



Welcome to the May edition of the Supply Chain Security newsletter, aimed at keeping stakeholders and industry informed about the progress of the Australian Customs Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) pilot program.

Update

The Australian Supply Chain Security pilot program is progressing to plan. The project is scheduled to conclude by the end of 2007 and we would like to continue to work closely with industry over the next six months to discuss, explore and consider the range of trade facilitation benefits that could be realised under a supply chain security program.

Since the last edition, the project team has assessed the security profiles of the five pilot partners; and is in the process of finalising site validation visits to these participants.

The purpose of these validation visits has been to verify and validate the draft security profiles of the pilot participants, and test and fine tune any future validation procedures.

Of note, Australian Customs also recently met with representatives from New Zealand Customs to discuss and compare each of the respective programs, identify outcomes sought under mutual recognition arrangements, and to debate future opportunities for trade facilitation benefits.

Current activity

There has been considerable interest in the pilot program from a wide range of industry sectors, with further discussions between industry representatives and Australian Customs regarding potential benefits identified as a short-term priority.

The validation visits to date have provided an important opportunity to refine the application and validation process, assess the minimum security requirements and further develop the business processes that would form the basis of an operational program.

From these validation visits, Australian Customs has been able to gain a more detailed understanding of industry supply chain priorities and operations, and identify a number of areas for further refinement of program requirements.

APEC and AEO

As reported previously, as part of the Asia – Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings being held in Australia, supply chain security will feature at the Secure Trade in the APEC Region (STAR V) conference to be held in Sydney 27 & 28 June 2007.

Information on the STAR V conference can be found at: www.apec2007star.org

Following STAR V will be the APEC Customs to Business Dialogue (ACBD) on 29 June 2007, also in Sydney. The theme for this dialogue is "Identifying future trade facilitation opportunities".

All sectors of the international trading community are encouraged to attend, as it is important to get importers, exporters, freight & logistics providers, and government together to share their views and experiences in order to develop new facilitation initiatives in an environment of ever increasing trade volumes.

Two streams of discussion will explore the potential for closer cooperation between customs administrations and the business community to provide increased trade facilitation opportunities:

- Tracking and facilitating cross-border shipments; and
- Identifying impediments to trade.

Attendance at the APEC Customs-Business Dialogue is free. For more information please see the attached flyer or visit the Australian Customs website at www.customs.gov.au

Contact Information

For any questions or queries please contact supplychainsecurity@customs.gov.au