

C-TPAT / AEO Mutual Recognition

Though probably a long way off (maybe 2009), US Customs and Border Protection and the European Commission have announced a U.S.-EU Joint Customs Cooperation Committee (JCCC). Among the several long-term goals of this newly formed committee is a concordance and mutual acceptance by both parties of their respective trade security initiatives – C-TPAT in the U.S. and AEO in the European Union. There have been discussions in the past regarding mutual recognition of the two programs but the establishment of this committee and agreement on a “roadmap” of the areas that the committee will address through 2008 formalizes the process.

This “roadmap” has outlined six steps that the JCCC will follow. They are: Establish guidelines regarding information exchange, including the exchange of validation/audit results and the legalities of disclosing member details.

1. Perform joint verifications to determine remaining gaps between C-TPAT and AEO.
2. Explore and test an export component for C-TPAT which now does not exist but is a component of AEO.
3. Exchange best practices.
4. Continue a discussion of legal and policy issues under the respective governmental administrations.
5. Endorse and sign a Mutual Recognition Agreement.
6. Evaluate Mutual Recognition benefits for AEO & C-TPAT members.