

# CTPAT ALERT

## Increase of Narcotics Smuggling on the Northern Border

Last Updated: August 18, 2020



To All CTPAT Members - This message is provided as a service to our Members and for your situational awareness.

In the past few weeks, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has detected a dramatic increase in narcotics smuggling seizures, mostly Canadian grown marijuana, in commercial shipments entering through several Northern land border ports.

CTPAT Importers, Foreign Manufacturers, and US/Canada Highway Carriers should be cognizant that Drug Trafficking Organizations may target all entities involved in the supply chain regardless of the commodity being transported.

In light of this information, CTPAT highly recommends Members to re-assess the risk of shipments coming from Canada. It is imperative that companies mitigate vulnerabilities through actions such as:

- Reinforcing Business Partners' Screening and Monitoring Procedures / Policies.
  - ✓ Stress the importance of security within the supply chain to all business partners;
  - ✓ Monitor your business partner's via the CTPAT Portal's Status Verification Interface (SVI).
  - ✓ Increase the number of on-site visits to business partners operating in high risk areas.
  - ✓ Highly scrutinize new business partners.
- Enforcing Contracting/Sub-Contracting Policies and Procedures.
  - ✓ Thoroughly screen the contractors and sub-contractors which are providing such services.
  - ✓ Limit sub-contracting to one level only.
- Ensuring all Security Inspections are Being Conducted Thoroughly.
  - ✓ Systematic security inspections of conveyances and Instruments of International Traffic (IIT) are conducted at the point of stuffing, and at conveyances/IIT storage yards.
  - ✓ Increase the frequency of random and unannounced inspections by management of conveyances/IIT after the transportation staff have conducted the security inspections.
- Verifying/Strengthening Conveyance Tracking and Monitoring Procedures
  - ✓ Ensure all conveyances are being tracked and monitored –preferably in real time.
  - ✓ Make sure pre-designated transit routes which include anticipated transit times between waypoints are being followed.
  - ✓ Maintain constant communication with the driver while en-route to the U.S. border and to U.S. Border Patrol checkpoints.
- Ensuring all program seal requirements are being met.
  - ✓ CTPAT's seal verification process (VVTT – view, verify, tug, and twist) must be followed as soon as container is stuffed, and immediately prior to arrival at the border crossing in high risk areas.
- Reporting Suspicious Activities and Anomalies
  - ✓ Make sure managers/appropriate personnel understand company procedures on reporting suspicious activities, discrepancies and anomalies to local law enforcement agencies, CBP Ports and assigned CTPAT Supply Chain Security Specialist.



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- Being Proactive When it Comes to Personnel Security.
  - ✓ Periodically conduct thorough background checks of employees, especially those who handle cargo.
  - ✓ Ensure all employees understand the company's Code of Conduct – to include being aware of the penalties and disciplinary procedures should they fail to adhere to it.
- Conducting Security Threat and Awareness Training Frequently.
  - ✓ Conduct refresher training for employees handling cargo, especially truck drivers.
  - ✓ Train all personnel on how to detect and report internal conspiracies.

Members should consider implementing key minimum security criteria recommendations in order to mitigate risks on the land border environment. Some of those recommendations include:

- Incorporate specific requirements for tracking, reporting, and sharing of data within terms of service agreements with service providers. Shippers should have access to their carrier's GPS fleet monitoring system, so they may track the movement of their shipments.
- Implement a "no-stop" policy with regard to unscheduled stops for land border shipments that are in proximity to the United States border.
- Set up a mechanism to report security related issues anonymously. When an allegation is received, it should be investigated, and if applicable, corrective actions should be taken.
- As documented evidence of the properly installed seal, digital photographs should be taken at the point of stuffing. To the extent feasible, these images should be electronically forwarded to the destination for verification purposes.

These are some additional best practices from the truck industry:

- Using cable seals in a figure 8 pattern around the locking bars of the trailer in conjunction with a high security seal.
- Using tamper resistant "smart" seals that transmit date, time and GPS location coordinate information when subjected to tampering.

Many CBP Ports have established a local 24/7 contact number and Members should familiarize themselves with local port communication protocols and call 1-800-BE ALERT (1-800-232-5378) to report suspicious activity. You may find your local CBP Port telephone number here: <https://www.cbp.gov/contact/ports>

**C-TPAT Appreciates Your Continued Efforts to Secure the International Supply Chain.**

### CTPAT Program

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