**Manuel Garza, Jr.**

Director, CTPAT Program

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Manuel Garza is an alumni member of the University of Texas where he majored in Business Administration and minored in Criminal Justice.

He began his federal career with U.S. Customs & Border Protection (U.S. Customs Service) in 2002 where his first assignment was working as a Customs Officer in Blaine, WA working on the Northern border. In 2006 he was transferred to Roma, TX as an Officer to work the Southern border.

In 2006, Manuel was selected to be the Team Lead for the new Container Security Initiative (CSI) port of Caucedo, Dominican Republic. While stationed in the DR, he was instrumental in assisting in the largest seizure of cocaine to date in both the CSI program and in the Dominican Republic. He was also responsible for the largest Intellectual Property Rights seizure in the DR – over 30 containers of fake Ralph Lauren Polo shirts.

In 2007, Manuel accepted a position in Washington, DC to be a Supply Chain Security Specialist for the Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (CTPAT) Office. He conducted or participated in over 650 security site visits in over 60 counties.

Manuel was promoted in January 2011 to a Supervisory Supply Chain Security Specialist for the CTPAT Headquarters Office where he is was responsible for the Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRA) with the European Union (EU), New Zealand, Jordan, Israel, and Mexico. Manuel also oversaw the progress on CBP’s Joint Work Plans with Australia, and India.

In February 2015, Manuel became the Branch Chief of the CTPAT Plans and Operations Branch. He was instrumental in negotiating the exchange of near real time rail VACIS data images with Mexico Customs.
In April 2015, Manuel was asked to be Acting Director for the Manifest & Conveyance Security Division. He was responsible for the cargo enforcement policies, activities, and security efforts in all modes of transportation. He was responsible for compliance and policy oversight, and for ensuring that manifest and Trade Act requirements were met for all modes up to the point of arrival. Manuel also oversaw advanced data initiatives: Importer Security Filling (ISF), Air Cargo Advance Screening (ACAS) and advance electronic data (AED) for the postal environment. He provided policy and operational guidance in the international mail and express consignment environments. Manuel became the permanent Director for the Manifest & Conveyance Security Division in November 2015.

Manuel served as the CBP delegate on the Advisory Committee on International Postal and Deliver Services. He was also the CBP Office of Field Operations delegate on the Opioid Detection Challenge and a member of the judging panel. Working on this challenge was one of Manuel’s highlights in his career. “Being able to lead the efforts of the nation to bring together a group of smart individuals to develop a system capable of detecting opioids while still in the package is truly an amazing feet”. CBP has now partnered with the winner of the challenge and they will deliver several systems to locations throughout the U.S.

In December 2018, Manuel was asked to be the Acting Director for the CTPAT. In this role, Manuel directs a team of nearly 180 employees in six field offices to conduct supply chain security validations throughout the globe. He is responsible for the management of nearly 11,600 CTPAT participants including 309 Trade Compliance members and 366 Tier 3 members. He is also responsible for the policy of the program and the enforcement activities of CTPAT members to include suspension, removal, or conditional reinstatement.

Manuel also manages the partnership with twelve other countries which have a mutual recognition arrangement (MRA) with CTPAT and five countries in which we have a joint work plan which can lead to a MRA.

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Manuel led his team to develop alternatives to the physical on-site validation process. In July 2020, CTPAT conducted its first virtual validation test.

At the June 2019 CTPAT conference in San Antonio, Texas, Manuel was named the national Director for the CTPAT program.

Manuel has been married to Joanne for 20 years and has two children, Seth 20yrs old (Sophomore - UT Knoxville) and Kendall 16yrs old (Junior - Briar Woods High School).