

Spotlight

Department of Homeland Security



Office of Inspector General

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Why This Matters

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) implemented the Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection (SENTRI) Program in 1995, as a border management initiative to accelerate the inspection of pre-enrolled low-risk travelers at designated southern land border United States ports of entry.

However, some program members have abused their privileges and transported illicit goods across the border. As a result, effective internal controls are essential for the program to deter and detect illegal activity.

DHS Response

CBP concurred with 16 recommendations and did not concur with 1 recommendation. Based on information in CBP's response, 15 recommendations are open. Recommendations 10 and 17 are closed.

Ensuring the Integrity of CBP's Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection Program

What We Determined

In 2004, we reviewed the SENTRI Program and identified program deficiencies. As part of this review, we note significant improvements in CBP's implementation of the program. CBP has enhanced internal controls processes and established initiatives to address officer integrity issues. However, CBP needs to expand upon these initiatives and address challenges in the SENTRI Program enrollment process. Although CBP has an Ombudsman to review and address redetermination requests, the manual process needs to be enhanced through technology solutions.

What We Recommend

We made 17 recommendations to assist the program in correcting these deficiencies by: establishing and implementing covert testing operational plans and procedures for SENTRI lanes; enhancing information sharing and coordinating policies and procedures; developing and implementing a uniform training program; modifying the Global Enrollment System to allow CBP officers to establish links between family member records under a common profile; and automating the CBP redetermination process to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

In addition, CBP can address officer integrity issues by: ensuring CBP officers performing primary lane inspections at ports of entry are provided minimal advanced notification of lane assignments; limiting CBP officer hometown region assignments; and developing and implementing a plan with CBP's union to establish a program to conduct random polygraph screening of all CBP officers.

For Further Information:

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