

Frontline

U.S. Customs and Border Protection ★ Summer 2008



Technology
the future of
border security



U.S. Customs and Border Protection

★ **FRONTLINE IMAGES** *Summertime means vacation for many, but CBP is always on the job, patrolling the waters near our nations's borders.*



SUMMER 2008



★ FEATURES

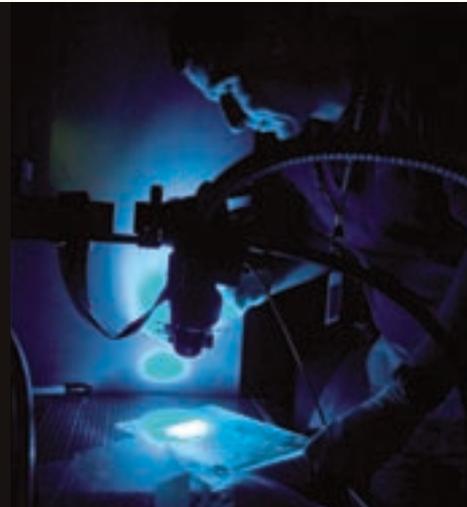
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★ CBP scientists play a critical role in the agency's mission by analyzing evidence of potentially illegitimate activity. Here, a forensic analyst uses specialized processing techniques and equipment to examine fingerprints.

*on the cover: photo by
James R. Tourtellotte*



COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE



Advanced technology helps CBP's officers and agents do their job better, faster and safer. Today, our personnel have more tools at their disposal than ever before. These tools enable them to see into containers from across the globe, to recognize the presence of radiation, to scan the horizon from aircraft in the pitch-black night, to "look" into a trailer as it proceeds through a port, or to instantaneously know if a visitor is on a terror watch list. The technology CBP uses on the job now encourages us to envision how we can adapt and expand its use in the future.

Although CBP is just five years old, our predecessors have been searching for better tools to get the job done for generations. Without high-tech scanning devices, they discovered that a thin metal probe worked quite well for determining if a box was really full of flowers or cocaine. Border Patrol agents have used the ancient Indian art of sign cutting, where they study footprints and determine a great deal about who came through, when, and where they were heading.

We have benefited greatly from another asset at our ports of entry—our detector dogs. They can masterfully sniff out contraband, explosives and people. I've seen detector dogs circle a vehicle with a driver and passenger in the front seat, and two passengers in the back seat. The dog, however, alerts that something is wrong. Sure enough, a fifth person was hidden on the floor in the back seat.

On the other end of the spectrum, our aviation assets increase our capabilities by giving us "eyes in the sky." They continue to enable many of our most ambitious law enforcement activities and to lead the way on many of our homeland security assessment challenges. Our world-class unmanned aircraft systems provide unprecedented capabilities in a law enforcement environment. Their high-optics, infrared surveillance cameras and cutting-edge radar and surveillance lasers give us enhanced capabilities on our expansive borders. And I am particularly pleased to have a vehicle we can send into a dangerous situation that does not put personnel at risk.

Throughout the agency, new tools are improving our performance. In this issue of *Frontline*, you can read about the reality and promise of technological tools at CBP. As you read, remember that it is not only about the technology; it is about the technician. It is not just about the tool; it is about the craftsman. Without smart, responsive CBP professionals to use these tools, even the most sophisticated technology can't do the job alone.

—W. Ralph Basham, Commissioner

Frontline

Summer 2008

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CORRECTIONS

A photo caption on page 26 of our Spring issue misidentified Michael Carmody, executive director of the Australian Customs Service, as Robert Correll, deputy secretary of the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship. We apologize for the error.



Photo by James R. Tomchik

★ Technology is critical to CBP's mission. Here, an employee uses non-intrusive radiation detectors to check several containers, not shown, for dangerous material.

EYE in the SKY



★ CBP is placing increased emphasis on protecting the northern border. Here, Air & Marine agents rappel from a Blackhawk helicopter.

presence at and between ports of entry. To support the expanding northern border effort, CBP Air and Marine (A&M) has developed a plan to increase security through accelerated air operations at five locations. A&M has already established four air wings on the northern border: Bellingham, Wash. (August 2004); Plattsburgh, N.Y. (October 2004); Great Falls, Mont. (September 2006); and Grand Forks, N.D. (September 2007).

By August 2008, the fifth air wing will be established at Detroit, Mich.

Further, by late 2009, A&M will have established an additional six marine units along the northern border to augment the three existing marine units in Bellingham, Detroit and Buffalo, N.Y.

The locations were chosen to provide an efficient and appropriate interdiction/law enforcement response to criminal activity. The North Dakota Air Branch in Grand Forks was chosen to provide a strategic, centrally located air branch. It is currently becoming certified for Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) operations. A UAS is scheduled to deploy from Grand Forks in 2008, and CBP is reviewing the need for other UASs along the northern border.

The fiscal year 2008 budget includes \$17.1 million to support activation of the Detroit A&M Branch. Ultimately, the northern border air wings will include more than 220 personnel (air interdiction agents, administrative personnel and aircraft maintenance employees) and will have an inventory of more than 40 aircraft of different types.

Securing the country's borders is a national priority, and CBP must be effective in a wide range of environments to achieve its mission. The new A&M branches and units on the northern border, combined with existing CBP units at Bellingham and Spokane, Wash.; Buffalo and Plattsburgh, N.Y.; and Houlton, Maine, will move the country closer to securing the northern border from exploitation by terrorists and other criminals. ■ By Juan Muñoz-Torres

The border between the United States and Canada runs from the state of Washington through Maine and includes the Great Lakes region. Its geography ranges from densely forested lands on the west and east coasts to open plains in the middle of the country. For law enforcement, the operating environment differs drastically from that of the southwestern border and requires a different approach.

Several major Canadian cities are close to the border; in fact, 90 percent of

the Canadian population lives within 100 miles of the border. Historically, the northern border has seen much lower numbers of illegal incursions compared with the southwestern border; however, known terrorist affiliates and extremist groups can be found in Canadian cities.

CBP looks at the northern border from four perspectives: terrorism, general drug trafficking, illegal immigration and intelligence.

To address known and potential threats on the northern border, CBP is creating a stronger, more proactive



ANSWERING the Army's call

Deployment to the Iraq/Iran border is a major challenge for U.S. soldiers, and CBP's Office of Training and Development (OTD) is there to help. The office has a reputation for providing high-quality training to CBP officers and Border Patrol agents. For that reason, other agencies—such as the Department of Defense (DoD)—frequently ask to participate in CBP training programs or assist CBP in joint endeavors or field exercises.

Early in 2007, DoD called on OTD to train soldiers preparing for deployment to the Iraq/Iran border. As part of dedicated border transition teams, soldiers are stationed at a port of entry (POE) or patrol

with the Iraqi Border Police between POEs on the Iraqi border.

To develop the curriculum, OTD's Border Enforcement Training Division (BETD) worked with CBP officers and Border Patrol agents who had previously served in Iraq as advisors to the U.S. military and the Iraqi government. Classes and practical exercises were held at Ft. Riley, Kan. Everyone was pleased with the results, and additional training took place late in 2007. Subjects covered included port operations, concealment methods, interviewing techniques, fraudulent documents detection, tracking and sign cutting, and non-intrusive inspection technology.

To conduct the training, BETD went to Ft. Riley and to the Port of El Paso, Texas. In El Paso, soldiers worked directly with CBP officers in both primary and secondary inspections. They also accompanied Border Patrol agents patrolling in the El Paso sector. The CBP officers and agents formed a strong and immediate bond with the soldiers. Everyone involved understood the vital role this training would play in daily operations, helping to ensure the safety and security of the soldiers and the Iraqi citizens.

"CBP is learning a great deal about the dynamics of border security in a high-risk environment," says Tom Walters, OTD Assistant Commissioner. "The soldiers tell us they've learned a lot of techniques that will help them do their job in that environment. We're proud to be associated with this effort."

It was an honor for BETD to work side by side with the U.S. military to help secure not only America's frontline but also our interests abroad. ■ By Jane Blasio

Pulling the **PLUG** on **PREDATORS**

San Francisco International Airport is a major transit point for travelers arriving in the United States from popular Southeast Asian tourist destinations such as Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines. These countries (and many others) suffer from extreme poverty and weak legal systems, which can make children easy targets for sexual predators who want to exploit them and force them into prostitution. These countries also tend to be ideal stopoff points for travelers who are interested in obtaining or producing child pornography.

In June 2005, CBP Officers Daniel Relay and Matthew Moran led an operation targeting travelers who might be involved in child sex tourism and child pornography from the four countries mentioned above. First, the officers researched Southeast Asian travelers in general and all the methods that could be used to smuggle child pornography. They rigorously applied this knowledge to every inspection that fit the target criteria. Relay and Moran have seen increasingly positive results and have participated in numerous inspections involving child pornography, many of which have resulted in successful indictments and prosecutions of criminal perpetrators. Relay said, "Both Matt and I are working hard to stop these peddlers of horrific crimes against innocent children."



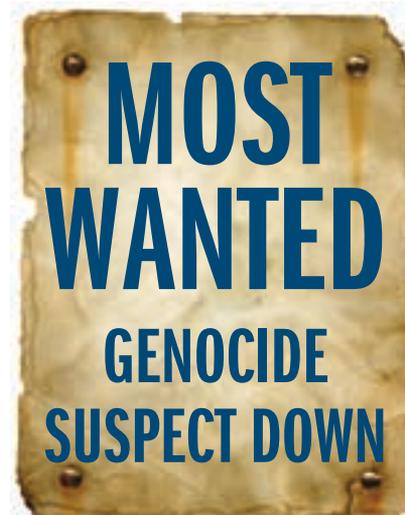
★ Because alert CBP officers inspected his laptop, a minister was sentenced for possessing and transporting child pornography across international borders.

One case that demonstrates the officers' excellent enforcement work involved Mark Godbey Moore, a minister with a Christian group and ties to orphanages in Thailand, who was discovered during a routine CBP inspection to possess more than 1,000 images of child pornography on his laptop, including pictures of children and infants being forced into unimaginable acts. After the criminal investigation of this case by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in San Francisco and Minneapolis, Moore was ultimately sentenced to 97 months in prison and eight years of supervised release. This sentence was the longest ever imposed in Northern California in a noncontact case involving possession and transportation of child pornography.

Another case involved Dr. William T. Garner, former dean of the University of San Francisco, who was found during a CBP inspection to possess more than 1,500 images of child pornography on his laptop, including images of minors being forced into violent and sadistic sexual acts. After a criminal investigation by ICE in San Francisco, Garner was sentenced to 63 months in prison and up to five years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay \$50,000 to the San Francisco Child Abuse Prevention Center.

Through these outstanding enforcement efforts targeting international travelers who sexually exploit young children overseas, a significant number of predators have been identified, prosecuted and incarcerated. Relay and Moran's diligence in identifying, examining and referring these persons for prosecution has resulted in convictions with long prison terms. In 2007, Relay and Moran received the Federal Executive Board Employee of the Year Award. U.S. attorneys, judges, the FBI and other law enforcement entities have commended them for their work. Nat Aycox, San Francisco director of field operations, says, "We take pride in the work of both of these CBP officers."

■ By Roxanne Hercules



On June 20, 2007, the last person Philadelphia CBP Officers Harvel Francis, Patricia Covington, Ji Young-Lee, Fran X. McGowan and Chief Evan Davidow thought they would come face-to-face with was one of the most wanted Rwandan genocide suspects.

The subject, carrying a French passport, was applying for admission to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program. Officer Francis, assigned to passport control primary, noticed that the name on the passport was similar to a name on the Interpol Watch List. Among the thousands of international passengers who enter through Philadelphia, the subject could easily have slipped through, because it was only a partial match on the name.

The keen insight of Officer Francis and the thorough background review by Officers Covington and Lee resulted in the confirmation of an Interpol Outstanding Red Alert Warrant issued by the government of Rwanda.

The man had long been on the list of most wanted genocide masterminds, a list the government of Rwanda has circulated worldwide in an effort to bring to justice those responsible for the cold-blooded murder of at least a million ethnic Tutsis and Hutu moderates in 100 days in 1994.

The international fugitive was taken into CBP custody and returned to France, where he was met by French law enforcement officials.

The diligent work of these officers is an example of CBP at its best. ■ By Fran X. McGowan

BO DEREK'S WILDLIFE WOES

South Florida is one the major points of entry for both legal and illegal exotic wildlife and plants. Unfortunately, it also has an ecosystem in the Everglades and along the coast that is perfect for rapid population growth of invasive species.

Recently, actress Bo Derek, special envoy of the secretary of state for wildlife trafficking issues, and Claudia McMurray, assistant secretary for oceans and international environmental and scientific affairs, were at Miami International Airport to discuss wildlife trafficking and observe the inspection process of wildlife imports.

Derek and McMurray watched intently as Fish and Wildlife officers examined a shipment of African clawed frogs arriving from Chile as about 20 members of the local and international media looked on. The frogs, which are legal to import, were headed to a pet store in north Florida. Although these frogs are not known to be a threat to Florida's environment, who knows what might happen if enough people get tired of them as pets and discard them in local ponds, and they reproduce. McMurray noted that an animal that is not endangered or invasive today may become endangered or damaging to an ecosystem tomorrow.

With numerous examples of endangered species on hand—intercepted by CBP and Fish and Wildlife—Derek praised the hard work and vigilance of frontline CBP and Fish and Wildlife officers. “We appreciate the fantastic work these officers, the true heroes, do each and every day protecting endangered or threatened wildlife,” Derek said.

Derek and McMurray discussed how Americans can make an impact on the

problem of wildlife trafficking by not purchasing these animals or items as souvenirs. “Don’t purchase an ivory carving or a baby tiger skin just because someone on the street tells you it came from an animal that died of natural causes,” said Derek. “Most of these animal products have been purposely taken for profits.”

“Trafficking in endangered or threatened wildlife is a close third only behind drug smuggling and arms trading,” McMurray said. “Estimates indicate that \$10 billion in illegal wildlife products are traded on the black market globally each year, with China and the United States being first and second in consumption.”

Derek was originally approached to take on the role of special envoy because of her interest in wildlife and her record of public service. Her involvement in wildlife issues includes working with the Galapagos Conservancy and WildAid. She has also taken up the cause of stopping the slaughter of horses in the United States for food export to Europe and testified before Congress with the National Horse Protection Coalition.

Derek and McMurray participated in a panel discussion at the University of Miami. The panel included Rob Stewart, director of the documentary *Sharkwater*, which is about shark finning; Dr. Andrew Baker, coral reef expert; and Neil Hammerschlag, co-founder/director of the South Florida Student Shark Program. The panel members discussed the illegal trade in ocean corals, often purchased as jewelry by tourists on cruise ships, and the horrific practice of shark finning, in which fishermen cut the fins off live sharks and throw the animals back into the water to drown. Recent



★ CBP is actively engaged in the fight against illegal wildlife trafficking; the shark fins pictured here are just one example of a prohibited animal item that is traded on the black market.

estimates indicate that approximately 100 million sharks are killed each year, at a rate of over 270,000 per day. In the Atlantic alone, shark populations have decreased between 60 and 90 percent, depending on the species, in just the last 15 years.

