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International Trade: Commissioner Shares CBP's Progress and Plans



incredibly complex," said Kerlikowske.

Some of the trade achievements Kerlikowske shared include filling key senior leadership positions in the Offices of International Trade and Field Operations; successfully launching [eBond](#) processing in the [Automated Commercial Environment](#); achieving full functionality of three [Centers of Excellence and Expertise](#); and increasing participation in the [Air Cargo Advance Screening](#) program. The Commissioner also discussed current efforts to enhance the [Trusted Trader](#) program and announced the selection of new [Commercial Operations Advisory Committee](#) members.

The Commissioner was grateful for the opportunity to speak at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. "The Chamber is vital to our Nation's economic health," said Kerlikowske. "As champions of American business, you help U.S. industries compete and lead on the global playing field."

For additional information, please read the [Commissioner's full remarks](#), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

On March 24, 2015, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske gave a "State of the Trade" address at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The Commissioner noted that in his first year at CBP, he visited numerous ports and CBP facilities and saw first-hand how integral CBP is to the Nation's economic health and vitality, and to the safety and security of the global supply chain. The Commissioner acknowledged that the volume of trade at ports of entry and the complexities of the trade process can present significant challenges for global businesses.

"Trade and travel facilitation, balanced with our strong commitment to seamless border security, makes our mission

CBP Announces Open Period for Reimbursable Services Partnerships



On March 2, 2015, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced the open period for accepting letters of application through the Section 559 Reimbursable Services Program.

Pursuant to Section 559 of the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014*, CBP is authorized to enter into partnerships with private sector and government entities to provide new or expanded services on a reimbursable basis.

Reimbursable services include customs and agricultural processing, border security, and immigration inspection-related matters at ports of entry. Associated costs may include the salaries of additional staff,

overtime hours, administration, and transportation expenses. For CBP-serviced airports, Section 559 imposes a limit of five agreements per year, and limits reimbursement to overtime payments only.

The Reimbursable Services Program is a key component of CBP's [Resource Optimization Strategy](#). The program enables CBP to support additional requests for services while also managing rising volumes of travel and trade that are critical to our economy. In the first year, CBP was able to provide more than 60,000 additional processing hours at primary lanes and booths, which contributed to both increased border throughput and decreased border wait times.

To request participation in this program, a detailed letter of application should be submitted to CBP at 559reimbursableservices@cbp.dhs.gov, no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT on March 31, 2015. Letters of application will be evaluated based on their individual merit and ability to satisfy the evaluation criteria posted on CBP.gov. Requesting parties will be notified of receipt of their requests and may be asked to provide additional information. Interested parties who have established a need for and a commitment to such a partnership will enter into written agreements with CBP, establishing the obligations and responsibilities of both parties.

Please visit the CBP Website for additional information on the [Reimbursable Services Program](#) and [CBP's Public Private Partnerships](#), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

The Office of Congressional Affairs (OCA) serves as the single point of contact within CBP for communications between CBP and Congress.

OCA is committed to addressing any question or concern you may have related to CBP's complex mission. Please contact us:

Phone: (202) 344-1760; Fax: (202) 344-2152; E-mail: OCAInquiry@cbp.dhs.gov.

Please visit CBP's [Congressional Resources](#) webpage for Frequently Asked Questions, News and Events, and other CBP Resources.



VIDEO ▶ 12:29

CBP Responds to OIG Report on Unmanned Aircraft Systems

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has released a response to the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General (OIG) [report](#) on CBP's Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) program. CBP disagrees with the report's conclusions about the effectiveness and cost of the UAS program, managed by CBP's [Office of Air and Marine](#) (OAM). In a recent interview, OAM Assistant Commissioner Randolph D. Alles discussed in detail the report's incorrect portrayal of how, and for what purpose, CBP uses the UAS platform.

"[T]he platform provides us domain awareness. From that standpoint it's part of a larger CBP system of technology to help secure our borders. So, it's not a stand-alone system," said Alles.

Alles stated that the platform, particularly in the area of domain awareness, provides a significant return on investment. For example, he noted that during the year the OIG report was written, the UAS platform was responsible for seizures worth approximately \$341 million.

Below is a summary of the report's four recommendations and CBP's response:

- 1) Conduct a study prior to purchasing more systems – CBP does not have any plans to purchase additional aircraft and is using current funding to improve the capabilities of the existing fleet. Initiating a study on an action not under consideration would be an irresponsible use of funds.
- 2) Lift CBP's Joint Field Command (JFC) limitations on the Vehicle and Dismount Exploitation Radar (VADER) system – There are no limitations placed on the VADER system by JFC. There did exist limitations at one time that were external of JFC that have already been removed and resolved.
- 3) Revise the Concept of Operations to include attainable goals – OAM is working on implementing this recommendation.
- 4) Develop policies and procedures for reporting all associated costs of the UAS program – CBP disagrees with the report's analysis of cost and cost per flight hour, and with the report's interpretation of Office of Management and Budget's Circular No. A-126. CBP's cost per flight hour calculation is in compliance with the circular, and provides a reasonable cost per flight hour.



CBP's [full response to the OIG report](#) is available on the CBP Website. Please view the [interview with Assistant Commissioner Alles](#), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs for additional information.

Increased Border Security Helps Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument to Reopen Area



Areas in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument that have been closed since 2003 are again available for public access. More than half the monument was closed to the public due to safety concerns from cross border illegal activity such as human and narcotic smuggling.

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) have worked cooperatively to construct infrastructure intended to provide additional security to border areas. Where there used to be a barbed wire fence designating the border between Mexico and the United States there is now a 30-mile vehicle barrier fence and a 5.2-mile pedestrian fence. The fences have reduced the illegal access by vehicles through the desert and have almost eliminated high speed pursuits on Highway 85. Surveillance and radio towers also aid in the tracking and apprehension of illegal smugglers.

Since 2003, CBP has increased the number of Border Patrol agents at the Ajo Station from 25 to over 500 and CBP officers at the Lukeville Port of Entry from 12 to 32. The National Park Service has also increased the Visitor and Resource Protection staff at [Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument](#) from five rangers to 20. The park is using new signage, informational brochures and increased safety orientations at the visitor center to improve visitors' situational awareness about the illegal activities that occur at the park.

For additional information, please contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

Ana Hinojosa: U.S. Candidate for World Customs Organization Position



U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske has announced that the United States will put forward Ms. Ana Hinojosa as a candidate for the post of Director, Compliance and Facilitation, of the World Customs Organization. A bilingual member of the U.S. Government Senior Executive Service, Ms. Hinojosa began her career working for the U.S. Customs Service, CBP's legacy agency.

"For the last 28 years I have worked in every facet of customs – from fines and penalties procedures to overseeing what we're doing in the passenger environment to narcotics arrests, immigration issues and agriculture concerns," said Hinojosa.

Hinojosa, who is the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of CBP's Office of International Affairs has also been integrally involved with helping other customs administrations with their capacity building.

"A big piece of what we do in our international engagement is provide subject matter expertise and capacity building to our foreign partners throughout the world," said Hinojosa. Some of that capacity building is related to traditional trade missions. But CBP also assists other countries with coordinated border management, risk management, fraudulent documents and other areas where training is needed.

For additional information, please visit the [CBP Website](#) or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.