



**Homeland
Security**

March 10, 2016

The Honorable Michael T. McCaul
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman ~~McCaul~~: *Mike*

Thank you for your January 13, 2016 letter.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the United States Postal Service (USPS) have been working together for a number of years to enhance the security of the international postal supply chain.

By Transportation Security Administration (TSA) regulation, international mail destined for the United States is considered air cargo and, as a result, is subject to all existing security controls. These security controls, which include screening for explosive devices, are applied outside the United States prior to transporting international mail on aircraft regulated by TSA. These requirements are not dependent on advanced electronic manifest data.

In addition, USPS is working with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to establish a process for the provision of advanced electronic data for all international mail packages sent to the United States. As part of these efforts, USPS and DHS have helped lead efforts at the Universal Postal Union (UPU) to: establish international electronic messaging and data sharing standards agreed to by the UPU and World Customs Organization; amend the UPU Convention to require postal operators to provide electronic data, if requested; develop a global postal electronic data model; and establish minimum security standards for physical screening and security of all facilities world-wide that process international mail.

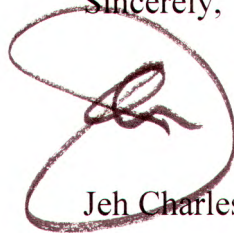
Moreover, CBP is conducting a pilot with USPS on advanced electronic data for international mail packages. Specifically, CBP receives, via USPS, limited advanced electronic data on international mail packages from Australia, Canada, China, France,

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Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The data is provided on a voluntary basis for testing and evaluation and is processed at the National Targeting Center—Cargo (NTC-C). The Department intends to expand this pilot with other countries that have the capability to collect and transmit relevant data. If the pilot is successful, and the program is implemented, NTC-C would be better able to identify high-risk international mail packages. CBP and USPS are also partnering on the International Mail Advance Data Initiative, which is a pilot program for the pre-arrival review and targeting of international mail packages from China at the John F. Kennedy International Mail Facility in New York.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. I have enclosed detailed responses to each of your questions. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeh Charles Johnson", enclosed within a large, loopy circular flourish.

Jeh Charles Johnson

Enclosure

**The Department of Homeland Security's
Response to Chairman McCaul's January 13, 2016 Letter**

- 1. How many parcels from foreign posts, via the USPS, are coming into the United States annually with no associated advanced electronic manifest data that would permit CBP or other agencies to effectively screen for dangerous items in order to target and mitigate threats to the U.S. homeland?***

In FY2014, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) processed approximately 340 million mail parcels arriving from foreign postal operators. These items did not have advanced electronic manifest data, but were required to have paper customs declarations affixed to them, per the Universal Postal Union regulations. As mentioned, international mail arriving by air is considered air cargo by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA); therefore, it is screened for explosives and other illicit items in accordance with TSA regulations and security program requirements, which are not dependent on advanced electronic manifest data. Additionally, upon arrival, CBP screens all international mail for radiological threats, x-rays all international mail packages that are presented to CBP by the United States Postal Service, and physically examines those deemed to be high-risk.

- 2. As a member of the UN's Universal Postal Union, is the U.S. legally precluded from protecting itself against the threat of unscreened parcels entering the country from foreign posts by virtue of UPU regulations issued under UN existing treaties, including the UPU Convention? If so, please explain.***

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) defers to the Department of State to respond to this question.

- 3. What is the timeline for CBP's issuance of a proposed rule and a final rule applicable equally to foreign posts and the private sector?***

The Notice of Proposed Rule Making that will create the regulatory framework for mandatory compliance with the Air Cargo Advance Screening (ACAS) requirements is undergoing interagency review. DHS has operated ACAS as a voluntary pilot program since 2010, and intends to implement ACAS as a regulatory program as soon as practicable. The scope of the proposed rule has yet to be determined.