Another example is seahorses. They are protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, but the rapidly growing trade for use in traditional Chinese medicines and as aquarium pets, souvenirs and curios has resulted in the overexploitation of wild populations. Seahorse supply no longer meets international demand. The largest importers of seahorses are China, Hong Kong and Taiwan; together, they import an estimated 16 million seahorses annually. Seahorses are sold as whole, dried animals (in Hong Kong, they are bleached) for preparation into tonics.

Not only that, but a number of shark species have been nearly eliminated. For example, the Bull, Tiger, and Dusky shark populations have decreased by 95 percent over the past three decades. ■ By Zachary Mann

Español for real life

Agents on the Southwest border encounter Spanish speakers every day, so training them to speak the language is a critical component of the Border Patrol Academy curriculum. Recently, the academy replaced the grammar-based program used for many decades with an eight-week task-based approach that uses the philosophy of immersion language training. This method is widely used in second language acquisition schools around the world.

Another major change has been to allow very proficient Spanish speakers to test out of language training and report directly to their duty stations after graduating from the 55-day basic training. In the past, resources were devoted to teaching Spanish to already fluent speakers. The focus now is on making non-Spanish-speaking students more effective during their first year on the job.

The new Spanish program, which includes 320 hours of comprehensive instruction delivered over 40 days, begins after graduation from basic training. The number of training hours delivered to non-Spanish-speaking students has been increased, and the course is divided into eight modules based on critical tasks identified by the agency as essential for field operations.

Experts from the Office of Training and Development, the Border Patrol Academy and the Universities of Maryland and Hawaii helped develop this new course. ■ By Greg Burwell



★ To conduct task-based Spanish language training, the Border Patrol Academy filmed typical scenarios so that agents could watch them and rehearse the needed language skills afterward. These include the provision of aid to an injured alien, lower left, and a high-risk felony stop, lower right. Upper right, the filming of a vehicle stop scenario.

Photos by Rock Creek Productions

BOOSTING SPIRITS ON THE JOB



technical expertise and leadership skills of supervisors and managers, and with limits on decision-making authority. Some employees perceived a “culture of punishment” and a lack

primarily of senior field leaders, the council will ensure that ideas from the field are represented in headquarters decision making on human capital and diversity issues. The council held its first meeting in January to finalize its business plan, establish priorities and identify strategies to address the three areas of concern.

When the Office of Personnel Management published the results of its 2006 Federal Human Capital Survey, CBP realized that it had some work to do in the areas of leadership, talent management and performance culture. Commissioner W. Ralph Basham asked the Office of Human Resources Management (HRM) to explore the reasons behind the responses from CBP employees.

of opportunities for upward communication. Some felt that after the CBP mission was revised to emphasize the prevention of terrorism, certain traditional job functions were undervalued.

Other issues also surfaced, such as the limitations of the pass/fail performance appraisal system and policies for recognizing employee performance, as well as a desire to engage in an ongoing dialogue with supervisors about performance expectations.

The Commissioner said that a key aspect of improving employee perceptions about their organization is educating the public about CBP’s mission, its dedicated workforce and the contributions CBP employees make every day to keeping the nation secure. Employee morale is expected to increase as public appreciation grows.

LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

An independent contractor commissioned by HRM conducted 127 focus group sessions across the country to delve into the issues. Those who did not attend were encouraged to participate in an online focus group

Employees clearly articulated their concerns. They had issues with the

MOVING FORWARD

Commissioner Basham is eager to address these concerns in the near future, although he knows that many of them will require a longer term process.

His first step was to establish the Human Capital Advisory Council. Composed

THE WAY AHEAD

The work that lies ahead for the HRM team and the Human Capital Advisory Council will be challenging and will require a sustained effort over the next year and beyond. But the challenge is one that the agency wants and needs to embrace. The Commissioner’s hope is that the results from the 2008 survey will provide a clear indication that employee perceptions are improving. ■ By Penny Curtis

Top Five	Positive Responses	Bottom Five	Positive Responses
The work I do is important	87%	Awards in my work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	26%
Employees use information technology (for example, intranet, shared networks) to perform work.	87	Creativity and innovation are rewarded	23
The people I work with cooperate to get the job done	82	Promotions in my work unit are based on merit.	23
I like the kind of work I do.	82	In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	22
I know how my work relates to the agency's goals and priorities.	75	In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.	21

DRIVEN to SUCCEED

CBP is joining the ranks of law enforcement organizations such as the FBI, ATF, NYPD, and LAPD, all of which have encouraged female officers to join their special response/tactical units. Laredo CBP Officers Kristie Lee Fitzhenry and Charmaine Guillory are both members of the first Special Response Team (SRT) for the Office of Field Operations (OFO).

OFO Special Response Teams respond to high-risk threats that occur at our nation's border.

Fitzhenry, a former Air Force canine handler, began her career with CBP nine years ago. She says that she has always "gravitated toward male-dominated jobs and physically challenging endeavors that not many women want to do."

Why the SRT? Guillory says that a SRT "is essential in the event of any crisis as a first responder," adding that she is "proud to be part of a great team" that she knows "will make a difference."

The two women completed three grueling weeks of training at the CBP Advanced Training Center in Harper's Ferry, W.Va., and three additional weeks of training at the port.

Fitzhenry says the training "made me a better law enforcement officer overall. The technical and mental aspects of the training, such as the scenarios that call for split-second decisions, are real confidence-builders." She added, "I

member of the team is rewarding in itself. However, she and Fitzhenry are both fully cognizant of the fact that being the first female SRT members means they will be



Photo by James R. Kunkel/White

★ CBP is proud to join the ranks of law enforcement agencies with women on their Special Response Teams. Pictured here are Charmaine Guillory (left) and Kristie Lee Fitzhenry (right), the agency's first female SRT members in the Office of Field Operations, with Laredo Director of Field Operations Leticia Moran (center).

"I feel that my role within the SRT not only gives me more confidence in my abilities but, as the mother of an impressionable 11-year-old girl, I think my being an SRT member encourages my daughter to pursue anything she dreams of and shows her that there are no boundaries."

—Special Response Team member Kristie Lee Fitzhenry

Guillory is a U.S. Army veteran who has been a CBP officer at the Port of Laredo for four years. As soon as she heard about the SRT, she was immediately interested in trying out, although she admits that she felt a little trepidation. But her co-workers urged her to apply, and she believed she was both physically and mentally up to it, having experienced the rigors of military training. The rest is history.

feel that my role within the SRT not only gives me more confidence in my abilities but, as the mother of an impressionable 11-year-old girl, I think my being an SRT member encourages my daughter to pursue anything she dreams of and shows her that there are no boundaries."

Both Guillory and Fitzhenry are consummate team players, and both find the team experience to be intrinsically challenging. Guillory says that just being a

constantly under scrutiny or judgment in a way that their male teammates might not be. Their response is that with all the training they have received, coupled with their own tenacity and will to succeed, they are prepared to answer the call.

This newly created OFO team is part of the agency's continuing evolution and another example of our officers' commitment to service to country and protection of our homeland. ■ By Mucia Dovalina



ALL IN A DAY

Photo by Carlos A. Rivera

★ Débora D. Hall is a CBP pioneer—the agency's first female airborne detection systems specialist.

I am the first and so far the only female airborne detection systems specialist at CBP. I work out of the P-3 Operations Center in Jacksonville, Fla. The following are some examples of a typical day.

I come in at 9 a.m. with a “just-in-case” bag containing toothpaste, a toothbrush, a change of clothes and shoes, plus enough food for two or three meals. I gather my equipment for the mission: crypto (secure codes for the radio on an airplane), computers, cameras, briefs, paperwork and whatever else I might need. I walk to the plane and do what we call “pre-flight”—getting ready for a 10-hour-plus mission. I’m the sensor operator (a combination of radar, video and communications) in the back of a P-3 aircraft. On a typical day, I talk to various agencies: the Drug Enforcement Administration, police, military, Coast Guard and any other national or international agencies we need to contact to accomplish our mission.

On the mission, I detect unidentified planes or boats and try to identify them as legal or illegal. After we’ve exhausted our resources to identify the target and advised pertinent agencies of its heading and speed, the chase (the fun!) begins. I carefully videotape, photograph and document everything that happens. I

might spend hours doing command and control coordination, monitoring and recording to get contraband, seizures, arrests and proper evidence for prosecution. I could end up over an island in the middle of the Caribbean, working with international assets and using my bilingual skills to get the job done efficiently. I might videotape an air drop, boats picking up dope or boats getting rid of dope in the middle of the ocean because our friendly assets are right behind them.

I’ve seen smugglers dump their load while engaging in a high-speed chase, then torch the boat and jump overboard. I’ve videotaped people beaching their vessel in the middle of nowhere and running up the beach carrying as much dope as they can. We might follow a plane through several countries, then watch the pilot crash land it in the jungle, where people and donkeys suddenly emerge to try to salvage the load. A few minutes later, they torch the plane and whatever is left inside, before the arrival of the local law enforcement personnel I’m directing to the site.

I might spend three days conducting missions in one country and the next four in another country, briefing civilians, military, government officials, even vice presidents. Sometimes I help in emergency and safety situations. It’s not unusual to

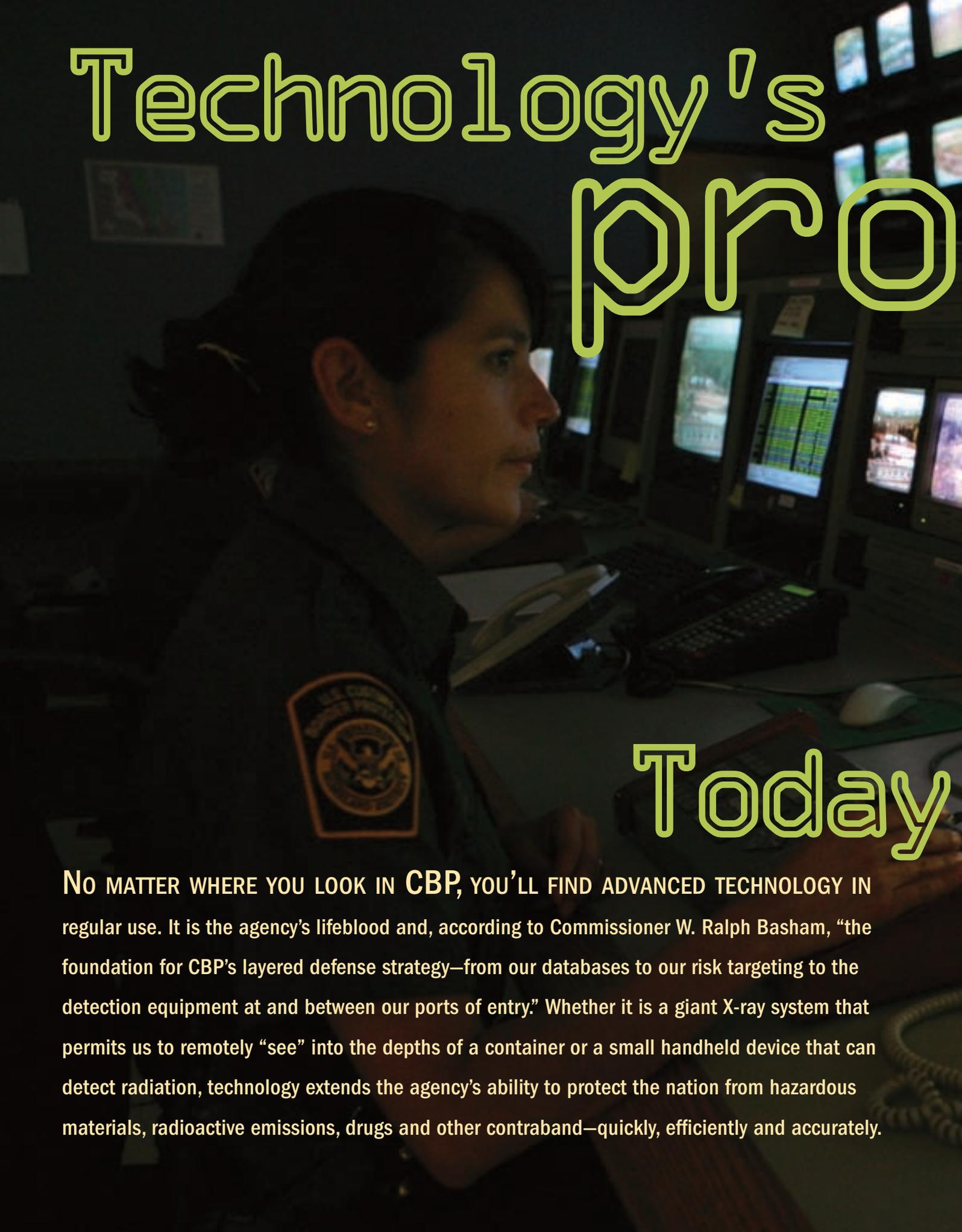
have to refuel or even spend the night in another country.

These are just a few of the things I do in my job. At the end of the day, as I’m walking back to my car, I can’t help but think, “Wow! I’m getting *paid* for this!”

■ By Débora D. Hall

“We might follow a plane through several countries, then watch the pilot crash land it in the jungle, where people and donkeys suddenly emerge to try to salvage the load.”

Technology's pro

A woman in a CBP uniform is shown in profile, working at a computer workstation in a control room. The room is dimly lit, with the glow from multiple computer monitors illuminating the scene. The woman is looking intently at the screens, which display various data and images. The overall atmosphere is one of focused, high-tech professional work.

