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Bulletin 256 - 07/02 - Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism - USA

U.S. Customs Service Commissioner Robert C. Bonner has announced that Customs will begin taking applications in mid-July from the global transportation community for membership in the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) program. C-TPAT is an initiative between business and government to protect global commerce from terrorism. Unveiled in April, the program initially sought membership from major importers of goods into the U.S. To date, just over 230 importers have agreed to participate.

"This marks the next step in our plan to join forces with the private sector and keep the avenues of the world economy free of terrorist infiltration," said Bonner. "We expect this phase to progress quickly since we are building on the already firm foundation of Customs carrier programs."

The program calls upon importing businesses to establish policies to enhance their own security practices and those of business partners involved in the supply chain. Once these policies are in effect, imports by these businesses would be given expedited processing at ports of entry.

Commissioner Bonner stressed that swifter processing is just one of the benefits extended to business by U.S. Customs.

"The specter of terrorists using global commercial channels is a threat to all who benefit from world trade," said Commissioner Bonner. "It is not one nation that is the target of such an attack, it is the entire world economy. The international business community has a tremendous stake in the success of this program."

We understand this new round of application recruitment, scheduled to begin July 15, has been developed from the "Sea Carrier Initiative" program with which many Members were involved in the mid/late 1990s. This initiative, Members will remember, was heavily focused on drug smuggling, piracy and stowaways.

The US Customs authorities advise that participating in the scheme will give members the following potential benefits

- A reduced number of inspections
- An assigned account manager
- Access to the C-PTAT membership list
- Eligibility for account based processes
- An emphasis on self policing, not Customs verifications

For further information contact Industry Partnership Programs

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