

CBP / Trade Monthly Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 6, 2023

8:30 AM

At Laredo College, De La Garza Bldg. Rm 101

Meeting Called to Order 8:35 AM

CBP Announcements:

Discussed Supervisor Rotation will begin towards the end of the month with New Director coming from Los Angeles

Colombia Bride Construction Update

- Discussion of Bridge Expansion
- Volume grown by 60% in last 3 years
- 2700-3000 trucks crossed daily average
- 3rd largest Bridge on Southern Border

Old Business:

1. Colombia Bridge Construction update.
 - a. Has construction been completed? Are the MEPs now fully operational?
Construction is 90% completed, with just the software issue pending.
 - b. With the recent discussions of the Columbia Bridge expansion project that Nuevo Leon has announced now on several occasions, is the expansion plan related to the Mexican side infrastructure only?
No, expansion options on both the Mexico and United States sides are still in discussion
 - c. Presentation on Mexican infrastructure plans
Presentation discussed bridge infrastructure, master plan, and development updates

New Business:

1. MEP for NII by EOD today.
2. MEP Construction at WTB. During the August CBP Trade meeting, an announcement was made that the construction of Multi Energy Portals (MEPs) will be installed at World Trade Bridge for Non Intrusive Inspection (NII) purposes.

- A. Can CBP please provide more details about this construction (how many, when will construction be completed (ETA)?

Expected Completion date of April 2024. Small set back due to rain but still on track to complete in this time frame

- B. Does CBP have plans to add additional MEPs at WTB?

Currently have 4, no additional plans to add more.

3. UCP processing on FAST lanes at WTB.

- A. Are only Unified Cargo Processing (UCP) Inspections being conducted at WTB?

Unified Cargo Processing Inspections occurring at both World Trade Bridge & Colombia Bridge.

- B. Can CBP provide an update on the UCP program at WTB similar to the way UCP is being conducted at the Colombia Bridge?

Post primary joint inspections happening at World Trade Bridge. This will be a benefit to those CTPAT/Fast Lane Participants.

Push for more drivers to enter Fast Program and urged Association to stress this with Companies and Drivers.

Additionally, urged push for Laredo to have own CTPAT office for validations and re-certifications. Urged members to continue to spread this request.

- C. Has CBP gotten an ETA from Mexican Customs (ANAM) and MX Agriculture?

No current ETA, still waiting for WIFI Password from headquarters before they can proceed.

4. Cybersecurity for US Customs Brokers. Based on recent cybersecurity attacks on multiple US Customs Brokers affecting their ability to create and certify consumption Entries, there is an urgent concern by brokers to understand business continuity best practices. Besides following the "Cyber Incident Guidance for Customs Brokers" guidelines and documents found for download on cbp.gov.

- A. Can CBP discuss a given customs broker's "downtime procedures" to follow through the port of Laredo?

As soon as you notice "indicator of compromise", first contact SOC Center with description of indicator, incident/parties involved, personal info, and any other known factors

Submit Downtime Letter of Authorization which will then be distributed throughout affected ports so you may have the ability to process shipments.

Contact CEEs which can authorize for possible payment extensions.

Might not have access to any information during this downtime so recommend tabletop exercise option, include CBP and Service Providers

- B. Can US Customs Brokers have multiple ABI software applications with different ABI/ACE certification messaging as a method of business continuity? If so, what is the protocol to follow with CBP?
Yes, can have two but must make sure they can be sustained on different servers with separate IP addresses. If a compromise occurs, you would need to make sure you can transmit through different IP Address/Equipment.

5..NCAP/FAST cargo processing.

- A. Can CBP provide the status of NCAP/FAST cargo release processing?
Yes, this process is still active.
- B. Can other participants (importers) join or is there a moratorium on additional participants?
Additional importers can but the rule remains that an importer can only authorize one broker. New brokers cannot be added to current importer without releasing original broker assigned.
- C. Can additional third party EDI software developers create a module for NCAP/FAST manifest creations and is CBP willing to test these new applications?
Yes, it is an option

6. Telephone calls placed by CBP to US customs brokers. Several members have complained about CBP placing calls looking for the licensee broker and conducting themselves unprofessionally whenever he/she can't be reached.

- A. Can CBP please address this issue with its officers?
Yes, issue will be addressed with officers.
- B. Can CBP please standardize leaving voicemails with name, call back number, issue, and Entry/In-bond number whenever the broker can't be reached?
Yes, this process should be standard practice already and will work on making it standardized. It would additionally help if members can report specifics for any future incidents.

7. CEE Update on feedback provided to CBP DFO office. A few months ago, this association provided some feedback as it relates to dealing with the CEEs.

- a. Can CBP provide an update on the feedback provided?

CBP is taking note of comments made & has added working groups to address the specific feedback provided. Feedback centered on uniformity and communication topics.

Recommended members to address future instances when they occur with the Center. Recommended point of contact at the Center would be the supervisor. Additionally urged Members to respond to public outreach (such as this) when asked for comments.

8. User Fee payments on company vehicles. There seem to be more company vehicles (pickup trucks) being charged the User Fee when crossing through the non-commercial bridges at this port.

- A. Can CBP discuss the criteria used to determine the applicability of payment of the User Fee?

CBP is addressing this issue as soon as they are being reported & explained to Officers at the Port the correct process.

The rule is only Commercial vehicles crossing for commercial purposes (obvious commercial intent) should be paying this fee

Other CBP Announcements:

Provided updates on rotation of supervisors and will try to bring new supervisors to meetings so they can be introduced to everyone.

Introduction of New Import Specialists and New Consumer Safety Officer

PGA Questions/Announcements:

US Department of Agriculture (USDA):

Provided update to those who do business with other ports on the staffing rotations

Register for a USDA account if you do not already have one. You don't have an account if your bill shows daily billing terms. In the future, they may make pay prior to service if you do not have an account.

Reminder that Animal Products go to veterinary services

Food and Drug Administration (FDA):

9. FDA Review never released in ABI. Trade members have seen entries with an FDA Review in ABI but the 1 USG does come in as released. ITACS also shows 'May Proceed'.

- A. Is this an FDA communication issue with CBP or software vendor?
No issue, these systems are completely separate and do not communicate with one another.

- C. What can be presented to the Importer to prove "FDA May Proceed" as Importers do not want to let the freight go without it.
You can contact FDA reviewers and additionally ACE help desk for specific issues.
Entry Reviewer: (956) 721-2458
ACE Support: Ace_support@fda.hhs.gov

LUSCBA Announcements:

Broker Modernization Regulation Seminar – Friday September 15th (9-12 PM)

Next Brokers Association Meeting => Wednesday, September 27th

Next CBP Trade Meeting => Wednesday, October 4th

Meeting Adjourned: 10:00 AM

***** Any questions or Customs issues you may have prior to the meeting may be sent to [LLUSCBA Customs committee at CBPissues@lluscba.org](mailto:LLUSCBA_Customs_committee@CBPissues@lluscba.org). *****