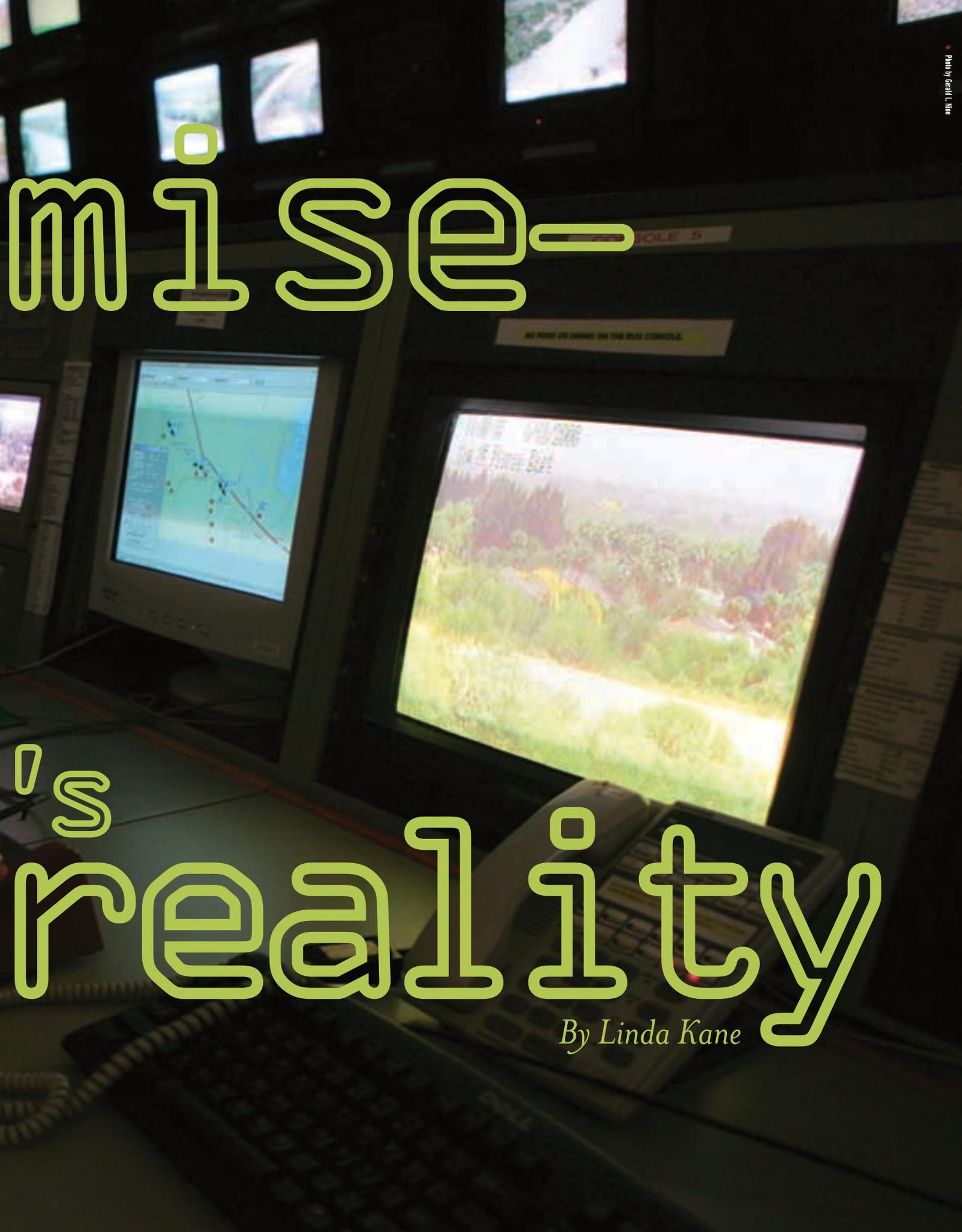
Today

NO MATTER WHERE YOU LOOK IN CBP, YOU'LL FIND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY IN regular use. It is the agency's lifeblood and, according to Commissioner W. Ralph Basham, "the foundation for CBP's layered defense strategy—from our databases to our risk targeting to the detection equipment at and between our ports of entry." Whether it is a giant X-ray system that permits us to remotely "see" into the depths of a container or a small handheld device that can detect radiation, technology extends the agency's ability to protect the nation from hazardous materials, radioactive emissions, drugs and other contraband—quickly, efficiently and accurately.

mise-

's
reality

By Linda Kane





“Technology enables CBP to expedite the release of legitimate cargo and persons lawfully entering the country, while interdicting high-risk or contraband cargo and persons who present a danger to the United States.”

—Thomas Winkowski, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations

◆ Technology enables CBP to screen a high volume of cargo quickly and efficiently. At left, a container at a port of entry is driven through CBP's non-intrusive inspection equipment; at right, a CBP officer reviews the real-time image results.

SCRUTINIZING SHIPMENTS

More than 11.5 million container shipments reach our shores annually, and thousands more move across our land borders, along with trucks, trains and automobiles. These containers represent the backbone of U.S. international trade and are critical components to our economic well-being. The priority to keep them moving must be balanced with security. As Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, Thomas Winkowski says, "Technology enables CBP to expedite the release of legitimate cargo and persons lawfully entering the country, while interdicting high-risk or contraband cargo and persons who present a danger to the United States."

CBP screens 100 percent of containerized cargo that comes into the country. Screening involves collecting information about a shipment and assessing risk. Shipments that are considered to be at a certain threshold of risk are scanned with nuclear and radiological detection equipment at all the major ports of entry, which means they get a virtual examination.

Fixed radiation portal monitors that look like a metallic inverted "u" scan conveyances for radiation. As the containers are driven through the monitors, the equipment absorbs any radiation emitted and produces a graphic profile of the reading. If radioactive material is detected, an alarm goes off. Radiation emissions can come from a nuclear device, a dirty bomb or even from some natural materials. Outside the country, at 58 participating foreign ports, the Cargo Security Initiative uses the same equipment to scan cargo bound for the United States.

Non-intrusive inspection equipment uses X-rays or gamma rays to produce an image of the contents of a container rail car, trailer-truck or vehicle. CBP officers review manifests and real-time images, looking for anomalies that could be drugs, stolen cars, people or any other contraband. Since 2001, CBP has more than tripled the number of these systems; as of May 2008, 198 are operating at ports of entry, as well as at some foreign ports and Border Patrol checkpoints. They include fixed and mobile, high and low

energy X-ray imaging systems and gamma ray imaging systems.

INSPECTING TRAVELERS

With technology, CBP can focus on more than just cargo. Technology touches every passenger and vehicle that reaches the U.S. land borders, seaports and airports.

CBP officers at land border crossings wear personal radiation detectors on their uniforms that alert to the presence of radiological material near the officer. If there is an alert, the officer may question a passenger or driver and refer him or her for an inspection to determine the source and nature of the radiation. The results can be anything from criminal intent to harmless radiation from an isotope used for a medical test the traveler has had. The technology can distinguish between harmless, naturally occurring radiation emitted by commonplace



items like ceramic tile, granite, kitty litter and some food products, and weapons-grade radioactive and nuclear materials.

Another technological tool is radio frequency identification (RFID). Vicinity RFID uses a device that can read information contained in a "tag" at a distance—no physical contact or line of sight is required. The tag is usually embedded in a card. As a car moves toward a primary inspection booth, the RFID chip in the card is read before the vehicle gets to the booth. The number in the chip ties to a secure database that contains identification and citizenship information about the traveler.

Having access to this information before the car gets to the booth is an advantage. But there's more—a photo of

the card holder also pops up on a monitor, providing the officer not just data but with visual data that allows validation of the passenger presenting the card.

RFID technology is already in use at certain ports of entry for the NEXUS, SENTRI and FAST "trusted traveler" programs. The new passport card and the enhanced driver's license issued by some states (which will meet the requirements as a border crossing document) also will use the technology. Full implementation of this expanded use of the RFID is expected after June 2009. RFID is an excellent example of how CBP uses technology to enhance security and increase efficiency at the same time.

GUARDING THE PERIMETER

Surveillance cameras—354 of them—stand like sentinels along our nation's borders, watching for evidence of intruders. They are sophisticated—costing as much as \$250,000 each or more—but they are worth the price. They can identify vehicle features two miles away, and detect and track human movement from approximately three miles.

The cameras are installed in pairs—one uses natural light and takes traditional video images; the other uses infrared imaging for night vision. To protect them from floods, animals and vandals, and to increase their range, the cameras are mounted on top of 80-foot towers.

Buttressing this camera technology are more than 12,000 pedestrian sensors along the U.S. border. The sensors are like motion sensors that use seismic, magnetic

and infrared technology to establish a line of defense against unauthorized entry into the country. What looks like a rock, a branch or a twig might be an antenna that is transmitting a signal to a central communication center miles away.

How does this system work? A Border Patrol agent or communication assistant sits in front of a console in a central communication station, watching for a simple line of text to pop up on the screen. The text line signals that a sensor has been activated and provides the location and geographical features—the gullies, mountains or ravines in the area around the sensor—that will allow authorities to target a possible breach in the line. Operating in real time, the agent can control the camera poised

above the sensors that have fired—panning the area, tilting the camera for a better angle and zooming in on what may be a small animal or an illegal migrant. Microwave transmitters relay the images from the cameras back to the monitoring station. The agent alerts mobile units by radio to respond to the border breach. The field agents who respond know all the important details in advance: the number of intruders, whether they are armed and their most likely route.

Border Patrol Chief David Aguilar says, “Incorporating technology that supports Border Patrol agents between the ports of entry as a tool to gain effective control of our nation’s borders will provide the force multiplier that the Border Patrol needs in order to perform its mission in the safest and most effective manner.” The ability to monitor, to intercept and ultimately to secure a perimeter is the key to maintaining a secure border. The high-tech camera/sensor combination offers the Border Patrol the electronic muscle it needs to hold the line against illegal immigrants and contraband.

Overarching all of these efforts is the Department of Homeland Security’s multiyear, multi-billion-dollar Secure Border Initiative, initiated in 2005 with the goal of securing U.S. borders and reducing illegal immigration. CBP’s piece of this program is *SBI_{net}*, which aims to develop a border protection system that uses an appropriate mix of people, technology and infrastructure—fencing, roads and lighting in proportions to fit the varying needs of our vast borders. *SBI_{net}*’s focus has been on the technology—sensors, cameras, radar communications systems and mounted laptop computers for agent vehicles.

The initial demonstration project—Project 28—sought to gain control of 28 miles of border in and around the Tucson area by packaging cameras, sensors, radar and other equipment into a system. The system uses existing technologies, but the application is different from what the Border Patrol has historically used.

In this project, radar activated cameras send images of border incursions not to a communication center but to the laptops of field agents, who use



PHOTO BY ZACHARY MATHIS

At CBP, working together is what makes the agency effective. Here, a CBP Air and Marine Blackhawk and a 38-foot Interceptor Class vessel work as a team to intercept suspect vessels before they reach the United States.

them to determine whether an illegal incursion is in progress. Border Patrol agents have been using this new system since December 2007. While the test system is not the final solution to support Border Patrol operations, it has provided greater technological capabilities—such as improved cameras and radars—than the equipment agents were working with before Project 28.

AERIAL AND MARITIME SECURITY

The Office of CBP Air and Marine (CBP A&M)—the largest nonmilitary air force in the world—uses state-of-the-art aircraft and maritime vessels to secure the national airspace as well as border rivers, lakes and coastal regions.

A&M uses a variety of aircraft, both fixed-wing and rotary, to detect and intercept aircraft seeking unauthorized entry into the United States. In addition, the unprecedented use of unmanned aircraft systems (UASs, or drones as they are sometimes called) to

scour inaccessible border areas is the first nonmilitary use of this technology. UASs expand the border area that can be viewed and provide strategic information so that enforcement operations can be targeted. “The UAS is an incredible asset to our enforcement operations. The system provides situational awareness to air crews and to ground interdiction agents alike, monitoring and capturing video of actual interdictions. We have a sustained UAS presence in three border regions and can support multiple border security missions while retaining the capability to respond to an emerging crisis,” says Michael C. Kostelnik, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Air and Marine. CBP also uses maritime assets as part of a multilayer strategy. The maritime assets complement CBP aviation assets, and work in concert with the Department of Defense, the U.S. Coast Guard and other DHS partners to detect, sort, detain and apprehend targets of interest before their arrival into U.S. territory.

The men and women who operate this technology intercept potential terrorists and seize thousands of pounds of narcotics annually. In fiscal year 2007, they seized more than 567,000 pounds of illegal drugs.

THE HUMAN FACTOR

As powerful as technology is, it is only a tool. It takes human skill to manage the myriad complicating factors that affect its use, such as different infrastructures at the ports of entry, climate conditions, terrain, the number of passengers crossing or containers arriving—the list is endless. CBP personnel are trained and ready for those challenges. Elbert Hubbard, an American author and artist, put it aptly when he said, “One machine can do the work of 50 ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man.”

CBP applies innovative and powerful technology to bolster border security, but it never loses sight of the human element—the importance of well-crafted policies and procedures for using the technology, along with advanced training. By integrating the unique contributions of machines and people to the mission, the agency is positioned for success in achieving its goals. ■



Photo courtesy of General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc.

★ Unmanned aerial systems (UASs), like the Predator B pictured here in flight over the Southwest border at Sierra Vista Ariz., have proven a safe, effective tool for patrolling the borders—flying pilotless for up to 30 hours at a time. CBP Air and Marine has four Predator Bs already deployed on the Southwest border, launched another on the Northern border this summer, and expects to add two more this year.



★ This is how the Predator B is piloted—by CBP Air and Marine Interdiction agents working at a ground control station. Using KuBand satellite technology, pilots can deploy Predator Bs throughout the Western Hemisphere.

BRAIN POWER *at the* BORDER

By Dannielle Blumenthal

THE LINE IS LONG, AND THE passengers are restless. Approaching the officer, a traveler reaches into his bag and pulls out his documentation. The officer has been alerted that passengers using a particular travel route have been found smuggling drugs. This traveler is using the route. A check of his papers and responses to the standard questions yield nothing suspicious, but the officer is not willing to take a chance. He pulls the traveler out into secondary for further questioning.





★ With traffic continually streaming through the ports of entry, CBP officers have minimal time to make decisions of maximum importance, namely whether a traveler poses a homeland security risk. Inset, an officer directs a driver to secondary inspection for further scrutiny.

IT'S A BUSY DAY AT THE PORT, AND THERE is a mountain of cargo to be cleared. The officer has been told that shipments from a particular country meeting certain criteria should be flagged for intensive examination, as they may contain materials that could be used to build a nuclear device that might be smuggled into the United States. He reviews the manifest and advance shipment information on one set of containers; it's a match. Reviews cause a backup, but something might be amiss. The cargo has to be scanned.

The Border Patrol agent has been told that smugglers are using pregnant women to accompany children who are not their own into the country. He is checking a female driver's identity at a checkpoint. She shifts nervously in her seat and pauses just a bit too long before answering a question. It is not clear whether she is pregnant or not. The agent takes her out of the line for further questioning.

All these scenarios have one thing in common: frontline CBP employees using intelligence to protect the borders of the United States from terrorists and other criminals. And all that intelligence flows through a single office: the Office of Intelligence and Operations Coordination, or CBP Intelligence.

Intelligence serves many purposes, from enabling field operators to pinpoint potential violators to providing the agency with a broad intelligence picture that helps managers allocate resources and develop strategies to accomplish CBP's missions. To discuss the role that CBP Intelligence plays at the agency, its leadership team sat down recently for an interview with *Frontline*.

THE INTELLIGENCE PROCESS

How does CBP gather information/intelligence in the first place? Techniques run the gamut, says Assistant Commissioner Rodney Snyder: "It's useful for people—including the bad guys—to know that we're using all appropriate methods at our disposal, be it human sources or technology, to trip them up."

Frank Reeder, director of the Intelligence and Situational Awareness Division, notes that CBP generates information in the form of daily operational reports; and CBP Intelligence officers review the vast majority of these. Tom Bush, director of the Analysis and Targeting Division, adds, "Our team works closely with our operational offices and the National Targeting Center to develop the selection criteria that help guide all the field resources as to what to examine or inspect. What we do is take information, take the history of all our enforcement operations, take the information we get from our partners, and turn that into assessments for

selection criteria, so that CBP officers know which shipment to open." Employees on the frontline also contribute to the intelligence information that the office processes.

DUAL PURPOSES

Snyder sees CBP Intelligence as providing primarily two kinds of information: "One is the kind that can be acted upon. We need to make sure our officers, agents and other personnel are informed and, therefore, prepared to act." He adds, "We also need to provide information to all our mission partners so they can take concrete action to stop bad people from doing bad things."

In this effort, speed is very important, says Deputy Assistant Commissioner Al Gina: "To support a free global marketplace, things need to cross our borders quickly. Our challenge is how we actually try to apprehend the bad person, the bad element, the bad thing without at any time reducing the throughput. It's hard enough just doing the job when you have all the time in the world, but when people and cargo move around in today's rapid-paced world economy, it becomes even more of a challenge. That's where good intelligence becomes useful."

