

A Message from CTPAT Director Manuel A. Garza, Jr.



December 2022

Dear CTPAT partner:

As we enter the holiday season, I want to wish you and your family a warm, safe, and happy Holidays. I would also like to recognize a few key program successes from this past year. These successes would not have been possible without your partnership and continued dedication, so in the spirit of the holidays, I say thank you!

To commemorate the program's milestone anniversary, we recently premiered CTPAT's 20th Anniversary Video at the Trade Facilitation and Cargo Security Summit. The video showcases the program's history, mission, growth, and accomplishments over the past two decades. The video also highlights CTPAT priorities and enhancements that have led to the program being recognized globally as the leading Authorized Economic Operator program. If you have not seen the video yet, [please take a moment to watch it here.](#)

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the CTPAT program used innovation to continue delivering benefits to partners. As much of the world's operations began to shut down, we enabled our partners' operations to continue by introducing virtual validations. As COVID-19 restrictions begin to ease, virtual validations will remain a benefit for tier 3 partners, while in person validations will resume for others. We have resumed in-person validations for certain companies in Mexico and Canada and will continue to keep our partners updated as travel resumes to additional countries.

I also want to thank all of you who were able to attend the Trade Facilitation and Cargo Security Summit this July. We welcomed over 3,000 attendees to our first ever combined CTPAT Conference and CBP Trade Symposium event, including 25 international representatives who attended in-person from 14 different customs authorities. The summit featured exciting program updates on topics such as virtual validations, forced labor compliance requirements, and cyber security and agriculture Minimum Security Criteria (MSC) updates. Additionally, CTPAT signed a Mutual Recognition Arrangement with Uruguay customs and Joint Work Plans with Colombia and Guatemala customs. We are very proud to have formalized these agreements in front of our partners, the trade, and partner government agencies. We thank you for your attendance and active participation and are looking forward to seeing you all at the next summit.

As CTPAT looks forward, promoting lawful trade and minimizing security risks will remain at the forefront of all our operational decisions. Over the next year, we plan to resume validations in additional countries and continue to improve the virtual validations process. As previously mentioned, CTPAT will be instituting new forced labor measures for both Security and Trade Compliance partners. For Security partners, section 3.9 of the MSC will transition from a "should" to a "must" requirement for importers, exporters, and foreign manufacturers starting in January 2023.

For Trade Compliance partners, CTPAT will be instituting six new forced labor requirements. As of August 2022, new Trade Compliance applicants must provide evidence demonstrating compliance with



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the forced labor requirements upon application. Existing Trade Compliance partners must provide evidence demonstrating compliance with these requirements by August 2023.

To conclude, I want to emphasize that without the support of our partner government agencies, international partners, and trade partners, CTPAT's success would not be possible. I thank you again for your continued collaboration and look forward to sharing additional program successes with you in the future.

Manuel A. Garza, Jr.

Director, CTPAT

Office of Field Operations

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

If you have questions, please reach out to your assigned SCSS/office manager or contact one of the six CTPAT Field Offices by email. As a Program and as an agency CTPAT and CBP are appreciative of the strong partnership we share with industry and look forward to continuing to work with you all to protect U.S. national and economic security through our partnership.

