview of the scope of a company's supply chain security. The company's responsibility is to outline the specific steps and measures a partner may implement to assess potential threats and vulnerabilities within its international supply chain. Please visit Resources for Partners at www.cbp.gov/CTPAT.

Q. Beyond the important reason for a secure supply chain and requirements, what strategies have you seen companies use to keep top management engaged and consistently committed to CTPAT especially as it relates to cost/investment and resources for CTPAT requirements?

CTPAT's partnership with University of Houston is to conduct an informational assessment of the CTPAT program to observe, evaluate effectiveness, identify cost-benefit enhancements, and to establish updated performance metrics. The program provides CTPAT partners with the information to share the program's importance to key stakeholders. Surveys have been given to CTPAT members. For more information, go to https://www.uh.edu/bti/research/ctpat-project/index.php.

Q. If a profile extension is requested and granted, does our certification remain intact during the extension period?

Yes, contact your Supply Chain Security Specialist (SCSS) if an extension was received, your status remains during the extension period.

Q. Will the minimum security criteria for foreign suppliers be available outside of the portal?

The minimum security criteria for foreign manufactures are posted in the CTPAT website and have been translated into several foreign languages, including Spanish and French. Only foreign manufacturers in Canada and Mexico are eligible to participate in CTPAT. www.cbp.gov/CTPAT

Q. When will CBP exam stations begin to recognize CTPAT status and honor the benefit of "front of the line" status verses non-CTPAT members?

CBP is continuing to work in this area and CTPAT continues to engage with all Port of Entry to ensure CTPAT benefits are afforded when operationally feasible. CTPAT encourages its partners to maintain close contact with their Supply Chain Security Specialist (SCSS) to research the status of shipment disposition.

Q. How can non-CTPAT member participate/collaborate with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the CTPAT program?

Non-CTPAT Members are usually part of the supply chain of a CTPAT Member; or they do business with CTPAT Members. The best way for a non-CTPAT Member to support CTPAT, its business partners, and the security of the global supply chain, is to follow the program's minimum security criteria; to demand security from its business partners and suppliers; to ensure a culture of security within its organization; and to always be proactive in monitoring and providing oversight to all of its security processes and employees.

Q. Are there any considerations for somehow combining Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) and CTPAT, since they both have security components?

CTPAT is currently exploring the possibility of including FTZs into the program.

Q. As global Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) adapt to COVID and post COVID environment, many will develop virtual validation procedures. How will CTPAT address this in the context of its Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA)?

CTPAT collaborates with the World Customs Organization (WCO) and its MRA partners in developing possible road maps on virtual validations that would support future programs.

Q. Will notifications be sent to members regarding virtual validations? If so, how long in advance and what additional equipment will be needed? Can you provide insight as to what to expect during a virtual validation?

Expectations should be very similar regardless of the type of validation performed. Correspondence between the Partner and the Supply Chain Security Specialist (SCSS) will remain important as always, whereas the entire validation process will be discussed and agreed upon resulting in the eventual site selected for the validation visit. At this time, it is believed that the Partner will need a system that is capable of receiving Webex communication. Evidence of Implementation exchanges and mechanisms will be discussed with the assigned Supply Chain Specialist during the entire process. Lessons will be learned along the way.

Q: How does CBP measure and leverage the experience and details obtained from an on-site inspection vs. a virtual validation and is this a temporary measure due to pandemic vs. the norm?

Currently, CTPAT does not anticipate virtual validations to be the norm moving forward. It is being perceived as an alternative method that may be used in times such as the COVID-19 pandemic situation we are currently experiencing which prevents us from physically validating companies or possibly a Partner benefit for more trusted members based on risk. CTPAT will continuously look at the possible benefits moving forward and evaluate accordingly.