



Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism

Bulletin

Best Practice - Port of Antwerp: Information-Sharing Network

The Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) program is one layer in U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) multi-layered cargo enforcement strategy. Through this program, CBP works with the trade community to strengthen international supply chains and improve United States border security.

To enhance communication with its members, C-TPAT routinely highlights security matters for the purpose of raising awareness and renewing Partners' vigilance, and recognizing best practices implemented to address supply chain security concerns.

This bulletin, generated in cooperation with BSI Supply Chain Solutions, recognizes a

best practice that has been implemented at the Port of Antwerp, Belgium, Europe's second largest seaport. C-TPAT applauds efforts such as this one and encourages other ports to implement similar programs.



Businesses operating at the Port of Antwerp are now able to participate in a program that facilitates the exchange of information about cargo-related crime between companies and authorities. The system, known as the Neighborhood Information Network (BIN), allows companies to submit anonymous tips about suspicious activity in the port area, which police then disseminates to other companies participating in the program. Approximately 650 companies were asked to join the program and 451 are now participating in the project.

The program was created in response to a number of recent incidents at the port that exposed security gaps and indicated an increase in criminal activity at the facility. In the most notable incident, thieves hacked into computers at the port, allowing them to track and redirect drug-laden containers arriving at the port. In another series of incidents, Belgian police recorded at least three instances in which smugglers hijacked cargo trucks leaving the port to extract shipments of drugs concealed in the vehicles. In these cases, the truck driver was not aware his or her shipment contained the contraband. The hijackers in these incidents were heavily armed, sometimes with automatic weapons.



Smugglers have also been known to steal the identifying information of legitimate companies operating at the port in order to arrange for the import of drug-laden shipments under their name.

The use of these tactics at the Port of Antwerp is motivated by relatively strict physical security controls, forcing criminals to use more creative indirect methods since they cannot directly access the port. In addition to the methods described above, BSI Supply Chain Solutions has noted an increase in drug trafficking activity at smaller ports in the southern Dutch province of Zeeland, particularly Terneuzen and Vlissingen. Recent investigations at these ports have centered on criminals attempting to break into containers in order to remove drugs, and on warehouse employees who have participated in drug smuggling schemes. This increase in activity is likely occurring in response to enhanced security at the larger ports of Rotterdam and Zeebrugge in addition to Antwerp.

As the single, unified border agency of the United States, CBP's mission is extraordinarily important to the protection of America and the American people. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, both the C-TPAT and the Container Security Initiative (CSI) programs were created to form part of CBP's multi-layered cargo enforcement strategy.



CSI addresses the threat to border security and global trade posed by the potential use of terrorist organizations of the maritime container as the delivery mechanism of weapons or terrorists. Through CSI, CBP officers work with host customs administrations to establish security criteria for identifying high-risk containers. Those administrations use non-intrusive inspection and radiation detection technology to screen high-risk containers before they are shipped to U.S. ports. There are now 58 operational CSI ports that pre-screen over 80 percent of all maritime containerized cargo imported into the United States. One of those ports is the Port of Antwerp, Belgium.

If you have information about the possible use by terrorists of shipping containers to smuggle weapons or other items, contact the local authorities and/or your CBP port of entry. To find your local CBP port of entry's telephone number, please navigate to the site below:

<http://www.cbp.gov/contact/ports>

Or call the CBP hotline at 1-800-BE ALERT (1-800-232-5378)
C-TPAT Partners are Required to Notify their Supply Chain Security Specialist

C-TPAT Program

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