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## Streamlining the Export/Import Process for America's Businesses

On February 19, 2014, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Jeh Johnson joined President Barack Obama in announcing an Executive Order (EO) on *Streamlining the Export/Import Process for America's Businesses*. The EO establishes a December 31, 2016, deadline for completion and government-wide use of the International Trade Data System (ITDS), an automated technology capability enabled by U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) for the importation and exportation of cargo.

“By leveraging resources like the International Trade Data System, we can modernize and simplify the way government interacts with businesses to further bolster our Nation's economic competitiveness,” said Secretary Johnson.

Each year, more than 50 million containers and \$3.8 trillion worth of goods cross our borders. Once completed, ITDS will allow businesses to electronically transmit data required by 47 Federal agencies through a “single window” further enhancing U.S. economic competitiveness by reducing administrative costs and streamlining processes associated with moving goods in and out of the country. The benefits of ITDS are substantial and include:

- Reduction or elimination of paper forms will reduce handling costs for the Government and private sector, and legitimate trade will be approved for release into the commerce more quickly.
- Access to electronic data will improve targeting of high-risk people, cargo, and conveyances crossing the border. Those considered low-risk will move more quickly and smoothly through ports of entry and exit.
- Access to more accurate and complete international trade data will improve policy formulation and review.
- Federal agencies with border responsibilities will be better able to work with the trade to improve trade compliance.

DHS, in close collaboration with other U.S. Government agencies, will employ a phased approach to meet the deadline for the completion of ITDS. By December 31, 2016, electronic submission of data and documentation via ACE will be required to import and export cargo.

For additional information, please read the [Executive Order](#), an [ITDS fact sheet](#), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.



## CBP Begins Redeployment of the Tethered Aerostat Radar System in Puerto Rico

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Office of Air and Marine (OAM) will soon redeploy the Tethered Aerostat Radar System (TARS) in Lajas, PR. In August 2011, the TARS aerostat and radar was lost in a weather-induced crash. The TARS site has been inoperable since due to lack of spare equipment.

“The restoration of the Tethered Aerostat Radar System will provide an additional asset to continue our collaborative operations and partnerships with other Federal, State and Local law enforcement in the Caribbean,” stated OAM Assistant Commissioner Randolph D. Alles.

CBP recently assumed responsibility for the TARS from the U.S. Air Force. The aerostat-borne surveillance system has been used in the United States since 1978 and provides radar detection and monitoring of low-altitude aircraft and surface vessels. CBP's TARS program consists of eight TARS aerostat sites with six along the Southwest border — Yuma and Ft. Huachuca, AZ; Deming, NM; Marfa, Eagle Pass, and Rio Grande City, TX — and additional sites in the Florida Keys and Puerto Rico.

For additional information, please contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

The Office of Congressional Affairs (OCA) serves as the single point of contact within CBP for communications between CBP and Congress.

OCA is committed to addressing any question or concern you may have related to CBP's complex mission. Please contact us:

Phone: (202) 344-1760; Fax: (202) 344-2152; E-mail: [OCAInquiry@cbp.dhs.gov](mailto:OCAInquiry@cbp.dhs.gov).

Please visit CBP's [Congressional Resources](#) webpage for Frequently Asked Questions, News and Events, and other CBP Resources.



PLAY VIDEO

## Protecting the United States from Foreign Animal Diseases

America's farms — the food they produce fuels our Nation's economy as well as its inhabitants.

There are more than two million farms in the United States and more than half of them count livestock as their major business. But what would happen to our Nation's economy, our food supply, and our food prices if U.S. livestock were exposed to deadly foreign animal diseases? And, what would happen to our wildlife – like birds, deer, and buffalo – that are also vitally important to our Nation's ecosystems and tourism?

Some foreign animal diseases are so contagious that they could devastate our food supply and our economy. That is why U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has trained its Agriculture Specialists to intercept these pathogens and remain ever-vigilant protecting the U.S. livestock industry while facilitating the flow of admissible agricultural products into the country.

CBP works closely with the United States Department of Agriculture to enforce import restrictions that keep out foreign animal diseases. Keeping U.S. livestock free of foreign animal diseases not only avoids the imposition of trade sanctions on the United States, it helps keep prices down for American consumers. Foreign animal diseases can be carried into the United States in a variety of ways. Some of them are quite visible; others are hidden in the fine print of processed food ingredients.

For additional information, please view the [video](#) or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.



**BLUE CAMPAIGN**  
One Voice. One Mission. End Human Trafficking.™

## Blue Lightning Initiative: Partnering with Airlines to Fight Human Trafficking

The Blue Lightning Initiative (BLI) is a federal partnership with the aviation industry to combat human trafficking. Using educational materials produced by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and the Departments of Homeland Security (DHS) and Transportation

(DOT), participating airlines voluntarily instruct commercial airline flight crews and other airline personnel to identify potential traffickers and their victims and to report their suspicions to federal law enforcement.

Beginning with ticket agents who routinely handle travel documents and question passengers as part of the check-in and boarding process and continuing with flight crews, airline personnel have extended time with travelers and opportunities for interactions. They are skilled observers, and with the appropriate training, they can be the frontline against trafficking.

The BLI training materials provide a basic overview of trafficking, outline the indicators of human trafficking, provide mechanisms to report human trafficking. To alert authorities about suspect trafficking, airline employees can use cockpit communications, follow their airline's in-flight reporting protocol, submit a report via the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) internet tip form or call the HSI Tip Line. These real-time reporting mechanisms give law enforcement additional time to research and analyze information and coordinate an appropriate, effective response.

Since the launch of BLI in June 2013, five airlines have signed BLI Memoranda of Understanding with DHS and DOT. Several more agreements are in development, and thousands of aviation employees having already received training. Other collaborators on BLI include ICE, the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center, Transportation Security Administration, Federal Air Marshal Service, DOT's Federal Aviation Administration, nongovernmental organizations, and private industry.

For additional information, please visit the [CBP Website](#) or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

## CBP Enforcement News



### CBP Agriculture Specialists Inspect Valentine's Day Flowers for Harmful Pests

The weeks leading up to Valentine's Day are some of the most demanding each year for U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agriculture specialists as they ensure that cut flowers are free from microscopic insects and diseases that could harm the U.S. agricultural and floral industries. CBP processed approximately 867.2 million cut flower stems during the 2013 Valentine's Day season and intercepted 1,867 pests.

— Visit the [CBP Newsroom](#) for the full story.



### Border Patrol Agents Seize \$250,000 in Methamphetamine at Checkpoints

Salton City, CA — On February 13, 2014, El Centro Sector Border Patrol agents assigned to the Indio Station arrested two suspected narcotics smugglers and seized more than 21 pounds of methamphetamine in two separate events. The first incident occurred when a Border Patrol canine detection team found an abandoned backpack during a bus check. The second incident occurred when a canine alerted to a vehicle in which agents discovered 46 packages of methamphetamine hidden inside a rear seat.

— Visit the [CBP Newsroom](#) for the full story.



### CBP Officers Seize \$656,000 in Cocaine at Port of Entry

Brownsville, TX – On February 12, 2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers at the Gateway International Bridge discovered 20 pounds of cocaine hidden within a vehicle. The driver of the vehicle had been referred to secondary where officers discovered 12 hidden packages of cocaine. CBP officers turned the driver over to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations and seized the narcotics and vehicle.

— Visit the [CBP Newsroom](#) for the full story.

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