

# C-TPAT: What's Your Opinion?

By Michael Laden

My expose last month titled [C-TPAT: Off the Rails](#) resulted in a number of e-mails from other private-sector companies, other countries and a few insiders at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). C-TPAT of course stands for the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, a voluntary-incentive based supply chain security program that was formally stood up on April 16, 2002 in Detroit, MI. My article on the program's short-comings must have struck a nerve or ruffled a few feathers; but I haven't received one single comment that disagreed or took issue with my commentary. The good news is I also haven't received a subpoena yet! But the bad news is despite hearing from some CBP employees, CBP senior leadership has been silent.

In the article I cited a few examples of errant Supply Chain Security Specialists (SCSS's) or other issues related to the overall administration and management (or lack thereof) of the C-TPAT program. Now, I have more examples of problems, or unreturned e-mails and telephone calls. In the coming weeks I hope to get even more examples. I'd like to hear from companies that are either familiar with the program but have been reluctant to join, or better yet, companies who are currently C-TPAT members. I am interested in hearing about the good illustrations, as well as the bad ones; but my feeling is (based on the unscientific results of my last article) that I will wind up with more problematic examples than I will glowing comments.

My purpose in gathering this additional information is to further analyze the program flaws and the opportunities that they represent. It is also to give credit where credit is due; assuming that some of the respondents do indeed have some positive comments. If you do take the time to send me a note, or to document your issues, you can rest assured that I will not reveal the source(s) of the comments or complaints. I will sanitize the remarks to protect the identity of the person or persons making them.

Ideally, I would like to assemble a compendium of stories or examples, both good and bad, that I would then deliver to CBP Headquarters for their review, comment and/or action. In my opinion, until the CBP Executive Leadership acknowledges that there is a problem, the C-TPAT program will continue to languish and disappoint.

So, if you or your company have something compelling to share related to the C-TPAT program, please take a moment to reach out to me via e-mail or by telephone. I can be reached by e-mail at [mike.laden@tradeinnovations.com](mailto:mike.laden@tradeinnovations.com), or by telephone at 952.843.8312.