



*The world has changed since 9/11*

# C-TPAT

## Fact sheet and FAQ's

presented for your information by  
Quality Air Forwarding, Inc.

**DHS**'s cargo security vision "The Department of Homeland Security envisions a system for supply chain security that mitigates the evolving terrorist threat and facilitates the free flow of global commerce in order to ensure the physical and economic well being of the United States and its trading partners." (*Traffic World, January 2005*)



### What is C-TPAT?

- C-TPAT is a joint government-business initiative to build cooperative relationships that strengthen overall supply chain and border security.
- C-TPAT recognizes that Customs can provide the highest level of security only through close cooperation with the ultimate owners of the supply chain, importers, carriers, brokers, warehouse operators and manufacturers.
- Through this initiative, Customs is asking businesses to ensure the integrity of their security practices and communicate their security guidelines to their business partners within the supply chain.

### What does participation in C-TPAT require?

*Businesses must apply to participate in C-TPAT. Participants will sign an agreement that commits them to the following actions:*

- Conduct a comprehensive self-assessment of supply chain security using the C-TPAT security guidelines jointly developed by Customs and the trade community. These guidelines, which are available for review on the Customs website, encompass the following areas: Procedural Security, Physical Security, Personnel Security, Education and Training, Access Controls, Manifest Procedures, and Conveyance Security.
- Submit a supply chain security profile questionnaire to Customs.
- Develop and implement a program to enhance security throughout the supply chain in accordance with C-TPAT guidelines.
- Communicate C-TPAT guidelines to other companies in the supply chain and work toward building the guidelines into relationships with these companies.

### What are the benefits of participation in C-TPAT?

*C-TPAT offers businesses an opportunity to play an active role in the war against terrorism. By participating in this first worldwide supply chain security initiative, companies will ensure a more secure supply chain for their employees, suppliers and customers.*

*Beyond these essential security benefits, Customs will offer potential benefits to C-TPAT members, including:*

- A reduced number of inspections (reduced border times)
- An assigned account manager (if one is not already assigned)
- Access to the C-TPAT membership list
- An emphasis on self-policing, not Customs verifications
- Eligibility for account-based processes (bimonthly/monthly payments, e. g.)

### Who is eligible for C-TPAT?

*C-TPAT is currently open to all importers and carriers (air, rail, sea). Customs plans to open enrollment to a broader spectrum of the trade community in the near future. C-TPAT membership will be made available to all sectors of the supply chain. Customs will be consulting with the trade community to develop the most effective approach for each sector to participate in C-TPAT. Please refer to this site for the latest information on eligibility and application procedures.*

### How do I apply?

- Applicants will submit signed agreements to Customs, which will represent their commitment to the C-TPAT security guidelines.
- Applicants will also submit a supply chain security profile questionnaire at the same time they submit their signed agreements or within a specified time thereafter.
- Complete application instructions will be maintained on this site.

### When will benefits begin?

*Benefits will begin once Customs has completed an evaluation of the importer's C-TPAT application package and notified the importer of our findings. Customs aims to complete these evaluations within 30-60 days after the supply chain security questionnaire has been submitted.*

### Where can I get more information on C-TPAT?

For More Information: Contact Industry Partnership Programs at (202) 927-0520 or email them at: [industry.partnership@customs.treas.gov](mailto:industry.partnership@customs.treas.gov)

# Frequently Asked Questions



## **Q: What exactly are Customs expectations for the trade on this program?**

To make a commitment toward the common goal of creating a more secure and efficient supply chain through partnership. Customs understands that it has entered a new era and requires the assistance of private industry to ensure increased vigilance throughout the supply chain. Customs recognizes that just as it protects the trade and our borders, businesses must ensure that their brands, employees, and customers are protected to the best of their abilities.

## **Q: Will the information our company provides be confidential?**

All information on supply chain security submitted by companies applying for the C-TPAT program will be confidential. Customs will not disclose a company's participation in C-TPAT without the company's consent.

## **Q: As a company, we are very interested in C-TPAT but we are not interested in spending a lot of money, nor putting ourselves in a liability position if something goes wrong. Is it still possible to do this partnership?**

Yes. Customs intent is to not impose security requirements that will be cost prohibitive. For this reason, we worked in concert with the trade community in developing security guidelines that reflect a realistic business perspective. Potential C-TPAT participants may find that they already have many of these guidelines in place. C-TPAT is also not intended to create any new 'liabilities' for companies beyond existing trade laws and regulations. However, joining C-TPAT will commit companies to follow through on actions specified in the signed agreement. These actions include self-assessing security systems, submitting security questionnaires, developing security enhancement plans, and communicating C-TPAT guidelines to companies in the supply chain. If a company fails to uphold its C-TPAT commitments, Customs would take action to suspend benefits or cancel participation.

## **Q: What is the overall vision for C-TPAT in the coming months and years?**

Customs recognizes that a safe and secure supply chain is the most critical part of our work in keeping our country safe. For this reason, Customs is seeking a strong anti-terrorism partnership with the trade community through C-TPAT. Trade partners will have a commitment to both trade security and trade compliance, which are rooted in the same business practices. Customs wants to work closely with companies whose good business practices ensure supply chain security and compliance with trade laws.

## **Q: How will audits work in the future?**

Audits will continue to be used to assess overall trade compliance. Customs Regulatory Audit will apply the new "Focused Assessment" methodology, a risk-based audit program, in conducting these audits. Companies will not be required to undergo a Focused Assessment in order to participate in C-TPAT. However, to take advantage of Customs Regulatory Audit Importer Self-Assessment (ISA) program, importers must be C-TPAT participants.

## **Q: Is the C-TPAT program a viable consideration for medium or small size companies?**

C-TPAT is designed for the entire trade community and Customs encourages all companies to take an active role in promoting supply chain and border security. While the benefits of C-TPAT are greatest for large companies that rely heavily on international supply chains, C-TPAT is not just a big-company program. Medium and small companies may want to evaluate the requirements and benefits of C-TPAT carefully in deciding whether to apply for the program. Moreover, even without official participation in C-TPAT, companies should still consider employing C-TPAT guidelines in their security practices.

Information presented is from Customs Border Patrol, United States Government.  
Website: [www.customs.treas.gov](http://www.customs.treas.gov)  
Direct link: [http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/import/commercial\\_enforcement/ctpat/fact\\_sheet.xml](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/import/commercial_enforcement/ctpat/fact_sheet.xml)

*In December 2004, Quality Air Forwarding, Inc. began participation in C-TPAT with submission of our safety profile. We are seriously committed to doing our part to improve security along the supply chain as well as whatever is within our power to help combat terrorism.*



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