

three (3) copies of the SOP developed by the air carrier.

(b) *Approval criteria.* Upon receipt, each application will be reviewed to determine whether the procedures contained therein meet the requirements of the ACSPP. In determining whether a SOP submitted by an applicant carrier contains sufficient detail to assure the proper level of care and diligence required under the provisions of the ACSPP, the Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, will apply uniform standards and verify that, at a minimum, procedures are in place which:

(1) Assure positive security background checks are performed on all carrier employees, both those employed within the United States and without, who have access to baggage, cargo or secure areas on participating routes, to the extent permitted by law;

(2) Assure a system of positive baggage and cargo identification is employed at all terminals used by the carrier;

(3) Assure the carrier employs a system to assure that no unmanifested cargo is placed on board the conveyance or brought into the United States on any of their conveyances;

(4) Assure the carrier has specific procedures through which it will notify Customs should it discover any unmanifested or improperly manifested cargo on any of its conveyances or in any area subject to its control;

(5) Assure the carrier has an effective and practical employee awareness training program in place; and

(6) Assure thorough security measures are implemented at all foreign departure points on ACSPP participating routes which will assure that the carrier has control and knowledge of the baggage, cargo, passenger and other materials placed on board its aircraft.

(c) *Acceptance and notification.* Upon verification by Customs that a carrier's SOP meets all the criteria outlined in §122.173(b) of this part, the carrier will be notified that its application to the ACSPP has been accepted. Acceptance into the ACSPP is made with the understanding and expectation that the carrier will continue to act with the highest degree of care and diligence required under law and that

it will abide by and perform all elements of its approved SOP.

[T.D. 91-25, 56 FR 12347, Mar. 25, 1991, as amended by T.D. 91-77, 56 FR 46115, Sept. 10, 1991]

#### § 122.174 Operational procedures.

(a) *Participating carriers.* Participating carriers are required to develop and adhere to procedures whereby they will:

(1) Provide security personnel for every international arrival participating in the ACSPP to conduct the following procedures:

(i) Perform a thorough internal and external search of the arriving aircraft;

(ii) Maintain total control of all passengers and cargo being discharged from the aircraft to either the Customs passenger hall or to the carrier's cargo facility;

(iii) Verify that all cargo on aircraft is properly manifested, marked and weighed and that piece counts are properly performed; and

(iv) Maintain physical security of the aircraft and ramp access to the aircraft while it is being offloaded.

(2) Provide security personnel at the foreign point of departure for every international departure which is participating in ACSPP to conduct the following procedures:

(i) Perform a thorough internal and external search of the departing aircraft;

(ii) Maintain total control of all passengers and cargo being loaded on the aircraft from either the passenger terminal or the carrier's cargo facility;

(iii) Verify that all cargo placed on the aircraft is properly manifested, marked and weighed and that piece counts are properly performed;

(iv) Maintain physical security of the aircraft and ramp access to the aircraft while it is being loaded; and

(v) Maintain similar positive security measures at all foreign intermediate airports prior to the arrival of the aircraft at an ACSPP designated airport.

(b) *U.S. Customs.* U.S. Customs will:

(1) Retain all current options available regarding the search and inspection of any and all passengers, cargo and conveyances; and

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(2) Provide training to carrier personnel to assist the development of proper operational procedures.

§ 122.175 Exemption from penalties.

Should a controlled substance be introduced into the United States or discovered aboard an aircraft owned or operated by a participating carrier, or in cargo carried by a participating carrier, on a route identified by the carrier as one participating in the ACSPP and which has been approved by Customs, the participating air carrier shall be considered to have met the test of highest degree of care and diligence required under law, and shall not be subject to the penalty or seizure provisions of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended, if the carrier establishes at an oral presentation before the port director or his designee, that the carrier was not grossly negligent nor engaged in willful misconduct, and that it had complied with all the provisions of these regulations.

§ 122.176 Removal from ACSPP.

(a) Grounds for removal from ACSPP. The Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, may revoke or suspend the privilege of operating as a member of the ACSPP if:

- (1) Acceptance into the program was gained through fraud or the misstatement of a material fact;
- (2) The carrier refuses or neglects to obey any proper order of a Customs officer or any Customs order, rule, or regulation relative to its cooperation within the program;
- (3) An officer of the carrier or corporation which has been accepted into the program is convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving theft, smuggling, or other theft-connected crime which was committed in his or her official capacity as an officer of the carrier, or is convicted of any Customs-related crime;
- (4) The carrier fails to retain merchandise which has been designated for examination;
- (5) The carrier does not provide secure facilities or properly safeguard merchandise within its area of control; or
- (6) The carrier fails to observe any of the procedures which it had set forth in

the SOP which served as the basis for the carrier's acceptance into the program; and

(7) The carrier has been notified in writing that it has been found in non-compliance with a provision of the program and has failed to correct such noncompliance after having been given a reasonable opportunity to correct such noncompliance.

(b) Notice and appeal. The Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, shall suspend or remove participants from the ACSPP by serving notice of the proposed action upon the carrier in writing. The notice shall be in the form of a statement specifically setting forth the grounds for suspension or removal and shall provide the carrier with notice that it may file a written notice of appeal from suspension or revocation within 10 days following receipt of the notice of revocation or suspension. The notice of appeal shall be filed in duplicate to the office of the Assistant Commissioner, Field Operations, and shall set forth response of the carrier to the statement of the Assistant Commissioner.

(c) Notice of decision. The Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, shall notify the participating carrier in writing of the decision concerning continued participation in the program.

(d) Use of uniform criteria. When making any determination regarding a carrier's participation or continuation in the ACSPP, the Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, shall employ a uniform standard of performance and evaluation.

[T.D. 91-25, 56 FR 12347, Mar. 25, 1991, as amended by T.D. 91-77, 56 FR 46115, Sept. 10, 1991; T.D. 99-27, 64 FR 13675, Mar. 22, 1999]

Subpart S—Access to Customs Security Areas

SOURCE: T.D. 90-82, 55 FR 42557, Oct. 22, 1990, unless otherwise noted.

§ 122.181 Definition of Customs security area.

For purposes of this section, the term "Customs security area" means the Federal inspection services area at any airport accommodating international air commerce designated for processing