



WORLD SHIPPING COUNCIL
PARTNERS IN AMERICA'S TRADE

June 6, 2003

World Shipping Council Commends Customs' Ability to Increase Cargo Inspections Without Disrupting Trade

The World Shipping Council expresses its full support for the Customs and Border Protection programs to build a more effective, multi-layered security system for containerized cargo.

Customs has increased the number of import containers it is inspecting from a national average of 2 percent to over 10 percent – a five-fold increase. Yet it has accomplished this expanded scrutiny without significant disruption of U.S. trade.

Customs is building a more robust cargo security infrastructure here in America and in cooperation with our trading partners at foreign ports around the world pursuant to the Container Security Initiative. Non-intrusive container inspection equipment is increasingly being deployed at U.S. and foreign ports, and the government is implementing a more focused cargo risk assessment of shipments. Cargo not meeting the government's risk criteria is being subjected to inspection.

Risk based assessment and non-intrusive container inspection technology are important, because inspections of shipments that do not meet the government's security criteria answer the security question of most importance, namely: What is in the container?

Obviously, the overwhelming percentage of America's cargo is safe, secure, and legitimate, and its continued, efficient movement is essential to the nation's economic vitality. As the government increases its risk based inspection of containers, the shipping industry is committed to maintaining an open and cooperative relationship with the government to ensure that the cargo which warrants inspection is handled properly and as quickly as practicable, and the cargo which does not pose a security risk continues to move efficiently and expeditiously through U.S. ports.

To date, Customs has demonstrated that it can increase inspections and security in a prudent and substantial manner without disrupting America's international commerce.