



**Testimony of George P. Cummings
Director of Homeland Security**

**Port of Los Angeles
Los Angeles, California**

**Before the
United States House of Representatives**

**Committee on Homeland Security
Subcommittee on Border, Maritime and Global Counterterrorism**

The Honorable Loretta Sanchez, Chair

April 26, 2007

Good afternoon, Chairwoman Sanchez, and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for inviting the Port of Los Angeles to testify before you today to convey the Port experiences with the implementation of the SAFE Port Act as it relates to the national Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) Program, container screenings and inspections, training and exercises, and the Port Security Grant Program.

I am George Cummings, Director of Homeland Security, for the Port of Los Angeles. I am responsible for coordination of the Port's homeland security and maritime security programs at the national, state, and local levels. As you can imagine, Port security is the top priority for the Port of Los Angeles. Not only are we responsible for the security and well-being of our

tenants, workers, visitors, and the surrounding communities; but the port is also charged with maintaining the free flow of commerce that moves through our Port and that is vital to this nation's economy.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MARITIME TRADE AND SEAPORT SECURITY

As you well know, Madame Chair, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach comprise the San Pedro Bay port complex through which 95 percent of all goods entering the United States arrives by container ship; and the San Pedro Bay port complex is the gateway for more than 43 percent of the containerized goods that enter the American stream of commerce annually. Together, the San Pedro Bay port complex is ranked the fifth busiest port complex in the world. Alone, the Port of Los Angeles is the eighth largest container port in the world and is the number-one container port in the United States. To further illustrate our importance to the national economy, and hence, the importance of port infrastructure security, in 2006 8.5 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of containers entered the U.S. through the Port of Los Angeles, and 15.8 TEUs through the port complex. In addition to containerized freight, the Los Angeles/Long Beach port complex handles more than one million cruise passengers, half a million automobiles, and more than 50 percent of California's oil.

By size, the Port of Los Angeles spans 7500 acres of real estate, including 4300 land acres and 3200 water acres along 43 miles of waterfront. The Port leases 27 marine cargo terminals with 270 berths, the World Cruise Center that hosts more than 1.2 million passengers each year, and 17 marinas that accommodate more than 3,700 recreational boat slips.

Trade through the Port of Los Angeles has grown steadily by an estimated 20 percent each year over the last five years, and we expect this trend to continue. Likewise, the industry expects national maritime trade volumes to double by the year 2020, although some economists have predicted that such doubling may occur as early as 2014 due to the demands of the American marketplace.

In the event of a catastrophic incident, whether caused by intentional acts or natural disaster, it is the responsibility of the Port of Los Angeles to stand up cargo operations as quickly as possible to minimize the impacts to the nation's economy that is dependant on trade and the movement of goods. A recent example of the affects of a major port shutdown occurred in the fall of 2002 when a labor disruption caused a 10-day shutdown of the west coast ports that brought cargo movement through the west coast ports to an immediate halt. This action cost the nation's economy an estimated \$1.5 billion dollars a day (valued in 2002 dollars), disrupting the availability of goods and products that Americans rely upon daily. A healthy U.S. economy relies heavily on secure, functioning ports throughout the United States.

THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE TWIC PROGRAM

Access control at ports and port facilities is a critical component of port security, and access control will require a comprehensive credentialing program. We consider a federal credentialing program, such as TWIC, to be the solution to this major security challenge. We fully support the TWIC program and look forward to its full implementation. Ports throughout the nation are waiting for the TWIC program guidance so they may be able to fully complete their access control systems.

The Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach have been chosen by TSA to conduct the TWIC Field Test which will look at testing the card reader, processing the TWIC cards, and designing procedures at terminals for program implementation. The Field Test will also evaluate the impact of the TWIC card on the ongoing efficient movement of goods through port terminals.

In addition, the TWIC Enrollment Program is critical and must be completed before the Field Test can get underway. The TWIC enrollment team has made an initial visit to the Ports of Los Angles and Long Beach and met with port stakeholders. However, much work is yet to be done to achieve full enrollment for port and all transportation workers nationally. Full enrolment in for our port will be required before we can initiate the operational phase of the TWIC field test.

PORT SECURITY GRANTS

The Port of Los Angeles has been a participant in the Port Security Grant Program since its inception. Grant awards fund the initial capital required to development the security infrastructure throughout the Port, and to date, funds have supported projects such as 1) a port-wide surveillance camera system, 2) a command and control center that will be located in the Port of Long Beach and serve the entire port complex, and, 3) a fiber optic backbone that will allow connectivity of all 50 terminals throughout both ports. We will look to this grant program to continue to fund critical port security projects such as enhanced surface and underwater detection capabilities, shore-side virtual perimeter systems, and system integration to optimize the efficiency of security systems and share data with other law enforcement agencies.

CONTAINER SCREENING AND INSPECTION

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CPB) are currently operating Radiation Portal Monitors and container imaging units at all of the Port's container terminals. The Port of Los Angeles supports increased scanning of cargo, both at our port and at foreign ports where cargo is loaded. It is critical to ensure that the movement of goods is maintained. Our concern is that sufficient operational resources are made available to CBP that are adequate to support increases in cargo inspections without adversely affecting the movement of cargo. Additionally, we would want to make sure the any reciprocity requirements imposed by foreign governments for inspection of exported goods are also supported with adequate recourses so that the flow of exported goods out of the port is not adversely affected.

TRAINING AND EXCERCISES

Port security training and exercises for the Los Angeles/Long Beach port complex are coordinated through the Area Maritime Security Committee which established a subcommittee to coordinate these activities. Each year, a major port security exercises has been held in the port, and many types of security training opportunities are available throughout the year for both law enforcement agencies, emergency responders and port industry members.

IN CLOSING

In closing, Chairwoman Sanchez and members of the Subcommittee, we at the Port of Los Angeles thank you for your leadership in calling attention to the critical elements of port security, and one that has not yet been fully accomplished – the TWIC program. Also, we appreciate the opportunity to share the Port of Los Angeles’s experience with the TWIC field test, and our recommendations to improve the TWIC Program. The Port is confident that the federal regulatory development process will be a speedy one, leading to the full implementation of the TWIC program, and that elements of the SAFE Port Act will be fully funded. Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in this important hearing, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

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