

BACKGROUND: Global Entry, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) travel facilitation program, provides frequent low-risk travelers expedited processing through U.S. immigration checkpoints. Global Entry applicants are vetted by CBP through a name-based and biometric security review as well as a personal interview. Once admitted into the program, participants entering the U.S. utilize automated kiosks located in the CBP inspection area to move through the inspection process without undergoing a person-to-person CBP interview. The program benefits travelers because it streamlines the entry system. The program enhances security by allowing CBP officers to concentrate their efforts on potentially higher-risk travelers and goods.

The program was originally authorized in 2004, but not implemented. It was then reauthorized in 2007 in the FY08 DHS appropriations bill with strong support from travel interests and CBP. Global Entry launched on June 6, 2008 at JFK International Airport, Houston's Bush Intercontinental Airport and Washington Dulles International Airport. In October and November 2008, the program expanded to Los Angeles, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta, Chicago O'Hare, Miami and additional JFK terminals. Though the program was launched originally without a start-up appropriation, the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee provided \$10 million in FY09 for Global Entry to promote its expansion. As a result, an additional 13 airports are scheduled to implement the program in 2008 and 2009. As of October 2008, approximately 4,500 individuals have applied for the program, approximately 2,500 have been enrolled, and 1,500 crossings have been documented.

Although Global Entry is currently limited to U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents, it can and should be made available to foreign travelers. CBP has concluded tentative agreements with its counterparts in the Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom to harmonize Global Entry with the international trusted traveler programs in their countries. Final agreements would allow nationals from these countries to use the Global Entry program in the U.S.

ISSUES FOR THE NEW ADMINISTRATION

1. **Build Critical Mass:** The initial applicant and usage numbers for Global Entry are low, especially in comparison to the perceived demand and experiences of other countries with similar programs. This slow start is due in part to the limited number of Global Entry locations, but also due to a lack of marketing by CBP.

Action Items:

- Direct necessary resources from the FY09 budget to develop a comprehensive marketing campaign to attract Global Entry applicants. The initial amount may come from the \$10 million mentioned above for Global Entry in FY09, and additional resources may come from the Global Entry user fee.
- Ensure prompt deployment of Global Entry kiosks and enrollment sites to the 13 new international U.S. airports to meet Congressional intent and traveler demand.
- Build partnerships with the private sector to develop programs that help to enroll business and leisure travelers in Global Entry.

2. **Increase International Participation:** DHS has attempted to negotiate agreements with a few countries that operate programs similar to Global Entry to allow cross-enrollment or reciprocal privileges. CBP announced tentative agreements with the United Kingdom, Germany and the Netherlands in 2008. However, implementation of this promising concept has stalled over a dispute about whether those governments will provide U.S. authorities with information about applicants refused enrollment. DHS has argued that it needs to know about individuals who may seek to travel to the U.S. and may be inadmissible or deserving of special review. Many governments have resisted on privacy grounds.

Action Item:

- Reopen negotiations with foreign governments on Global Entry and finalize an agreement that will improve information-sharing of data but also respects privacy concerns.

3. **Develop an Expedited Travel Option for Mexican Nationals:** While the U.S. has a successful international registered traveler program for air and land with Canada, it does not currently have an air program with Mexico. Yet, Mexico generates 26 percent of all overnight international travel to the U.S. and is the second largest inbound travel market, only slightly behind Canada. Furthermore, for the fourth consecutive year, Mexican visitors spent record levels on travel in the United States — totaling \$9.6 billion in 2007. The new Administration must nurture and enhance this critical travel market through more efficient and secure travel systems.

Action Items:

- DHS should work with Mexican officials to increase participation levels of pre-approved low-risk travelers in the SENTRI registered traveler program.
- DHS should renew negotiations with Mexican officials to ensure that pre-approved, low-risk Mexican travelers are able to enroll in the Global Entry Program by the end of FY09.

4. **Create a Linkage with Domestic Trusted Traveler Programs:** Thousands of U.S. citizens have already enrolled in domestic Registered Traveler programs at various U.S. airports and have provided security information as part of the enrollment process. The similarity between these programs and Global Entry provides an opportunity for DHS to cross enroll applicants.

Action Item:

- Registered Traveler enrollees and applicants who also successfully pass a rigorous CBP application process should be offered an opportunity to cross-enroll in all other DHS-regulated domestic trusted traveler programs to ease their travel and increase DHS's screening productivity.

5. **Launch APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC):** President Bush promised in 2007 to offer ABTC enrollment opportunities to U.S. business travelers for use in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation region. The ABTC is not a security program per se, but allows travelers designated by their host governments as key business leaders to utilize specialized entry lines upon arrival in APEC countries. DHS, the Department of State and Department of Commerce have not been able to agree which agency, if any, has authority to issue ABTCs in the U.S.

Action Items:

- Resolve interagency discussions to allow issuance of ABTCs by the U.S. government or to seek authorizing language from Congress to do so.
- Coordinate ABTC with Global Entry to offer consistent programs for U.S. travelers and other qualified Global Entry members.