The second kind of information, Snyder says, is "situational awareness"—to keep decision makers abreast of developments. These decision makers include the commissioner, the deputy commissioner and the heads of CBP's major operational components. Snyder says, "They need to be fully scoped on not only what's going on but the lay of the land, so that they have as much of the picture as possible as they're making decisions and taking action."

AN ESSENTIAL FACTOR

Snyder notes that CBP Intelligence brings great benefit to the agency in terms of supporting the mission. "It's amazing what this agency does," he says. "Not only in terms of stopping or deterring terrorists, but also narco-traffickers, counterfeiters, aliens and [other] criminals, each and every day. Literally every day, murderers, rapists, child pornographers and other criminals are being caught, thanks to CBP's efforts."

Intelligence, says Snyder, "needs to permeate every strand of CBP's actions, and that's what we're trying to do—make that piece stronger, more powerful; play a bigger role in terms of intelligence-driven operations."

THE COMMISSIONER'S VISION

The intelligence functions of the Border Patrol and the former U.S. Customs Service became part of Customs and Border Protection in 2003. Integrating these functions into one office with broad responsibility was part of CBP

"To support a free global marketplace, things need to cross our borders quickly... It's hard enough just doing the job when you have all the time in the world, but when people and cargo move around in today's rapid-paced world economy, it becomes even more of a challenge. That's where good intelligence becomes useful."

—Al Gina, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Office of Intelligence and Operations Coordination



Commissioner W. Ralph Basham's vision for the organization's future. As Basham stated, "One of my top priorities is to help transform CBP into a fully integrated, intelligence-driven organization...to ensure that we are organized in a way that will maximize our capabilities."

What is the difference between the old intelligence function and the new one? Gina says, "There was tremendous work being done in the former offices of intelligence and anti-terrorism, as well as targeting efforts in the offices of the Border Patrol and Field Operations, but we needed to gain a greater economy of scale and really maximize synergies by bringing those expert components together into one office."

Jeanne Ray-Condon, director of the Field Coordination Division says, "It was the fully integrated piece that we were really missing before."

PARTNERSHIPS MATTER

Rodney Scott, director of the Incident Management and Operations Coordination

Division, says that the new office brings the power of partnership to the mix, as collaboration within the agency and between CBP and other agencies and organizations is a key element of the commissioner's vision. Putting the pieces together means working closely with partners and providing them with all available information. Scott says, "What may not seem like a big deal to CBP could be a huge deal to somebody else. Or, more often, we'll have one piece of the puzzle and another agency will have another."

Reeder adds that information-sharing in the intelligence community has grown significantly over the past decade. "I've seen tremendous advances," he says. "We have partnerships with the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency and others. I wouldn't have said that in 2000, but we do now."

A NEW MINDSET

CBP Intelligence leaders agree that CBP needs to change its culture even more to be

fully intelligence-driven. Gina says, "I don't believe we're there yet, but that's where a lot of our energies are going." Historically, he says, "we've told our personnel to go out there and interdict, seize and apprehend. We're trying to transition that to interdict, seize and collect information, and feed it back into the intelligence-operations loop."

PREPARING FOR THE WORST

Snyder notes that despite the best intelligence, emergency situations—like a terrorist attack or natural disaster—will occur. It is the job of CBP Intelligence "to have thought through, worked through how to deal with it."

Scott says that the goal in an emergency is "to get back on our feet quickly and minimize any impact on legitimate trade and travel." Therefore, "a big part of our team's responsibility is developing strategies in advance to manage incidents."

Scott notes that as the largest federal uniformed law enforcement agency, CBP is often called on to respond to natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and the California wildfires in fall 2007.

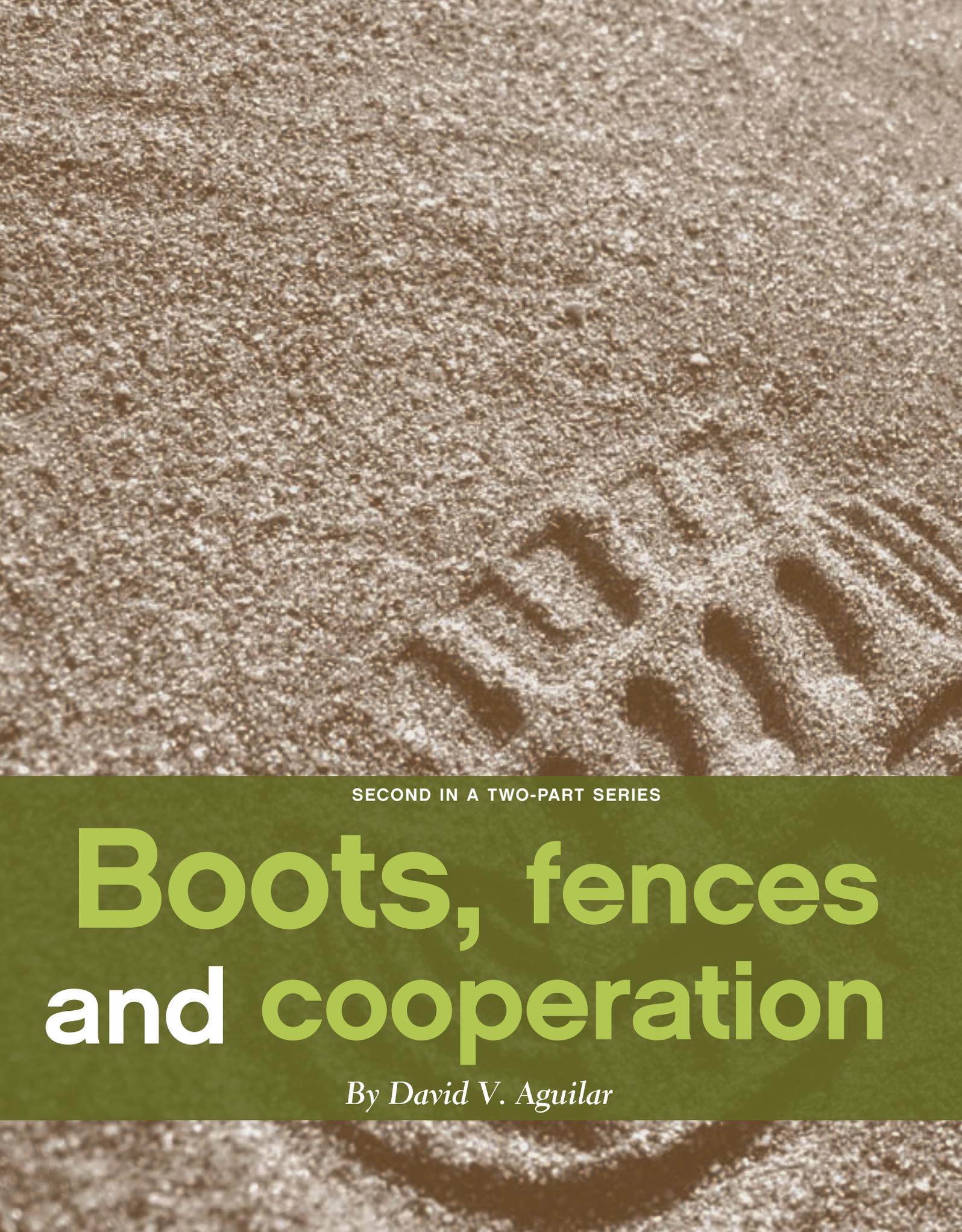
FUTURE VISION

CBP is one of the largest agencies in DHS, but it is largely a quiet giant, choosing not to promote itself in the public eye. Nevertheless, the agency plays a huge role in homeland security, not only by protecting the borders but also by partnering with other law enforcement and intelligence agencies to stop dangerous people and goods from infiltrating the nation and to help the country recover from disastrous situations.

In all these situations, the organization's efforts are facilitated by an ongoing intelligence operation that is newly integrated but in no way new to the agency itself.

Looking forward, the agency's leaders expect CBP Intelligence to disseminate ever more information to frontline personnel—intelligence that is timely, integrated and actionable—and to guide employees in developing a culture that incorporates an intelligence mindset throughout the agency. ■

**TO REPORT SUSPICIOUS
ACTIVITY CALL 1-800-BE-ALERT**

A close-up photograph of sand with several boot prints. The prints are arranged in a line, with some showing distinct tread patterns. The lighting creates soft shadows, highlighting the texture of the sand and the ridges on the boot soles.

SECOND IN A TWO-PART SERIES

Boots, fences and cooperation

By David V. Aguilar



The Border Patrol is moving into the future with training, technology, and critically important partnerships. In this article, the second of a two-part series, National Border Patrol Chief David V. Aguilar highlights some key developments in these areas.





“Border security and the protection of America are responsibilities shared by every public safety, military, public health and law enforcement professional in the country. Each element has a different mission, but we all own a piece.”

—David V. Aguilar, Chief, U.S. Border Patrol

WHEN SOMEONE SAYS “BORDER SECURITY” or “illegal immigration,” the first area that comes to mind is the Southwest. And, indeed, human smuggling, drug smuggling, gang fights over territory and other activities often bring this part of the nation’s border into the media spotlight. But the Border Patrol strategy encompasses all borders—northern, southern and maritime—and addresses new and longstanding vulnerabilities.

The basic Border Patrol mission has not changed, but the criticality of the mission has increased significantly. We are in a new era with a different set of threats against our country. Increased violence, criminals in the mix of illegal immigration, and the potential for terrorists and terrorist weapons crossing our borders are dynamics that change the way we think about our training and enforcement tactics.

BREAKING IN NEW BORDER PATROL BOOTS

More personnel, although critical to our success, means more challenges. Recruits must be trained and seasoned to be of use in accomplishing our mission. Some people, both inside and outside the Border Patrol, have expressed concern that the quality of training at the Border Patrol Academy has been compromised to meet the need for more personnel.

However, this is not the case. The academy’s training program has kept pace with the needs of our new environment, although we have made some accommodations to make the process more efficient. For example, in the past, all trainees received Spanish-language instruction, whether or not they already knew the language. Now, a person who is already fluent enough to perform the duties of a Border Patrol agent, such as interviewing and processing Spanish-speaking subjects, can report for field duty after receiving his or her basic Border Patrol training (see *Español for Real Life*, page 8).

Physical training, firearms, basic law enforcement techniques, constitutional and criminal law, and other basic academy requirements are as strict, if not stricter, than in the past.

THE NATIONAL GUARD

In May 2006, the president announced Operation Jump Start, an initiative to provide National Guard support to the border security mission through the deployment of up to 6,000 troops.

Operation Jump Start was a new initiative, but the National Guard has been working in solid partnership with the Border

Photo by Gerald L. Nevo



• All-terrain vehicles are an efficient (and, we admit it,

Patrol since the 1980s. They have been an integral part of our border security efforts, serving as additional eyes and ears on the border, supporting our operational and administrative entities and constructing roads, fences and barriers.

During Operation Jump Start, which ended in July, National Guard troops have assumed support functions that freed more than 500 Border Patrol agents for reassignment to direct enforcement operations. Surveillance has been reinforced by entry identification teams that cover more than 300 miles of border and National Guard



enjoyable) way for Border Patrol agents to patrol the borders.

air assets that provide an average of 271 hours of aviation surveillance support each week. The Guard has built fences and other barriers to prevent and slow entry, built or maintained hundreds of miles of roads to enhance our patrol capabilities, and improved our fleet readiness to 90 percent capability.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT—
CRITICAL TO OUR SUCCESS**

Border security and the protection of America are responsibilities shared by every public safety, military, public health and law enforcement professional in the country. Each element has

Photo by Gerald L. Nino



• Classroom training is vital to keeping Border Patrol agents' skills up to date.

a different mission, but we all own a piece of the responsibility.

For many years, law enforcement agencies in the immediate border area have dealt with the ancillary impacts of border crime. Police and sheriffs report smugglers using stolen vehicles to transport people and contraband; overloaded and unsafe vehicles involved in

commercial buildings, abandoned structures, and residences as holding areas for people awaiting transport away from the border. Cities that condemn and destroy unsafe buildings used as staging areas for illegal alien traffic significantly reduce the smugglers' ability to exploit the community, resulting in significant reductions in smuggling.



Often, signs of border intrusion are subtle. Here, a Border Patrol agent looks for signs of illegal activity on the Southwestern border. Sometimes those indications come from remote video surveillance systems such as the one pictured at center.

smuggling; speeding and reckless driving by smugglers; extensive littering along smuggling routes near the border; vehicles abandoned in the desert; kidnapping and extortion among smuggling organizations; and abuse of people being smuggled. The list goes on and on.

Through combined efforts with other law enforcement agencies, we can focus specific authorities and skills to confront border crime. For example, a local police department can initiate a zero-tolerance posture on overloaded vehicles and focus enforcement in areas where violence has been known to spread away from the border. A sheriff's office or state police unit can focus on apprehending stolen vehicles headed toward the border, thereby removing the vehicle from the smuggling chain before it has picked up any people or contraband. These efforts take the vehicle out of the mix before the driver is able to use it for more criminal activity.

Border communities have enacted health and fire code regulations that address the use of

CONFRONTING ILLEGAL ENTRY WITH BARRIERS

Infrastructure is part of the triad that is the key to border security—the proper mix of personnel, infrastructure and technology. The mix varies depending on the location, activity, terrain and operational efforts in any given area.

Fences (or walls, as some people call them) are not a panacea, but they play a critical role and have a specific application in support of our strategy. Urban and high traffic areas, where housing or other structures are close to the border on both sides, are advantageous for illegal entry. If illegal aliens can make it to a housing area or vehicle quickly, they have a chance of outmaneuvering our enforcement efforts. This is especially true when a large group of illegal entrants uses the strategy of “rushing” the border to overwhelm our agents.





The use of barriers, tall fences and walls, supported by technology and quick enforcement response in urban areas, forces illegal entrants to cross in remote rural areas. This is more difficult for them and transfers the advantage to enforcement personnel.

Fencing and walls are not necessarily the most cost-effective way to confront illegal entries in rural and remote areas. Detection technology and a rapid response capability may be a less expensive but equally effective solution. Technology supplements barriers by providing greater visual range for agents. Ground sensors placed along alien traffic routes in remote areas send a signal to communication centers when they are tripped. Remote video surveillance systems feature pole-mounted cameras that can be manipulated from the communication center, so agents can pan in to determine what tripped the sensor. This system allows agents to respond quickly to intrusions.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

We are continuing to put the tools in place to gain, maintain and expand operational control of our borders. By the end of 2008, we will reach our goal of hiring and training 6,000 new Border Patrol agents. We will see significant levels of tactical infrastructure deployed in strategic locations along the border, along with a level of technology unlike anything we have seen before.

Within the next few years, the Border Patrol will have gone from a force of fewer

than 4,000 in the 1980s to a force of nearly 20,000. These agents will have the capability to consistently detect entries, identify and classify the threat of the entry, prepare and mount an effective response, and ensure the proper law enforcement resolution. Agents will benefit from state-of-the-art technology and updated training and skills, supported by the largest civilian law enforcement air force in the world.

THE OVERARCHING RESOURCE

The real secret to the success of securing our borders is an intangible force: the heart of the Border Patrol agent. Throughout the history of the agency, this heart has been determined to get the job done, has been innovative and has adapted to challenges. Over time, the Border Patrol has developed an organizational culture that strives to overcome adversity through ingenuity.

