ITDS e-Newsletter

A Message from the Chairman

On behalf of the ITDS Board of Directors, I am pleased to welcome the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as the newest member of the participating government agency (PGA) community. The IRS joins the ITDS program at an important juncture— as 2006 will be a year to build upon the momentum generated by last year's accomplishments and prepare in earnest for the deployment of PGA functionality in the Entry Summary, Accounts and Revenue (ESAR) and Cargo Transactions and Enforcement (CT&E) components of ACE.

In this issue, we feature a data harmonization success story and spotlight Cindy Owens and the Legal and Policy Committee's work on the "Everything a Government Lawyer Should Know about Agency Participation in ACE/ITDS" paper. I would particularly like to thank Cindy for her work on this guide to legal issues involved in ITDS participation. The guide is truly a collaborative PGA effort, but Cindy was the chief editor and primary drafter of this extremely useful document, and it couldn't have been completed without her efforts.

For more information about the ITDS program, please feel fee to email us at ask.itds@associates.dhs.gov.
-**Tim Skud, Chairman, ITDS Board of Directors**

The Global Role of the US in Data Harmonization
By: William Nolle, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Based on extensive experience gained through the collaborative efforts of the International Trade Data System (ITDS) Data Harmonization Integrated Product Team, CBP is assuming a global lead in data harmonization. At two recent meetings of international organizations, the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the United Nations Center for Electronic Business and Trade Facilitation (UN CEFACT), ITDS and CBP efforts and success in these areas have been recognized.

The US presented a set of materials and tools used in ITDS data harmonization to both organizations. These include a presentation of data harmonization steps used to acquaint PGAs with the harmonization process, PGA user operations questionnaire, and the PGA data assessment. Based upon these documents the US prepared a short narrative of the harmonization process.

With minor modifications to internationalize the material, the WCO distributed these documents to members. In addition, the narrative was presented to the Information Management Sub-Committee for review and the committee agreed to include this document as an annex to the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) Guidelines. The ICT Guidelines were developed to assist members in meeting the information technology provisions of the Revised Kyoto Convention and include many references to the single window concept. UN CEFACT is also promoting the single window concept and has issued "Recommendation No. 33, Recommendations and Guidelines on Establishing a Single Window" and an accompanying document of Single Window case studies. CBP has contributed to both of these documents. Based on the materials presented, the US has been asked to draft UN CEFACT Recommendation 34 detailing the steps, processes, and desired result of data harmonization.

The US will be presenting a draft of this document at the CEFACT Forum in March 2006 and has agreed to participate in a UN CEFACT Single Window Workshop in Geneva in May 2006 with a presentation on data harmonization.

**PGA Spotlight:
Cindy Owens
Attorney-Advisor
Office of the Chief Counsel
for Economic Affairs
Department of Commerce**

The ITDS Board of Directors Legal and Policy Committee has spent the past several months analyzing and documenting the applicable laws and authorities related to PGA integration into ACE. The fruit of their labor, a white paper entitled, "Everything a Government Lawyer Should Know about Agency Participation in ACE/ITDS", was finalized in late February.

Cindy Owens, an attorney in the Department of Commerce's Office of the Chief Counsel for Economic Affairs, played a key role in managing the overall development of this important document. Cindy has been a member of the Legal and Policy Committee since joining the Department of Commerce about one and a half years ago. She says that her prior experience in obtaining licenses for State Department munitions list items and Shipper's Export Declarations makes her involvement in the ITDS program a nice fit.

According to Cindy, "Everything a Government Lawyer Should Know about Agency Participation in ACE/ITDS" is an educational resource guide that provides agency lawyers with the appropriate background information needed to answer legal questions that may arise as a result of participation in the program. It was collaboratively drafted, with PGAs and CBP alike providing inputs, and features descriptions of government-wide and some PGA-specific laws that will govern the collection and dissemination of trade and transportation data collected via ACE.

Cindy encourages all PGAs to take a good look at the paper. A solid understanding of the legal framework will serve as a foundation for the PGAs as they begin Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) development and move on to other tasks along the road to ACE integration.

FYI

February 27, 28, March 1: Trade Support Network (TSN) Plenary Session

March 16, April 19: ITDS Board of Directors

March 21, April 25: Program Support Group

March 23: PGA ACE Secure Data Portal Training

Committee Updates

Data Harmonization: Peg MacKnight, Data Harmonization Integrated Product Team (IPT) Co-Chair, presented the ACE/ITDS Standard Data Set-Report for Trade to the TSN ITDS Committe. This is a more thorough version of the report delivered to the trade community at last fall's TSN, and includes items requested by the trade such as a complete mapping of data elements to source documentation. This version is also categorized by business entities such as conveyance/trip, party, and entry, to name a few.

Communications: If you are interested in joining the ITDS.gov Web site Editorial Review Board, please contact Susan Dyszel: susan.dyszel@dhs.gov or David Giamporcaro: giamporcaro.david@epa.gov for more information.

ESAR & CT&E Highlights

ESAR: The "ESAR Drops A1 & A2 Overview" sessions continue to be held with those PGAs slated for ESAR participation. The purpose of these briefings is to review and validate planned PGA functions such as business processes, users, reports, extracts, interfaces, and source requirements in the ESAR drops as well as to review the ESAR milestone plan. Next steps . . . the team will be heading out again for more one-on-ones with the PGAs, this time to examine user roles— this work will be kicked off with an "ESAR PGA User Role Overview" presentation at the **March 21st PSG meeting**.

CT&E: In the coming month, the ITDS CT&E team will be making appointments with the PGAs to review CT&E requirements and report on the current status of the M1 drop (rail and sea manifest).