

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

March 2021



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 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.
- At the end of CY20, the FLWG leadership team drafted and coordinated a new Statement of Work (SOW) for the FLWG in 2021.
- The SOW outlined objectives and established three subgroups: Informed Compliance Publication, Emerging Traceability Technologies, and Forced Labor Report and Metrics. Each subgroup will develop recommendations or inform progress towards recommendations related to its particular area of focus.
- The March 2021 meeting presents an opportunity for CBP and COAC to discuss the work of each subgroup and progress made on areas outlined in the SOW.

Issue:

- CBP is working with the COAC to achieve objectives outlined in the FLWG SOW for CY 2021.

Current Status:

- CBP and the FLWG held several calls in the first two months of the CY to review the SOW, establish subgroups, and discuss deliverables.
- CBP and the Trusted Trader Working Group also held calls during the first Quarter of 2021 after the working group provided two sets of forced labor recommendations.

Next Steps:

- FLWG leadership team will provide an update on work completed to further SOW objectives.
- CBP will continue to engage with the COAC IE FLWG to explore opportunities to enhance implementation of the agency's forced labor enforcement mandate.