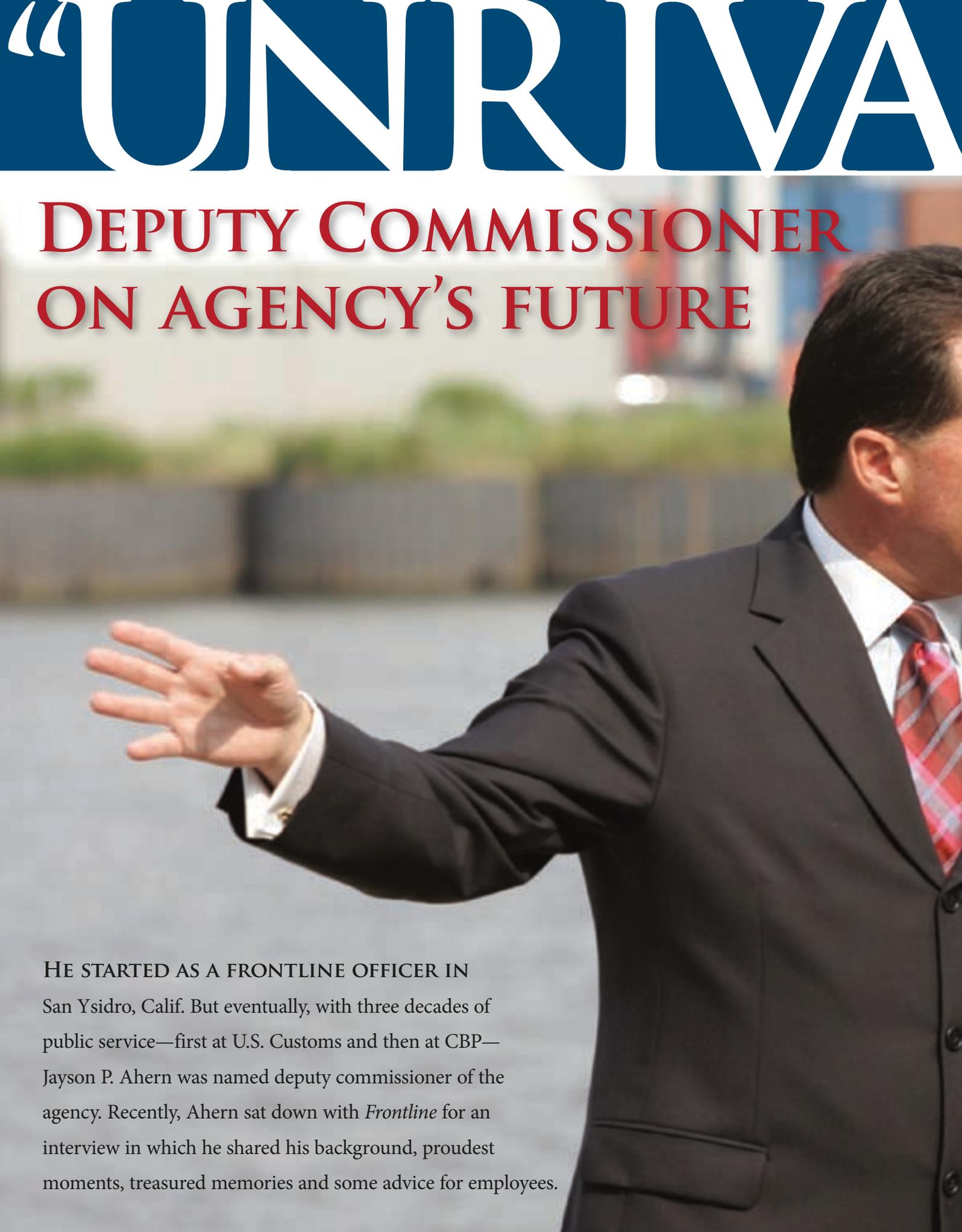
Deputy Chief Ron Colburn often speaks of his father, who was also in the Border Patrol. Before sophisticated technology was available, he put together a clothespin, a wire, and a flashlight to act as a sensor—when a smuggler or illegal alien tripped the wire, the flashlight went on. This primary resource—the ability of Border Patrol agents to adapt, to be resourceful, to go out day and night and literally put their lives on the line to defend, protect and maintain our homeland—is the real key to keeping our country strong and secure. ■



• Above, a Border Patrol agent uses remote control to operate a remote video surveillance system, such as the one pictured at center, and view the resulting images on a monitor.

“UNRIVA

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ON AGENCY'S FUTURE



HE STARTED AS A FRONTLINE OFFICER IN San Ysidro, Calif. But eventually, with three decades of public service—first at U.S. Customs and then at CBP—Jayson P. Ahern was named deputy commissioner of the agency. Recently, Ahern sat down with *Frontline* for an interview in which he shared his background, proudest moments, treasured memories and some advice for employees.

USED”

By *Dannielle Blumenthal*
and *Elysa Cross*

Part one of a two-part series



Photo by James L. Ford/White House

★ Border security is a top priority for President Bush. Here, Deputy Commissioner Ahern accompanies the president on a tour of the Baltimore, Md. seaport.

BEGINNINGS

Ahern was born and raised just outside Boston and went to college at Northeastern University. He majored in criminal justice, “knowing that I wanted to have a career in law enforcement or criminal justice.” As he worked through various intern and co-op assignments, he realized that he wanted to join the federal service. After graduation, the first opportunity arose in the 1970s with Customs in San Diego.

CAREER TRACK

Ahern came up primarily through the Field Operations ranks. He started as a frontline officer on the Mexican border and went through “just about every rank in the organization,” from first-line supervisor to second-line supervisor to assistant district director (when the agency had districts). He became a director of field operations after the reorganization of Customs in 1995. He worked in various headquarters offices over the years; in the late 1980s, he was anti-smuggling director of the contraband interdiction program. In fact, throughout the 1980s, he was heavily focused on drug war activity with the agency’s cocaine interdiction programs,

both in South Florida and for three or four years in the Caribbean and Central and South America, conducting training and interdiction programs.

Ahern has experienced much of what the agency has to offer. Over the years, he moved 10 times, “to experience different opportunities in different parts of the organization.” His position as deputy commissioner is his third tour at headquarters. He says, “I feel as though at this point in my professional life I’m prepared for the job, based on building blocks that I’ve put together over the past 31 years.”

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL LESSONS

Coming from the Office of Field Operations (OFO) side, Ahern admits that some things have surprised him about the Offices of Border Patrol and Air and Marine. “Certainly, what always surprises me about the organization,” he says, “is the size, the scope, the complexity and just the range of issues that we face every single hour of every day.” Because he’s familiar with the Field Operations side, and dealing a lot with the Border Patrol and Air and Marine, he has had an opportunity to “kind of view it from the other side of the fence.”

He says, “The thing I never find surprising is the diligence, the work ethic, the professionalism of our frontline personnel. They are unrivaled by any other federal employees or anybody else in law enforcement. They’re just a first-class group of individuals in this organization, and every person in CBP and every taxpayer in this country should be proud of the work that our frontline personnel do every single day to protect this country.”

ISSUES FACING CBP

Asked to describe some of the biggest issues facing CBP right now and how he plans to address them, Ahern says, “I think the biggest thing for CBP is maintaining our operational edge. There has not been an attack on our country since 9/11, and I think

the hard part for this organization is to maintain that operational edge every day.” Threats against the homeland are ever-present, he says, and CBP has to make sure that “our people on the frontlines are armed with the right intelligence, the information, the tools and the capability [and] training to execute the mission.”

Ahern believes that continuing to integrate the organization presents a challenge. “When Homeland Security was created,” he says, “it was the most significant reorganization since the World War II-era creation of the Department of Defense.” And within that reorganization, he says, “I would submit that the most pure example of a merger in the DHS family was actually within Customs and Border Protection.” Other entities—like the Coast Guard, the Secret Service, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency—moved in intact. But CBP also went through a major internal reorganization, merging three large operational components into one. (The agency also had a divestiture, in which it lost its investigative capability when Immigration and Customs Enforcement was created.) Ahern says, “Transforming, after merging the components together, into one highly efficient, synergistic organization has been a huge challenge.”

Ahern was involved in the transition from the early days of the new organization. He says, “I clearly underestimated the challenges...[in getting] it up and running, and I know we still have a lot of work to do as we continue to integrate and refine this organization to move forward.”

THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER’S ROLE

“The role of the deputy is defined by the commissioner,” Ahern says. “Every commissioner has their own preference in how they would like to have a deputy perform.” He thanks Commissioner Basham for the opportunity to serve as his deputy and says, “The way he defines my role is how I define it. And that’s to serve as his alter ego on many of the critical issues facing this organization. It’s his choice that I serve as the chief operating officer for the agency.”

Ahern sees his role as making sure that CBP deals with all the frontline operational issues (he relies heavily on the assistant commissioners for this), while continuing to integrate its capabilities operationally and across components in the DHS family. In addition, “I’m frequently dealing with our department on policy and programmatic areas, and on financial issues as well.”

He adds, “I continue to learn from the Commissioner, so that as we head into transition at the end of this calendar year, we’ll be able to continue to forge ahead with



★ A U.S. flag hangs from an office in the New York Customhouse at building 6 World Trade Center, which was destroyed in the attacks of September 11. This flag was recovered by CBP employees and is now displayed in the Commissioner’s office at CBP headquarters in Washington, D.C. It symbolizes CBP’s determination to prevent another such tragedy, a focus exemplified by Deputy Commissioner Ahern.



★ CBP officers and Border Patrol agents have been training Iraqi officers in border security techniques for several years now. This June, while on a trip to Iraq to discuss future support for U.S. government efforts there, Ahern spent some time observing their work. This was taken at the Zurbatiya border crossing point on the Iraq/Iran border.

our mission.” This means “making sure we have this organization ready to be handed over to a new commissioner when the new administration puts their cabinet and their political appointees together.”

ADVICE HE LIVES BY

Ahern has a motto: Be positive, be professional, and have a good work ethic. He says, “It’s something that I’ve had the opportunity to convey many times over the last 20 to 25 years, for as long as I’ve been in management.” He mentions it whenever he has the opportunity to speak to graduating classes at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers in Glynco, Ga. and Artesia, NM. He also used it when he was in the field, talking to new employees as they came on board.

Everyone brings their own background to the workplace, Ahern says, but he believes that the motto holds the key to success.

“If you have those, you can be a success in this organization, be a success as a person, and not just in your professional life.” He believes that positive, professional people with a good work ethic are what we need in this organization and in government and professional careers in general.

MOST TREASURED MEMORIES

Ahern says that it’s difficult to break down his experience to “an individual circumstance or two”; rather, he says that he’s found “all the different opportunities... extremely valuable.” But when he thinks about the most memorable years, he says those would probably be the early

1980s in Miami—in the heyday of the “cocaine cowboys” of South Florida. He recalls, “It was an exciting time and a very productive time for such a small collection of individuals. We were setting national records for our interdiction numbers. It was a highly charged time and very rewarding.”

Ahern also cites the tragic events of 9/11. “I was serving in Southern California as a director on September 11, 2001, when I saw the first plane hit...the World Trade Center... I knew at that [moment] that the job would never be the same.” Ahern believes that the challenges facing the organization and the people who protect the country’s borders have changed for good. ■

“The thing I never find surprising is the diligence, the work ethic, the professionalism of our frontline personnel. They are unrivaled by any other federal employees or anybody else in law enforcement.”

The



★ This photo is for representative purposes only.

high cost of
Faking it

By Dannielle Blumenthal

Selling fake handbags on urban streets may seem like a harmless swipe against wealthy corporations, but the practice actually injures everyone.

“Counterfeits are often of poor quality, so consumers who buy them get burned, sometimes literally, and they can’t go back to the retailer to get a refund.”

—Therese Randazzo, Director,
Intellectual Property Rights
Policy and Programs

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS—including trademarks, copyrights and patents—protect the ownership of creative works and ideas. Counterfeiting hurts legitimate business owners in companies of all sizes who invest in developing new products. The trade in fakes causes losses of \$200–\$250 billion a year for U.S. companies alone, as well as costing as many as three quarters of a million American jobs annually, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

“Counterfeits are often of poor quality, so consumers who buy them get burned, sometimes literally, and they can’t go back to the retailer to get a refund,” says Therese Randazzo, director of Intellectual Property Rights Policy and Programs at the Office of International Trade.

Protecting intellectual property rights is a vital part of CBP’s mission to protect the borders from dangerous or illegal goods while keeping legitimate trade flowing smoothly. Counterfeiting can be dangerous to consumers. Fake batteries can explode or leak mercury, while fake personal care items—such as contact lens solution, cosmetics, razors, skin cream, soap, shampoo and toothpaste—may contain harmful bacteria or caustic chemicals.

Stopping counterfeit and pirated goods is a high priority for CBP, and the agency devotes substantial resources—officers, import specialists, international trade specialists, attorneys and auditors—to target, intercept, seize merchandise and penalize those who violate intellectual property laws.

A MAJOR GLOBAL CHALLENGE

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a global organization of 30 member countries that generates economic and social data, estimates that trade in counterfeit and pirated goods across national borders may have totaled around \$200 billion in 2005. The OECD says that the real total is probably higher

Photo by James A. Bourdelle



★ CBP routinely seizes counterfeit goods, the trade in which costs U.S. companies up to \$250 billion in losses each year.

by several hundred billion dollars, because the estimate excludes products made and sold inside a country, as well as products downloaded from the Internet.

CBP’S EFFORTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Every year, the United States imports about \$2 trillion worth of products from more than 150 countries. CBP’s job is to clear those products, making sure that they do not violate intellectual property rights. The protection of intellectual property rights is a priority trade issue for CBP, given the sustained high level of violations uncovered by the agency in recent years and the threats that such products represent.

In the past five years, CBP has significantly stepped up enforcement efforts against counterfeit and pirated goods: Seizures have increased by 110 percent over that time. In fiscal year 2007 alone, CBP made more than 13,600 seizures of goods infringing intellectual property rights. Those goods had a domestic value of more than \$196 million. CBP regularly seizes a broad range of counterfeit products, ranging from athletic shoes, handbags and T-shirts to computer hardware, DVD players, video

games, batteries, power cords and light bulbs.

CBP Commissioner W. Ralph Basham has said, “We will be relentless in our efforts to stop the flow of counterfeit goods into this country, and the threat they pose to the health of the U.S. consumer and the U.S. economy.”

Unfortunately, as CBP gets more adept at identifying and seizing counterfeit goods, counterfeiters are turning to other tactics, such as shipping unfinished products from overseas and finishing them in the United States. In fiscal year 2007, CBP seized 225 shipments (more than 1.4 million pieces) of counterfeit labels, emblems, decals and holograms.

HOW THE AGENCY DOES IT

CBP’s approach to counterfeiting is directed by its National Trade Strategy for Intellectual Property Rights. The agency “uses the same strategy against counterfeiters that we use in our security mission,” says Commissioner Basham. This means evaluating risks, using new techniques to target and stop pirated goods and using audits to go after importers who bring fake goods into the United States.

To help officers spot counterfeit and pirated goods, CBP has developed a new approach called “risk modeling.” This is a computer-based program that targets imports according to how well they match the risk factors characteristic of goods that infringe intellectual property rights. Further, through post-entry verification or intellectual property rights audits, CBP audits companies at high risk for importing counterfeit and pirated goods to prevent future violations by these companies.

