

Fact Sheet



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In-transit Container Targeting at Seaports

Canada and the United States are working together to improve container inspection by jointly targeting marine in-transit containers that arrive in Canada or the United States while en route to the other country. American customs inspectors have been stationed at Vancouver, Halifax, and Montréal, and Canadian customs inspectors are now stationed in Seattle-Tacoma and Newark.

Under this program, the United States Customs Service places unarmed analysts in Canadian marine ports. These analysts are responsible for targeting high-risk in-transit containers for examination by Canadian customs officers. Similarly, Canada has placed officers at the Ports of Newark, New Jersey, and Seattle, Washington, to target containers arriving at those ports and traveling by surface transportation to Canada. Targeters use their respective data banks, increasing the effectiveness of the program. It is important to note that neither country exercises its laws in the other country and that all examinations performed in Canada are carried out by Canadian customs officers. Similarly, in locations in the United States, Canadians are on hand to assist with the targeting, and U.S. Customs officers perform the examinations.

Currently under discussion is a plan to extend the In-transit Container Program to include rail shipments, where targeting and examination of high-risk shipments will be performed at the last point of departure from Canada. Under this initiative, rail cars may then proceed unimpeded from a Canadian rail hub to an American rail hub without stopping for inspection at a border point.

The Canada Customs and Revenue Agency is responsible for targeting and examining all containers that arrive at Canada's ports, regardless of the container's ultimate destination.

Canadian targeters perform an intensive review of import and shipping documents and utilize various data bases and intelligence to identify high-risk containers for examination.

Dedicated container and pier examination teams perform examinations using the latest contraband technology, including X-ray and ion mobility spectrometers.



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This joint program has two objectives: to ensure maximum effectiveness in identifying high-risk containers at the first point of arrival in North America, and to ensure the sharing of important law-enforcement information from both sides of the border through an exchange of officers.

The In-transit Container Targeting Program will also simplify the inspection process and avoid duplicate examinations. Under this Program, a container that is targeted as high risk will be examined at the first port of arrival and, if approved, will continue unimpeded, by rail or truck to its final destination.



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