



Summary

In October 2011, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) established two industry-specific Centers of Excellence and Expertise (Center) – the Electronics Center in Long Beach, CA and the Pharmaceutical, Health & Chemicals Center in New York City.

The Electronics Center covers the full spectrum of commodities within the information technology and consumer electronics industries. The Pharmaceutical, Health & Chemicals Center covers the full spectrum of commodities within the pharmaceutical, health equipment and chemical and allied industries.

The Centers are virtual organizations that bring all of CBP’s trade expertise to bear on a single industry in a strategic location. They are staffed with numerous trade positions using account management principles to authoritatively facilitate trade.

The Centers serve as a single point of processing for participating importers. While revenue collection continues to be carried out at the ports of entries, the required import documents are routed to the appropriate Center. The Centers perform validation activities, post entry amendment/post entry correction reviews, and review prior disclosure for participating importers.

Current participants are businesses enrolled in CBP’s trusted shipper programs: the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) and Importer Self-Assessment (ISA).

The Centers also serve as a resource to the broader trade community and to CBP’s U.S. government partners. Center personnel answer questions, provide information and develop trade facilitation strategies to address uniformity and compliance concerns, and enhance enforcement efforts.

The Centers continue CBP efforts to increase uniformity of practices across ports of entry, facilitate the timely resolution of trade compliance issues nationwide, and further strengthen critical agency knowledge on key industry practices.

Industry-based Centers afford CBP the ability to develop a deeper understanding of an industry’s business practices. This knowledge will provide CBP the capability and flexibility to respond to emerging threats and vulnerabilities within the industry.



Centers Expansion

Two additional Centers will be created in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012. The two new Centers will be the Automotive & Aerospace Center in Detroit, MI and the Petroleum, Natural Gas & Minerals Center in Houston, TX. These two new Centers will be open in September 2012.

The decision to expand is based on the success of the two current Centers, and represents CBP’s expanded focus on “Trade in the 21st Century,” transforming customs procedures to align with modern business.

Future Centers

In FY 2013 CBP expects to establish five more Centers, bringing the total number to nine.

The nine Centers will be:

- Electronics*
- Pharmaceutical, Health & Chemicals*
- Automotive & Aerospace
- Petroleum, Natural Gas & Minerals
- Agriculture & Prepared Products
- Base Metals & Machinery
- Consumer Products & Mass Merchandising
- Industrial & Manufacturing Materials
- Textiles, Wearing Apparel & Footwear

* Current Centers

Industry Working Groups

In June 2012, together with the American Association of Exporters and Importers (AAEI), CBP established Industry Working Groups. The Industry Working Groups are comprised of key industry stakeholders that will collaborate with CBP to plan and prepare for the future Centers.

Additional Information

Additional information, including contact information for individual Centers and the latest news regarding Centers of Excellence and Expertise can be found at: <http://1.usa.gov/JSy3Fe>