In 2005, CBP created a Web-based tool—e-Recordation—that allows users to place intellectual property rights “recordation” applications electronically with CBP, reducing the time required to process paper applications.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIP

As part of its anticounterfeiting strategy, CBP works intensively with partners.

Within the agency, the Intellectual Property Rights Working Group meets

regularly to focus the resources of offices throughout CBP on enforcement issues. CBP also has engaged in a new World Customs Organization initiative to spread best practices for protecting intellectual property. And the agency signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with China in 2007 to strengthen intellectual property rights enforcement. (In fiscal year 2007, 80 percent of the intellectual property rights violations seized by CBP originated in China.)

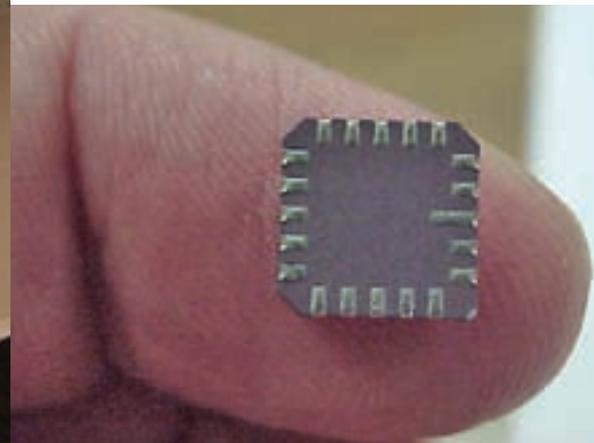
CBP also participates in the President’s Strategy for Targeting Organized Piracy (STOP!), an interagency initiative aimed at halting the traffic in counterfeit and pirated goods. Recently, CBP worked with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Department of Justice, the FBI and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to seize more than 400 units of counterfeit Cisco network hardware and labels, with an estimated retail value of more than \$76 million.

CBP’s partnership with ICE is key. In the summer of 2007, after a long investigation by the two agencies, ICE and CBP arrested 29 counterfeiters and charged them with conspiracy to smuggle more than 950 shipments of merchandise worth \$700 million into the country.

Partnership with the private sector is also an important part of CBP’s enforcement strategy. The agency’s work with the private sector includes education, training and information sharing.

LOOKING FORWARD

As the volume of products imported into the United States continues to increase (it is expected to triple by 2015), concerns about legitimate imports will increase as well. CBP will continue to partner with private industry and other government agencies to address this challenge. ■



★ A CBP officer unpacks a shipment of counterfeit toothpaste, which poses a health hazard to American consumers.

★ Computer chips like this one are routinely counterfeited—and since they are so small, pose a challenge to CBP officers to intercept.

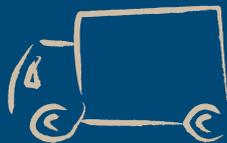
BorderBusts



★ Criminal activity is regularly attempted at the ports of entry. Here, CBP officers detain several individuals for suspected violations and examine illegal drugs found

A RUNNING DOPE

It was a quiet day for two Border Patrol agents patrolling an area near Jacumba, Calif. That is, until they spotted a pickup truck and an SUV on the Mexican side of the border, headed for the United States. As they moved in to investigate, the truck stopped to pick up a man running in the same direction. The agents detained the men in the two vehicles. As they talked to them, they saw a red light coming from the direction of Mexico. While one of the agents stayed with the suspects, the other followed the light to its origin, using a drug-sniffing dog to search the area. He found seven military-style duffel bags and one mesh bag used to hold onions, containing a total of 362 pounds of marijuana.



A TON OF TROUBLE

CBP officers at the San Luis, Ariz., port of entry seized a large amount of marijuana that smugglers tried to bring into the United States: a ton and a half, valued at just under \$5 million. Again, canines helped in the operation—a narcotics detector dog searched the smugglers' commercial truck, after officers became suspicious when they discovered it was otherwise empty.





Photo by Gerald L. Milano

in a vehicle.



CASH IN THE DOOR

When CBP officers in El Paso, Texas, encountered a nervous, shaky driver, they used a density meter to inspect his SUV. Looking closely at the doors, they found not the drugs they were expecting, but currency—nearly \$1.9 million. The seizure is among the largest ever made in El Paso.



A SMUGGLER'S STANDSTILL

A notorious Tijuana smuggler is off the streets, and it's all because of law enforcement cooperation between the San Diego Border Patrol and Mexican authorities. This June, Jose Luis Naranjo-Ramirez, better known as "El Sorga," was caught and detained by Mexican officials for organized crime and human trafficking charges. The alleged leader of the "Linea 13" smuggling organization, known for smuggling tactics that heavily endanger the lives of illegal aliens, Naranjo-Ramirez is one of the most-wanted illegal alien smugglers, on both sides of the border. Since the beginning of fiscal year 2008, San Diego Sector Border Patrol agents have apprehended over 110,164 illegal aliens and seized more than 36,844 pounds of marijuana.

A peek inside

Cargo security is focus of targeting facility



Photo by James R. Tomlinson

★ Information is continually fed to the National Targeting Center-Cargo, where staffers monitor incoming shipments to determine which ones may pose a threat.

So what's in the box? The employees at CBP's National Targeting Center-Cargo (NTC-C) can tell you. Using advance information on cargo shipments, law enforcement and intelligence databases, sophisticated analytical techniques and old-fashioned intuition, analysts determine which cargo shipments need a closer look. They may also decide that a shipment cannot enter the country.

Cargo represents the economic lifeblood of the United States and the global economy. But commerce coming into the country in cargo containers or "boxes," as they are called is not only an integral part of the trade economy; it also presents a potential threat to security. Surprises are great in holiday packages, but not in boxes loaded with commodities coming into the United States from foreign ports. Employees at the cargo targeting center make it their business to know what is coming into the country and to ensure the safety of global commerce.

SPECIALIZED SCRUTINY

CBP established the first National Targeting Center-Passenger (NTC-P) in October 2001 to provide tactical targeting and analysis in support of CBP anti-terrorism efforts.

Originally, it screened advance information on both passengers and cargo before either could cross U.S. borders. As the mission evolved, the passenger analysis function became the main focus.

In November 2006, a separate unit was established within the center to focus on cargo. With the specialized focus, cargo targeting efforts and expertise could expand. Today, the two targeting centers focus on their respective specialties. "The NTC-C mission is to coordinate and support all CBP anti-terrorism cargo-targeting efforts," says Darren Comras, NTC-C acting chief watch commander. "As resources allow, NTC-C is also beginning to combat narcotics trafficking and other transnational criminal syndicates."

The two centers share a primary mission: to keep terrorists and their weapons from reaching American soil while facilitating legitimate trade and travel. Both are part of the CBP layered strategy for smart and extended borders, and they require a cadre of well-trained personnel, advance information and threat-based targeting.

The NTC-C facility opened in May of 2007 in Northern Virginia. At the center,

more than 40 permanent and detailed employees work under the direction of Frank Jaramillo to evaluate shipments for risk and, when necessary, target them for examination.

ANALYZING WHAT'S IN THE BOX

Information is the oxygen that keeps the targeting process alive. Advance information from a carrier's manifest; historical trade data from the Automated Commercial System (ACS), CBP's cargo and trade processing system; and enforcement data from multiple law enforcement agencies are fed into the Automated Targeting System (ATS). ATS compares data with rules that describe what would be normal and identifies anomalies or red flags. Analysts review the deviations to determine whether they are significant. If the cargo is flagged for a more intensive inspection, the center provides a CBP field office with specific information.

While the NTC-C is looking at the data nationally, each port is also reviewing data for shipments coming into its area of operations. This layered approach provides a fail-safe system so that no discrepancy goes undetected or unreviewed.

Analysts also use an intuitive form of risk analysis, looking at anomalies that

“Analysts may look at things like unusual commodities for an importer, deviations in weight, commodities from an unusual location, radiological anomalies, or shipments of base ingredients for weapons of mass destruction.”

—Darren Comras, Acting Chief Watch Commander, NTC-C



Photo by James A. Benoit/USCBP

standard data analysis techniques may not have identified. “Analysts may look at things like unusual commodities for an importer, deviations in weight, commodities from an unusual location, radiological anomalies, or shipments of base ingredients for weapons of mass destruction,” says Comras.

The NTC-C also performs specialized cargo sweeps; for example, for weapons of mass destruction. During one of these sweeps, the center identified a shipment of weapons (also targeted by the Miami Advanced Targeting Unit) coming from the Middle East. Upon examination, CBP officers discovered 60 demilitarized rocket-propelled grenade launchers. The importer, who had multiple previous violations, had failed to file the proper permits, and the shipment violated international agreements. NTC-C also looks for possible conduits for the spread of avian influenza. Analysts have identified smugglers involved in the illegal trade of roosters for cockfights, parrots, hatching eggs, and fighting spurs.

ATS—THE CORE OF THE TARGETING PROCESS

ATS is a dynamic system based on rules that integrate enforcement and commercial databases. Subject matter experts develop a set of norms, or rules, for the process. The system identifies shipment anomalies and ranks each shipment according to risk factors. Analysts review these deviations to determine whether they are significant. If the cargo is considered to be a high risk, NTC-C coordinates examinations at the earliest possible point in the supply chain.

Analysts are constantly refining the rules and creating new ones. When new information or trends develop, rule developers and analysts at the NTC-C update the system. A joint working group that includes a Department of Agriculture liaison provides commodity, cargo and historical information to develop agro-terrorism rules and prioritize risk assessments.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS

Information is crucial at the NTC-C, so the center relies on open lines of communication and cooperation with other government agencies, such as the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce. Center personnel also provide monitoring support for larger Container Security Initiative (CSI) ports, such as Busan, South Korea, and Singapore. NTC-C reviews shipments when in-country CSI offices are closed or having system outages.

Under the International Cargo Targeting Fellowship Program, NTC-C is currently hosting two Japanese Customs and Tariff Bureau officers. The idea is to refine targeting methods and exchange best practices. Several other international partners, including the European Union and Mexico, have expressed interest in participating in the program.

KEY TO THE FUTURE

The NTC-C holds the key to the future of cargo security. Increases in advanced information and sophisticated rules development, coupled with internal and external partnership programs, will continue to ensure the safety of shipments entering the U.S. borders without impeding its flow.

■ By Linda Kane

★ The security of incoming cargo results from a partnership between CBP personnel who work on the border (as for example, here at a seaport) and those who work behind the scenes, as at the National Targeting Center-Cargo.

A DIPLOMATIC DANCE

It's about 15 minutes before the flight to New York takes off from London's Heathrow Airport. Passengers at the departure gate queue up to place their hand luggage and jackets on a table for one last check before boarding. Dressed in business clothes and working alongside airline personnel, a member of the CBP Immigration Advisory Program (IAP) team exchanges pleasantries and makes preboarding small talk with the passengers. At one point, the officer quietly pulls a passenger aside, having identified a problem with his travel documents.

IAP officers are posted in foreign airports and use passenger analysis information and a review of passenger documentation to make recommendations on whether they can board U.S.-bound flights. In this case, the traveler is a British citizen with a visa to work in the United States at a major university. He has been home on holiday and is returning to work; however, his visa has expired. He is not permitted to board, but instead of being angry, he seems relieved. The IAP officer has saved him a lot of hassle. He would have made the transatlantic trip only to be turned back in New York, and his ticket would have been wasted. Now he can go to the American Embassy in London, renew his visa and fly out at a later date.

Currently, IAP operates in Amsterdam, Warsaw, London, Frankfurt and Tokyo, with plans to expand to other locations.

HOW IT WORKS

The IAP process relies on two sets of advance data. The Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) includes such things as name, date and place of birth, and country of citizenship. This information is derived from passports and other government-issued documents, such as visas, that most passengers must present to air carriers when they check in for international flights. Passenger Name Recognition (PNR) files, which the airlines create for each passenger and every journey, contain the same information, plus travel details such as where and when a ticket was purchased and the method of payment.



Photo by James R. Thompson

The APIS and PNR data are sent electronically to the National Targeting Center (NTC) stateside and run against various databases. Essentially, a security check is conducted on each passenger before he or she boards a plane bound for the United States.

THE LONDON PROGRAM

At Heathrow, the IAP team may check more than 80 flights a day. A team member usually works at the check-in counter to screen passengers and to assist American passengers in distress or those who have a problem with travel documentation. If a passenger has lost his or her passport, the IAP officer can access the pertinent databases and verify the traveler's identity and citizenship on the spot. This is a great service—without it, the traveler would have to go the embassy to rectify the problem and reschedule the flight.

IAP personnel also work as “rovers” at the boarding gate, conducting in-person passenger analysis. Passenger information may have been reviewed, but adding the human element provides insight that cold data cannot supply. This process sometimes leads to information that prevents a traveler

from boarding or tags him or her for referral to secondary inspection on arrival.

IAP personnel uncover other issues, too. “Some travelers will have, and use, multiple passports,” says team member J. Ryan Halton. “While it's not illegal for someone to hold dual citizenship, it is a vulnerability.” A person can get a visa to travel on one passport and then use a passport from a visa-waiver country to travel. The person can sell the “extra” passport or use two passports to try to hide where he or she has traveled.

Another important function of the IAP team is training. Working with the Fraudulent Document Unit, team members train foreign carriers on admissibility criteria and how to identify document fraud. The IAP has provided training to the Dutch and French police forces.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

In a limited two-year pilot, the IAP produced more than 700 no-board recommendations and seized more than 70 fraudulent documents, resulting in savings of more than \$1.1 million to the airline industry.

The implementation of the IAP has had some unexpected benefits. Neil Winterbourne, director of United Kingdom Intelligence, Special Branch, says that his office and the IAP have developed a special relationship and the IAP has played a critical role in special operations. Operation Overt, for example, was a response to a plan by Al Qaeda-linked suspects to smuggle bombs aboard as many as nine airliners and detonate the bombs over the Atlantic or over American cities. Winterbourne says that the IAP was invaluable in assisting during the heightened level of security and the intense passenger screening that followed. Operation Seagram was a reaction to the crashing of a car into Glasgow Airport's passenger terminal by Kafeel Ahmed, a would-be terrorist. IAP personnel were among the first notified, and they worked countless hours of overtime to maintain security at Heathrow.

Winterbourne sums up the value of the program: “Terrorism is a continuum that goes across international boundaries. Exclusivity is not a viable tactic.” ■ By Linda Kane

CBP
Outreach
Campaign

**CONSTRUCTION
AHEAD**

**PROGRESS NOT
FAR BEHIND**

Construction on many U.S. border crossings will begin this summer. Although we regret that this may cause travelers additional delays, the state-of-the-art technology being installed will ultimately make re-entry into the U.S. more efficient and make our borders more secure. Your dedicated Customs and Border Protection officers appreciate your patience and understanding during this time. Visit www.cbp.gov/travel for the latest construction updates, border wait times and current document requirements.



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection

We're improving to keep you moving

WHTI
Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative

Improving to keep you moving

CBP is doing a number of things to make it tougher for the bad guys to get into the country and easier for legitimate travelers to get through faster. Here is a brief snapshot of current document requirements and an explanation of technology improvement efforts that will begin this summer to help create more efficient borders.

