

# Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee Secure Trade Lanes Subcommittee

December 2023

# COAC

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COMMERCIAL CUSTOMS OPERATIONS  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Commercial Customs Operations Advisory Committee (COAC)  
December 2023**

**Report of the Work of the COAC  
Subcommittee on Secure Trade Lanes**

**Co-Chairs**

Angela Cook – General Motors Tax Staff - Global Customs  
Jose (JD) Gonzalez – JD Gonzalez Customs Broker  
Stephen Simmons - The Kansas City Southern Railway Company

**Secure Trade Lanes Subcommittee Members:**

Dave Corn, Vicente Herrera, Chris Everley, Mary Hodges, Heather Litman, Kerry Novak, Julie Pojar, Craig Seelig

**Background:**

The Secure Trade Lanes Subcommittee has seven active working groups focused on areas aimed at modernizing import/export processes, improving trade intelligence, and maximizing efficiencies. These groups are working to enhance trade partnership programs, improve management of imports and exports, deploy authentication technologies to reduce supply chain barriers, and update the in-bond process.

The following working groups make up the Secure Trade Lanes Subcommittee:

- 1) Export Modernization Working Group, co-chaired by Dave Corn and Vicente Herrera Gonzalez;
- 2) In-Bond Working Group, co-chaired by Chris Everley and Jose (JD) Gonzalez;
- 3) Trade Partnership and Engagement Working Group, co-chaired by Angela Cook, Kerry Novak and Julie Pojar;
- 4) Cross-Border Recognition Working Group, co-chaired by Stephen Simmons and Jose (JD) Gonzalez;
- 5) Pipeline Working Group chaired by Mary Hodges;
- 6) De Minimis Working Group chaired by Craig Seelig;
- 7) Centers Working Group chaired by Heather Litman; and
- 8) Remote and Autonomous Cargo Processing Working Group, temporarily inactive.

All subcommittee objectives and scope are consistent with the official charter of COAC.

**Summary of Work**

The Secure Trade Lanes Subcommittee has the responsibility of focusing on areas aimed at modernizing import/export processes, improving trade intelligence, and maximizing efficiencies. The Secure Trade Lanes sub-committee has not met this quarter to discuss the ongoing efforts in the seven active working groups areas. This quarter there are 10 recommendations to put forth.

### **Export Modernization Work Group**

The Export Modernization Working Group (EMWG) has met seven times since our last public meeting on September 20th. The EMWG has continued to meet bi-weekly with CBP, Census and BIS to continue to push for the development and rollout of the Electronic Export Manifest (EEM) for all modes of transport. We also reviewed and follow up on the topics related to the EEM that were discussed in the in-person session from November of 2022 to see that they are addressed and developed in this COAC term.

Our immediate attention this quarter has been to push for the release of regulations for rail, air and vessel, to continue to build support for pilot participants with the release of the EEM document on CBP.gov and to further discuss the impacts and expectations for progressive filing.

The Truck Focus Group met three times this quarter, where several members of the trade, CBP, Census, and other Partner Government Agencies (PGAs) had open discussions on the benefits and challenges of the truck manifest pilot that CBP is planning to implement. One of the great accomplishments was to have the participation of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) representatives, where we identified the operational functionalities that will help determine efficiencies as well as potential new data elements with border crossings to Canada. We hope that a future conversation can be held with the National Customs Agency of Mexico (Agencia Nacional de Aduanas de Mexico, or ANAM) to review future efficiencies in with border crossings into Mexico. The Truck Focus Group was able to accomplish all the goals that it set at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> term and it is recommended that the group be placed on hiatus after this public meeting.

The EMWG have eight (8) recommendations for the December 13, 2023 public meeting, and two (2) of the recommendations come specifically from the Truck Focus Group.

### **In-Bond Working Group**

Since our last COAC public meeting in September, the In-Bond Working Group (IBWG) has held several meetings with CBP to discuss the status of prior recommendations and next steps for moving them forward. The working group sessions have been very robust with COAC members bringing forward pain points for discussion, as well as CBP providing updates. The IBWG discussed exporting AWB via flying trucks and will work with CBP to issue guidance on this topic. In addition, CBP is currently working to provide direction to their field offices in an effort to streamline non-bonded FIRMS code requests. The IBWG looks forward to continuing its collaboration with CBP on these key issues impacting the trade industry.

The IBWG has drafted two recommendations to submit for the December 13th, 2023, COAC public meeting. These recommendations focus on enhancing ACE logic with respect to matching ACE cargoes and in-bond entries, as well as providing public outreach to educate parties about in-bond movements.

### **Trade Partnership and Engagement Working Group**

The Trade Partnership and Engagement Working Group was able to meet five (5) times since the September public meeting. The focus of the meetings this quarter was a review multiple documents proposed by CBP. The intent of these documents is to standardize portions of the CTPAT validation process.

Additionally, a new trade member was added to the group this quarter, along with multiple changes on the CBP side.

The TPE WG has no recommendations this quarter.

### **Cross-Border Recognition Working Group**

Since the last public COAC meeting in September, the CBRWG has met two times under the revised Statement of Work (SOW). The CBRWG revised SOW now focuses on the strategic objectives of;

- Technologies that could potentially modernize, simplify, and/or harmonize customs procedures to the greatest extent possible.
- Enhanced data sharing.
- Operational procedures at selected land ports of entry.
- Ways to maximize the current MRA with Mexico Customs.

Over the next quarter, the working group will focus on identifying and documenting best practices of UCP in order to allow all POE's on the southern border to benefit from those best practices.

The Cross-Border Recognition Working Group will not have any recommendations for the December 2023 Public COAC meeting.

### **De Minimis Working Group**

The De Minimis Working Group met two times in this quarter. In these meetings we have discussed the recommendations from the previous quarter. The goal is to further refine those previous recommendations and the working group will have no recommendations this quarter.

### **Pipeline Working Group**

The Pipeline Working Group (PWG) Phase III has continued to meet and build on the knowledge gained from the previous COAC Work Groups and develop and codify uniformity while creating efficient processes for pipeline carriers and entry procedures. The PWG has no recommendations this quarter.

### **Centers Working Group**

The Centers Working Group was formed this quarter and has met once. There are no updates nor recommendations for this quarter.

### **Conclusion**

The Secure Trade Lanes Subcommittee will continue to leverage its existing working groups and trade subject-matter experts to provide feedback on the various challenges facing CBP and the Trade and collaborate to help CBP achieve its dual goals of trade facilitation and enforcement.