



C-TPAT GUIDELINES

RESOURCES FOR PARTNERS

Consult the following links for the most up-to-date information regarding the C-TPAT program:

[C-TPAT Minimum Security Criteria and Guidelines](#)

[C-TPAT Alerts/Bulletins](#)

[C-TPAT Best Practices](#)

CONTAINER & TRAILER SECURITY

Security procedures must be in place at the point of stuffing/loading, including procedures to inspect, properly seal and maintain the integrity of the shipping containers and trailers.

The seven-point inspection process for empty containers should be completed prior to loading cargo, as well as the seventeen-point inspection process for all trailers/tractors. These inspection processes can be found on the C-TPAT Secure Communications Portal, under 'Document Exchange'. A checklist for these inspections may be found in the [C-TPAT Resource Library and Job Aids](#).

SEALS

Seals used to secure loaded containers and trailers bound for the U.S. must meet or exceed the current PAS ISO 17712 standards for high security seals.

Entities within the supply chain must institute procedures for recognizing and reporting compromised seals to CBP or other appropriate foreign authority.

See also: [C-TPAT Bulletin - Compliance with ISO's 17712 Standards for High Security Seals](#)

ADVANCED SUBMISSION OF DATA

C-TPAT importers who are currently *not* filing entry prior to the arrival of their cargo in the port of arrival are not receiving their full C-TPAT benefits, especially reduced examinations. To fully realize the reduced cargo examinations afforded to certified and validated C-TPAT importers, entry must be made to CBP as early in the importation process as possible, and at a minimum, 24 hours prior to the cargo arriving to the first port of entry within the United States. The reason this is necessary is that C-TPAT benefits are aligned with a C-TPAT members' importer of record number. The importer of record number only becomes known when entry is filed; importer of record numbers are not identified on manifest information. To receive full benefits, the entry should be filed prior to arrival of the cargo. This applies only to cargo imported via ocean transport (sea containers), and not to cargo arriving via other modes of transport.

CARGO DISCREPANCIES

Regarding illegal or suspicious activities or anomalies:

- The discrepancy or anomaly must be fully investigated.
- CBP and/or other appropriate law enforcement agencies, as appropriate, should be notified of such discrepancy or anomaly.
- PTSI will assist in the reporting of the anomaly, and will make appropriate modifications in the transmission of entry data.

See also: [Reporting Suspicious Activities, Anomalies, and Security Breaches](#)

SHIPPING & RECEIVING

- Arriving cargo should be reconciled against information on the cargo manifest.
- The cargo should be accurately described, and the weights, labels, marks and piece count indicated and verified.
- Cargo should be verified against purchase or delivery orders.
- Drivers delivering or receiving cargo must be positively identified before the cargo is received or released.
- Procedures should also be established to track the timely movement of incoming goods.

PHYSICAL SECURITY

Cargo handling and storage facilities, as well as those facilities used to make entry of the international cargo, must have physical barriers and deterrents that guard against unauthorized access.

Fencing

- Perimeter fencing should enclose the areas around cargo handling and storage facilities.
- When required by CBP, interior fencing within a cargo handling structure should be used to segregate domestic, international, high value, and hazardous cargo.
- All fencing must be regularly inspected for integrity and damage.

Gates and Gate Houses

- Security gates through which vehicles and/or personnel enter or exit must be manned and/or monitored.
- The number of gates should be kept to the minimum necessary for proper access and safety.

Parking

Where substantially comparable alternative parking is available, private passenger vehicles should be prohibited from parking in or adjacent to cargo handling and storage areas.

Building Security

Cargo handling and storage facilities, as well as those facilities used to make entry of international cargo, must have physical barriers and deterrents that guard against unauthorized access.

Lighting

Adequate lighting must be provided inside and outside the facility including the following areas:

- Entrances and exits
- Cargo handling and storage areas
- Fence lines and parking areas

Alarm Systems & Video Surveillance Cameras

When reasonably and specifically required by CBP, alarm systems and video surveillance cameras must be utilized to monitor premises and prevent unauthorized access to cargo handling and storage areas.