SHOW YOUR PAPERS

It used to be that you could return from a shopping trip in Canada or from spring break in Mexico just by telling the CBP officer that you were a citizen of the United States. This represented a clear vulnerability at our borders. On January 31, 2008, the process changed, and documentation became required. The new rules affect U.S. citizens, as well as citizens of Canada and Bermuda who enter the nation.

TWO-DOCUMENT OPTION

If you are 19 years or older and you enter the country through a land or sea port, you may present two documents:

- Proof of identity: A valid driver's license, government-issued photo ID card or military ID card with orders.

- Proof of citizenship: A birth certificate, naturalization certificate, Canadian citizenship card or U.S. consular report of birth abroad.

(Children age 18 and younger will still be able to enter with only proof of citizenship.)

SINGLE DOCUMENT OPTION

U.S. citizens can prove both their identity and their citizenship by presenting a U.S. passport; a U.S. passport card (available this summer from the Department of State); a trusted traveler card such as NEXUS, FAST or SENTRI; an enhanced driver's license; a valid Merchant Mariner document when traveling in conjunction with official maritime business; or a valid U.S. military ID card when traveling on official orders.

PERMANENT RESIDENTS

Legal permanent residents are not affected by these recent changes; they must continue to present an Alien Registration Card (Form I-551) or other valid evidence of their resident status.

CANADIAN AND MEXICAN CITIZENS

Canadian citizens may present a valid passport or NEXUS card, or a combination of the two-document option noted above.

Mexican citizens are not affected by the new rules. No matter how old they are, they must present a passport issued by the Mexican government and a B-1/B-2 nonimmigrant visa. Alternatively, Mexican citizens may show a laser visa (Form DSP-150) or a valid SENTRI card in addition to a laser visa or passport and visa.

DEPLOYING TECHNOLOGY

To further streamline the entry process, CBP is deploying radio frequency identification (RFID) technology at 39 of the nation's top land border crossings this summer. RFID will enable faster processing for travelers with the new passport card or enhanced driver's license—similar to NEXUS, SENTRI and FAST processing. As these documents also have a machine readable zone, they will be accepted at any land or sea port of entry.

The goal is to limit the number and types of documents while adding state-of-the-art technology. This combination will help secure our borders and address a critical vulnerability, while improving processing times and helping reduce congestion at land border ports. Stay tuned for future updates.

■ By Kelly Klundt

Travelers ask, “Why me?”

CBP's trusted traveler programs are a great way to speed up access to the United States, but not everyone is accepted. Those who are not able to gain entry to the program often want to know why. Their concerns have been better served since CBP opened a centralized Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) office in fall 2007.

FOIA requests have increased 143 percent since fiscal year 2004, from 4,796 to 11,697 in fiscal year 2007. The increase is primarily

among persons who are trying to find out why they were denied access to the trusted traveler programs.

The new FOIA organization supports Presidential Executive Order #13392 to improve agency disclosure of information, improve FOIA processing and reduce backlog. The order requires executive branch departments to reform their FOIA programs to make them more citizen-centered.

FOIA provides a critical means of ensuring government transparency and is key

to demonstrating the value agencies provide to the taxpaying public. As the Executive Order states: “The effective functioning of our constitutional democracy depends upon the participation in public life of a citizenry that is well informed. For nearly four decades, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) has provided an important means through which the public can obtain information regarding the activities of Federal agencies.”

CBP looks forward to continuing to serve the public's FOIA requests.

■ By Dannielle Blumenthal

To reach the FOIA office, write to:
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Attn: Mint Annex Building, FOIA Division
Washington, DC 20229
Or call 202.572.0640

NEW online traveler tools

International travelers looking for an online method to enroll in CBP's NEXUS and SENTRI "trusted traveler" programs have several new tools at their disposal—the Global Online Enrollment System (GOES) and the Global Enrollment System (GES).

NEXUS is a joint program with the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) that began in 1999; it covers land, air and marine border crossings between Canada and the United States. SENTRI is a program for travelers crossing the U.S.-Mexico land border that has been in existence since 2001.

To enroll in these trusted traveler programs, applicants can enter the required information into GOES, an application form available on the CBP Web site (www.cbp.gov). The enrollment system interfaces with

www.pay.gov, so travelers also can pay the application fee online. For NEXUS applicants, the online enrollment system offers access to a French-language version.

CBP officers use GES to review and process the biographic data provided on the SENTRI and NEXUS applications. For NEXUS applications, the information is automatically sent to the CBSA for review. Status updates and notifications are sent electronically to GOES and to the applicant. Applicants are invited to schedule an interview at the program enrollment center of their choice. They can do this by using the online scheduling component or by calling the enrollment center directly.

At the interview, a CBP officer conducts a thorough discussion with the applicant to determine his or her eligibility for the trusted traveler program.

For SENTRI applicants, there is also a vehicle inspection. After the inspection and the person's acceptance into the SENTRI program, he or she receives a radio frequency identification (RFID) card. The cards are used in dedicated commuter lanes and allow swift passage across the border at ports that support these programs. For the NEXUS program, the accepted applicant goes to an enrollment center for an iris scan; this scan is used in place of the RFID at some Canadian airports.

GOES automates the process for the trusted traveler programs and eliminates the time and effort required to enter handwritten or typed applications into the GES. This makes participation in the programs more convenient and efficient for everyone: CBP, CBSA and the travelers themselves.

■ By Diane C. Hundertmark

No more forged fingerprints

Lost or stolen passports and other identification can prevent travelers from entering the United States, ruining vacations or business trips. A new fingerprinting process is proving to be a fast way to identify and help international travelers who have lost their documents.

Until recently, CBP officers used a biometric collection technology that consisted of taking two fingerprints and a photograph from most non-U.S. citizens between the ages of 14 and 79 when the traveler applied for a visa or arrived at a U.S. port of entry.

Now the Department of Homeland Security is upgrading to collecting all

10 fingerprints instead of just two. This approach increases efficiency and accuracy in determining whether a person is a legitimate traveler. With more information (i.e., more fingerprints), searches and matches are quicker and more exact. This also means fewer mismatches, in which valid travelers are misidentified as criminals or immigration violators. Although these mismatches are infrequent, they are very stressful for the travelers involved. Decreasing their number will reduce stress and delay for travelers and allow officers to focus their attention on persons who actually pose a risk.

Currently, the new scanners are being used at 10 U.S. airports; by the end of 2008, all ports of entry will be collecting 10 fingerprints from visitors.

Having 10 fingerprints on file helps protect travelers against identity theft if their documents are lost or stolen. A person's name and date of birth can be forged or reproduced, but biometrics are unique and almost impossible to duplicate. Approximately 6.7 million lost or stolen passports are floating around out there. Biometrics can help identify criminals and immigration violators who

are using fraudulent documents and prevent them from entering the United States.

The United Kingdom and the European Union are moving toward 10 fingerprint collection for immigration and border management, and Japan recently began collecting biometrics from visitors. The goal is to more accurately identify dangerous persons while ensuring that legitimate international travel is convenient, expedient and secure. ■ By Anna Hinken

AIRPORTS THAT COLLECT 10 FINGERPRINTS

- Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport
- Boston Logan International Airport
- Chicago O'Hare International Airport
- Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport
- George Bush Houston Intercontinental Airport
- Miami International Airport
- John F. Kennedy International Airport (New York)
- Orlando International Airport
- San Francisco International Airport
- Washington Dulles International Airport



INSPIRED INSPECTIONS

One of CBP's primary missions is to facilitate the lawful passage of cargo into the United States while ensuring the protection of American agriculture. To that end, the agency operates the National Agriculture Release Program (NARP), which began in January 2007. NARP is a nationwide cargo inspection program for approved commodities in all pathways—by air, land and sea—that inspects low-risk products at reduced frequency.

NARP uses a special method of evaluating high-volume agriculture imports

that present a low risk for introducing plant pests and diseases into the United States. The method involves a systematic sampling process that provides great accuracy in measuring pest risk. Further, the program can be rapidly adjusted to changing risks without compromising agriculture quarantine and plant health safeguards.

NARP expedites the entry of specified fresh fruits and vegetables from Brazil, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico, as well as certain frozen, processed and semiprocessed fruits and

vegetables from all countries.

Because NARP allows CBP to sample high-volume, low-risk commodities at a reduced frequency, resources can be more efficiently deployed to inspect high-risk commodities. NARP allows CBP to expedite the processing of agricultural cargo while ensuring the protection of American agriculture.

Before NARP, the ports of entry along the southwest border participated in the Border Cargo Release (BCR) program developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection

Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine Unit. Like NARP, BCR identified high-volume imports that presented a low risk for introducing invasive plant pests and diseases. NARP expanded BCR to the national level and increased the number of source countries involved in the program.

CBP and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service continue to jointly evaluate pest and contamination issues, and consider the addition of new commodities to NARP.

■ By Leslie Gomez Montez and Dannielle Blumenthal

Wood pests sent packing



Photo by Lori Andra

A significant proportion of the goods imported to the United States arrive packed in, or containing some, wood packing material. Too often, that wood carries more than its intended load—it carries environmentally and economically devastating species of forest timber pests. In recent years, outbreaks of the Asian longhorned beetle, the pine shoot beetle and the emerald ash borer have been linked to the importation of wood packing material.

In response to this increasing assault, CBP—especially its agriculture specialist staff, stationed at the Port of Savannah, Ga.—has embraced the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization protocol on International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures 15 (ISPM 15). These standards are designed to block transnational movement of pests that can destroy forestation.

During fiscal year 2007, Savannah agriculture specialists intercepted 37 timber beetles from 161 shipments discovered to be noncompliant with the ISPM standards. In a recent interception, agriculture specialist Ana Duarte inspected a shipment of granite, including its wood packing material. She found that the material was infested with woodborers from the Platypodidae family. Commonly called ambrosia beetles, these have not been intercepted at the Port of Savannah for several years. The total number of interceptions for pests in Savannah during fiscal year 2007 is close to 1,300.

“Savannah’s strong agriculture program has come as a result of integrating agriculture specialists into every facet of the operation,” says Lynn Brennan, assistant area port director for trade. “It has truly been the Savannah employees who have created this strong agriculture enforcement program.” ■ By Jim Eldridge

★ CBP goes beyond inspecting goods to make sure the containers they come in are safe. One example is wood packing material.

bits & bites

Bringing fruits, vegetables, meat, and other food into the country may seem harmless, but dangerous pests can lurk in even the most seemingly innocent of items. Here are some recent CBP interceptions of note.

TOP PEST INVADER STOPPED

When CBP agriculture specialists inspected a shipment of “personal effects” that arrived at the Dallas/Fort Worth airport aboard a Lufthansa plane, they made a stunning find: a plastic bag with approximately three kilograms of melon seeds and four immature insects, subsequently identified as Khapra beetles. These insects are among the most dangerous for grain and grain products.

CANINE SMELLS PORK

Dixie, a CBP agriculture canine, was searching luggage from a flight from Krakow, Poland, when she alerted to a piece of checked luggage. The owner said he was carrying just one jar of pork meat, but further inspection found four pounds of pork sausage concealed in coffee containers. The containers had been resealed with glue to make it look as though they had never been opened.

203 POUNDS OF TROUBLE

A passenger traveling from China to Honolulu was selected for a baggage inspection. She denied that she had any agricultural items to declare, but her luggage told a different story. It contained 100 pounds of pork meat and sausages, 30 pounds of dried beef, 30 pounds of poultry meat, five pounds of fresh peppers, 10 pounds of green beans, 10 pounds of green onions, five pounds of fresh eggplant, five pounds of cucumbers, three pounds of leeks and five pounds of Asian pears, for a total of 203 pounds.

LUGGAGE GONE BATTY

A Northwest Airlines passenger arriving in Detroit presented his luggage for inspection. He admitted to having several

food items from Ghana, including 10 dead bats, pieces of a rodent and pieces of what was suspected to be a small antelope. All the food items, including the animal pieces, were seized. Because the items were declared, no penalty was issued. Bats and rodents are often infected with rabies, monkey pox and Ebola virus.

GUAVAS IN HIDING

A Chicago CBP canine was checking luggage on a flight from Pakistan when she alerted her handlers. When the owner picked up the luggage at the baggage carousel, CBP officers interviewed him. He had answered “no” to the agriculture questions on the written declaration form; during the interview, he admitted that he had eight sealed cans of guava in his suitcase. ■ By Elysa Cross

Photo by James R. Bourdette



★ One of the bats found in luggage from Ghana destined for Ohio.

Photo by James R. Bourdette



★ Prohibited meat, fruits and vegetables seized from the luggage of a passenger from China.

An ACE odyssey

The last stop was Alcan, Alaska. For nearly two-and-a-half years, deployment team members from CBP's Automated Commercial Environment, the agency's new commercial trade processing system, had traced a path across the United States that led them 5,000 miles from the easternmost port of Lubec, Maine, to the southernmost port of Brownsville, Texas, and to every land border port of entry in between. On the final evening of this journey, the team members gathered at a small restaurant in Alaska to celebrate the challenges they had overcome as they pursued the Herculean task of deploying ACE electronic truck-processing capabilities to the nation's land border ports.

The 19-member CBP team, including staff from the Office of Information and Technology (OIT) Cargo Systems Program Office, completed the deployment of ACE e-manifest capabilities to all 99 land border ports in November 2007. To reach its goal, the team averaged 25 days away from home per month and worked nights, weekends and holidays. They worked through the minus-54 degree cold in Montana and 125-degree heat in Arizona, which gave them new insights into the challenges CBP officers face each day.

FIRST STEPS

The journey began in December 2004 at the Blaine, Wash., port of entry (POE). Blaine was the site of the first pilot of ACE truck-processing capabilities. The system allows carriers to submit electronic manifests before they arrive at the border, enabling CBP officers to prescreen trucks and shipments through a single computer interface. Initially, the system was slow and cumbersome; however, CBP personnel from the Office of Field Operations (OFO) immediately recognized the potential of ACE and worked with the deployment team to make the system more efficient. Using feedback from OFO, the team reduced the number of ACE computer screens that officers had to open to process a shipment. This allowed officers to process trucks faster without compromising security. The Blaine installation—including improvements—was



★ It gets pretty darn cold in Poker Creek, Alaska, but that didn't stop CBP's ACE group from stopping there to assure that deployment was completed successfully. Pictured from left to right are team members Richard Baron, John Kneidel, Gregg Scherban, Ed Sales and David Nordean.

completed in April 2005. Lessons learned in this installation proved beneficial for future installations.

THE BUSIEST COMMERCIAL PORT

After deploying e-manifest capabilities at the Nogales, Ariz., and Pembina, N.D., ports of entry in August 2005, the OIT and OFO set an ambitious goal to deploy the ACE system at the largest and busiest land border port of entry for commercial traffic in the United States, the Detroit-Windsor corridor. This port processes an average of 7,000 trucks a day and required software upgrades to reduce truck-processing times. The deployment was completed in October 2005, after which ACE-trained CBP officers fanned out to help with system deployment at smaller ports. The teams worked at breakneck speed, deploying ACE across the southern border in just four months and two days.

PAINSTAKING DETAIL

Before a port could "go live," staff from the OIT Enterprise Networks and Technology Solutions Division spent weeks creating a customized technology plan tailored to each port's operational requirements and cargo-processing needs. Staff followed a 129-step process to ensure that every computer had the necessary system capabilities to support ACE. The team encountered a few unwelcome guests in the network cabling, including bats and a large tarantula that required careful extraction. Wildlife notwithstanding, personnel paid careful attention to every detail of a port's computer network to ensure a smooth transition to ACE without creating delays at the border.

