

## C-TPAT-To Join or Not to Join

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Is your company still on the fence about participating in Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT)?

Are the benefits of 3.5 to 5 times fewer inspections, access to FAST lanes, securing your supply chain (and hence, your reputation), plus the opportunity to participate in other U.S. Customs & Border Protection programs not enough of an enticement?

Here's an incentive that may sway your company's mind: the loss of business opportunities.

U.S. Customs strongly advises all C-TPAT partners to encourage their business partners to participate in C-TPAT. Many importers have taken this message to heart, and are requiring importers they purchase from domestically to also be C-TPAT certified in order to do business with them. A well recognized company does not want to be linked with a supplier who experienced a security breach within their supply chain, no matter how small the supplier.

As U.S. Customs continues to mutually recognize the supply chain security programs of other countries\*, we are seeing more foreign participants requiring their international trade partners to participate in their own country's supply chain security program. Foreign manufacturers understand inspection of their cargo is minimal when their entire supply chain is certified in mutually recognized supply chain programs, resulting in quicker processing time of their cargo and availability of their product in the market.

Doing business with companies certified in mutually recognized supply chain programs lessens the burden of work when assessing your supply chain. You don't have to assess a business partner that is already certified in a supply chain program—they've already done that for you, and their Customs agency has confirmed that they've done their due diligence by certifying and validating them.

Instead of thinking about whether or not your company should participate in C-TPAT, ask yourself this: can we afford to lose business opportunities because we aren't certified?

*\*U.S. Customs & Border Protection mutually recognizes the following foreign supply chain programs: Canada, EU, Japan, Jordan, Korea, New Zealand, and Taiwan.*

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