U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Air Cargo Advance Screening (ACAS)

FACT SHEET

In October 2010, the global counter-terrorism community disrupted an attempt by al-Qaeda in Yemen to conceal and ship explosive devices in cargo onboard U.S.-bound aircraft. Five days after the attempted attack, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) began meeting with industry partners to better understand business practices and to collectively develop a mechanism to collect cargo data as soon as possible in the supply chain.

The result of this public/private cooperation was the Air Cargo Advance Screening (ACAS) pilot, which allowed CBP and TSA to use advance information from air carriers and other stakeholders to identify and intercept high-risk shipments in a pre-loading timeline. The two agencies formed a joint targeting operation at a centralized location (CBP's National Targeting Center), which allowed easy collaboration between Department of Homeland Security (DHS) components. The targeting operation uses CBP's Automated Targeting System and other available intelligence to identify packages that pose a possible security threat.

The ACAS pilot operated for more than seven years, as CBP continued to collaborate with industry partners and the international community to develop viable and effective regulatory requirements.

A printer cartridge loaded with explosives intercepted in a shipment from Yemen in October 2010

ACAS is now a requirement. As a program, it enhances the security of the aircraft and passengers on U.S.-bound flights by providing an additional layer to DHS's robust risk-based layered security strategy. ACAS risk assessments identify and prevent the loading of high-risk air cargo that could pose a risk to the aircraft during flight.

The ACAS data elements:

- **Shipper Name and Address** – individual name or name of business and a valid street address with city/province, country and postal code
- **Consignee Name and Address** – individual name or name of business and a valid street address with city/province, country and postal code.
- **Cargo Description** – generic cargo descriptions should be avoided
- **Total Quantity** – based on the smallest external packing unit
- **Total Weight** – total weight of cargo expressed in pounds or kilograms
- **Air Waybill Number**

Carton from Yemen containing explosives intercepted in October 2010