TRAINING IS KEY

At each port of entry, training was a critical predeployment step. The team tailored the training to each port's business practice and

spent hours conducting round-the-clock sessions covering all shifts. Sometimes, local weather created additional challenges. During a day-long session in the 105-degree Arizona heat, the air-conditioning system broke down and industrial-sized fans were brought in to cool the participants. The trainers struggled to be heard over the jet-engine roar of the fans, but rescheduling was not an option, as training was integral to the successful transition to ACE.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

As the deployment, training and field operations teams ensured that ports were ready for e-manifests, the Cargo Systems Program Office communications team undertook the enormous task of educating more than 10,000 carriers on the necessity and benefits of e-manifests. The team organized and hosted 2,500 licensed customs house brokers, cargo carriers and importers at eight ACE Exchange conferences across the country. Additional ACE information was disseminated to CBP field offices and the local trade community by CBP-trained volunteers called ACE ambassadors and trade ambassadors. CBP held another 200 well-attended cargo carrier outreach events in the United States, Mexico and Canada.

LOOKING AHEAD

After the final trip to Alaska, team members can be proud, knowing that their work has helped secure the U.S. border and that compliant carriers are saving time by using the ACE e-manifests. The team members were happy to complete their task, but they know that they will probably embark on more journeys as ACE rail, sea and air capabilities are deployed in the future. ■ By Louis Samenfink

For more information on ACE, visit: www.cbp.gov/modernization

SYMPOSIUM highlights progressive partnerships

“Nothing is more important to our country now than securing our borders and facilitating legitimate trade and travel,” CBP Commissioner W. Ralph Basham told the sold-out CBP Trade Symposium audience recently in Washington, D.C.

Addressing the symposium’s theme—Partnerships: Meeting the Challenges of Securing and Facilitating Trade—the Commissioner cited foiled terrorist attempts that could have paralyzed international travel and commerce, but he was very clear that “trade facilitation in our mission is equal to our security mission.”

He said, “Whether it’s flying an airplane into a building or hurting our economy, the terrorists don’t care how they inflict damage on us. If we cut off our economy by imposing overly restrictive trade security measures, the terrorists win.”

The Commissioner said that the only winning strategy to find the right balance for CBP’s dual mission is effective partnership with the trade. “In my 37 years in law enforcement,” he said, “one thing I’ve learned is that we need each other to do the job.” He mentioned the Commercial Operations Advisory Committee (COAC) in particular as a productive partnership for CBP.

The symposium featured five panels on a range of subjects, including cargo security, import safety and CBP’s agricultural inspection program. More than a dozen information booths and exhibits highlighted key trade programs by

various agencies that work with CBP. But what was most vividly on exhibit during the two-day event was the maturity of the new trade governance model—working partnerships between the public and private sectors, among government agencies and among countries.

Brokers, carriers and importers candidly discussed their experiences working with CBP to use new agency programs—including eManifest, Periodic Monthly Statement and ACE—and the business benefits they derived. There was praise for CBP’s substantial outreach to companies that want to implement these new programs.

Panelists from Canada, Pakistan and New Zealand described their collaboration with CBP to improve security without sacrificing facilitation. Examples included the Container Security Initiative (CSI) and recognition by CBP of the New Zealand version of the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT).

As the symposium again made clear, the paradigm shift in the CBP trade mission is its commitment to maximizing partnership. As Commissioner Basham told the trade community, “We recognize that your needs and our needs can only be satisfied if we work together. I do hope you will take away from this symposium the idea that we want to be your partner.” ■ By Richard Coleman



Photo by James B. Tomlinson

★ At CBP’s most recent annual Trade Symposium, CBP Commissioner W. Ralph Basham reiterated to trade attendees the agency’s commitment to working with them on issues of mutual economic and national security interest.

Canine Capers



★ CBP Canine teams search for contraband during the International Championship of Customs Drug Search Dogs held in the Czech Republic.

No escape from Zeek

An Oxford, Mass., man trying to fly from a private airfield in Miami to Venezuela with his family and dog was arrested with \$1.3 million, wrapped in paper and plastic bags, hidden in his luggage. When CBP officers (who had received a tip that the flight was suspicious) arrived at the airport to conduct an outbound examination, the man said he was going to cancel the flight. He refused to fill out a currency reporting form. After this refusal, Zeek—a currency detection dog—was brought out to examine the aircraft. The dog found the money hidden in the baggage compartment. The man has been charged with wire fraud and interstate transportation of stolen property, as the money was allegedly stolen.

Detector dog duels with narcotics

A Border Patrol agent was working at the I-19 checkpoint outside Nogales, Ariz., when his canine partner alerted to the possible presence of narcotics inside a tractor-trailer. The agent inspected the trailer and found 124 bundles of marijuana, weighing more than 1,900 pounds, hidden behind boxes of produce. The marijuana, with an estimated street value of more than \$1.5 million, was turned over to the Drug Enforcement Administration, along with the driver of the vehicle.



Photo by Steven Goldfarb

Canines show off

At the recent 10th Annual International Championship of Customs Drug Searching Dogs, held in the Czech Republic, CBP Officer Gilberto Flores and Border Patrol Agent Javier Ramirez, along with their respective canines Bogart and Rex-B, represented CBP and the United States. The purpose of the championship was to demonstrate how canines can be one of the best tools for combating drugs, organized crime and international terrorism.

Although the CBP team did not bring home any trophies, they made their strongest showing to date, ranking in the top half of the competition. The international judges complimented the professionalism, ability and skill of Officer Flores and Agent Ramirez, and the team made a positive impression, increased goodwill and improved international relations.

Photo by Steven Goldfarb

Action Plans for Agriculture

CBP reaches out in joint stakeholders conference



★ CBP agriculture specialists seize myriad items. Here, a CBP officer shows Commissioner W. Ralph Basham a few of them during a recent agriculture stakeholder conference.

CBP is moving forward in response to reviews by a variety of government bodies suggesting areas of improvement in its agriculture mission, which is closely intertwined with that of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

One step the agency has taken, in collaboration with the USDA, is to form several new partnership groups composed variously of delegates from CBP's Office of Field Operations, APHIS and representatives of several of the state departments of agriculture. The groups aim at mapping out improvement plans, establishing better lines of communication between CBP and APHIS, and ensuring that those plans were implemented.

During the spring of 2008, CBP and APHIS held a joint conference to obtain honest feedback from key industry and government stakeholders on how well they were doing in their efforts to improve, and what areas still needed work.

Thomas S. Winkowski, CBP's Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations

opened the conference by stating that CBP and APHIS shared common goals, despite their differing structure, chain of command and uniform. He also shared his hope that the event would result in a frank and open dialogue between CBP, APHIS and their stakeholders.

USDA Secretary Ed Schafer said that the theme of the conference, "Success through Partnership," was well chosen and he affirmed USDA's commitment to the partnership with CBP of protecting America's agricultural resources. Schafer also said that transferring agricultural inspection functions was a good thing. "Although it was not going to be seamless, it was the right move."

The primary concerns of the attendees were how to improve communication between the government, states and industry to include local pest risk committees, periodic program-related updates to the states and quality assurance.

Examples of some of the CBP/APHIS partnership successes such as the development and implementation of bird handling procedures and the CBP agriculture specialist academy were also showcased. ■ By Elysa Cross

SAFE in Space

In Ft. Pierce, Fla., marine interdiction agents work daily to prevent terrorists and terrorist weapons from entering the United States, as well as performing border control and drug interdiction activities. Sometimes these agents are called on to protect critical infrastructure components and provide maritime protection during major events that occur on or around the nation's coastal borders.

As one of several federal, state and local entities that helps NASA protect the space shuttle during launch operations, the Ft. Pierce Marine Unit recognizes the challenges and responsibilities this assignment carries. "This type of mission requires extreme vigilance and long hours, but watching the shuttle travel into space is an extraordinarily breathtaking experience and well worth the effort," says CBP Marine Interdiction Agent Christopher Wiyda.

The unit's mission is to help the U.S. Coast Guard secure the maritime security zone directly adjacent to the launch pad. This 3-by-12-mile security zone not only provides a safe launch path for the shuttle but also protects recreational and commercial boaters.

Operating a 39-foot Midnight Express interceptor vessel powered by four 225-horsepower Mercury motors, the Ft. Pierce Marine Unit serves as a rapid response vessel. The unit is responsible for intercepting trespassers into the security zone before a shuttle launch. When an offending vessel is intercepted, the agents interview the captain, crew and others on board the boat to determine why they violated the security zone. After the interviews, the vessel is removed from the security zone.

Wiyda says, "Supporting NASA is just another example of the diversity of CBP's marine program. We're extremely proud to be a part of such a historical event and look forward to ensuring the security of our nation's space program."

■ By Kevin Sposetta

FRIENDS UP NORTH

Since the events of September 11, 2001, the United States and Canada have continued to strengthen their partnership, and securing their joint border is a top priority for both countries.

The Thousand Islands Integrated Border Enforcement Team (IBET) is one of 15 units formed as a result of the Smart Border Declaration between the United States and Canada after 9/11. Composed of both Canadian and American law enforcement partners, IBET has established a strong presence along the New York–Ontario border. The team works with local, state and provincial enforcement agencies on national security issues, investigations of organized crime and any other suspicious activity along the Canada/U.S. border.

Photo by Joseph A. Banco, Jr.



★ Joint American-Canadian northern border patrols have led to enhanced enforcement of laws regarding contraband, immigration and customs violations.

In 2007, IBET conducted seven missions through traffic checkpoints and marine and linewatch operations. The objectives were to seize contraband, arrest offenders and generally disrupt and deter any illegal activity taking place along this portion of the northern border. The results were encouraging: 65 apprehensions or arrests for immigration and customs violations, five seizures of marijuana with a value of \$431,000, eight seizures of unlicensed tobacco

totaling \$331,873, two cash seizures totaling \$170,000, seizures of seven vehicles, 16 arrests for driving under the influence and nine for boating under the influence, four rescues of distressed boaters and 471 tickets issued for various violations.

The success of these operations confirms that when the two countries work together to secure and protect the U.S./Canada border, they can achieve their goals.

■ By Joseph A. Banco, Jr.

unity at sea

In January 2007, the *Tong Cheng*, a 485-foot Chinese-flagged commercial vessel carrying cargo from China to Cuba, suffered a crack in its hull below the waterline during bad weather at sea. Major flooding in a compartment dangerously affected stability and placed the crew of 26 at risk. The potential for changing sea conditions, crew safety and a damaged hull were among the factors

that turned the vessel toward Hawaii for assistance.

Because of the sensitive nature of the situation (which involved national security interests and a potential for diplomatic disaster), issues of international protocols, safe harbor, legal implications, local response, hazardous materials and the unified command all came into play. The U.S. Coast Guard initiated a unified command post in which CBP was the principal partner. A maritime operational threat response (MOTR) was established.

CBP officers boarded the vessel with the Coast Guard before its arrival to identify crew members, interview the captain and clarify the manifest. CBP officers fluent in Cantonese and Mandarin provided verbal and written support to the boarding team. The vessel arrived dockside and completed vessel clearance. Although the captain and crew were detained onboard, all interests agreed that the vessel, crew

and cargo posed no threat to the health and safety of the port or the surrounding communities, and any interests related to national security were satisfied. The vessel owner agreed to return the vessel and cargo to China after semi-permanent repairs were made.

Honolulu Area Port Director Lamar Witmer provided updates to San Francisco Director of Field Operations Nat Aycox. Aycox said, “The unified U.S. government response to this vessel emergency call demonstrated an international effort of several nations in support of maritime courtesies.”

Temporary repairs were made and the vessel moved to a designated harbor away from the domestic and foreign cargo piers. The repairs mitigated the potential for environmental damage to the coastal reef or port from any unknown discharges from the crack or from the vessel sinking in the event of hull failure.

CBP maintained a seat at the table with the unified command and MOTR, and provided necessary input to ensure that all aspects of CBP’s responsibilities for the vessel, crew and cargo were enforced. The vessel eventually departed Hawaii with its crew and cargo intact. ■ By Jim Kosciuk



★ When a Chinese freighter’s hull cracked, CBP and other agencies worked together to get it back onto international waters—safely and securely.

July 31, 1789

The second Declaration of Independence



★ Trade by sea has always been crucial to the U.S. Here is an image of “Revenue Cutter Eagle Captures Bon Pere,” by Wendell Minor.

the Collectors to build and control the first revenue cutters...we were the first Coast Guard. America needed a system of pension agents to assist its war veterans and the Collectors got the job...we were the first Veterans Administration.

Providing for the well-being of merchant seamen was another job for the busy Collectors...we were the first Public Health Service.

Weights and measures were effectively standardized by the agency to ensure merchant and consumer satisfaction...we were the first Bureau of Standards.

When masses of immigrants began seeking refuge in America, Congress turned to the Collectors for help...we were the first Immigration and Naturalization Service. Drug interdiction has been a Customs mandate since 1848, and 22 valiant

Customs Mounted Inspectors were wounded or killed during the apprehension of liquor smugglers during the era known as Prohibition.

As America developed into a major world power, the U.S. Customs Service grew with it, assuming more extensive and complex responsibilities to protect and provide for our nation and its loyal citizens. And

now, we are part of the Department of Homeland Security, facing our greatest challenge to date: protecting our nation from acts of terrorism within our own borders. And for more than five years now, we have been dedicated to meeting this challenge with the same dedication to duty that has always marked those special people who had the privilege ■ By Anne Saba

The history of the United States Customs Service, one of CBP’s key legacy agencies, goes back as far as that of the nation itself. In 1789, when Congress first assembled in New York City to launch this country on its proper course, it had one overriding concern...money: where to find it, how to collect it, how to keep it rolling in. Fighting a revolution had left the national cupboard bare, but James Madison proposed a remedy that would eventually make the nation solvent: Impose a duty on imports and create a well-regulated agency to ensure its due collection.

The Fifth Act of the First Congress, signed by President Washington on July 31, 1789, created the first agency of the federal government: a field organization of Collectors “to regulate the Collection of the Duties imposed by law on the tonnage of ships or vessels, and on goods, wares and merchandises imported into the United States.” Established were 59 collection districts, which were also ports of entry, and 116 ports of delivery. The legislation provided for Presidential appointment of 59 Collectors,

10 Naval Officers and 33 Surveyors. The organization, under the direct authority of the Secretary of the Treasury, was a new star in the American constellation, a shining reflection of the government’s newly granted power under the Constitution.

By bringing in needed revenue, it was the customs field agency that funded the functions of the Executive Departments, paid the salaries of those on military and civil lists, and effectively dissolved the huge national debt by 1835. In so doing, the Collectors of customs provided an example to the fledgling government on how a federal agency should operate. The task fell upon the Collectors by default, because they represented the first, and for years the largest, federal agency. By 1792, the Collectors offices totaled nearly 500 employees—80% of all Treasury Department employees!

The Customhouse represented the federal presence in the states and Congress consistently turned to the Collectors to administer new laws and regulations. From 1791 to 1850, the Collectors supervised the construction of over 300 lighthouses. A need for armed ships to patrol our shores directed



★ An archive image of Customs employees displaying their distinctive flag.



Photo by Kay Chernush, U.S. Department of State

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