PPQ Deputy's Safeguarding Award-

Submission Form

1. **Name, Address, Job Title, and Phone Number of Nominee (if a group is being submitted, provide the contact information for the group leader and the names and affiliation of all members of the group)**

Group – <u>Smuggling Interdiction and Trade Compliance (SITC) National Information, Communication and Activity System (NICAS) Development and Implementation Team</u>

Project Leaders:

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Project Champions:

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Team Members:

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2. Describe the action that enhanced safeguarding.

This group developed and implemented a new comprehensive data and communication system designed specifically to meet the operational and program needs of SITC. This resulted in improved data management and increased ability to identify pathways.

3. How did the action enhance safeguarding?

The system greatly improved USDA APHIS PPQ's ability to capture data on plant and animal products that may harbor plant pests and animal diseases. Specifically by:

- Improving SITC planning efforts involving its key stakeholders and reporting processes by standardizing formats and ensuring target audiences receive timely, consistent and useful program information.
- Unifying many of the SITC program critical data elements in a single database that provides a more complete and comprehensive picture of SITC activities.
- Collecting and storing important information that is useful to the Risk Management staffs within PPQ by determining the risk status of the commerce sites where the commodities were seized and identifying business entities and affiliated personnel associated with those locations that either purchased or distributed the prohibited or restricted commodities within U.S. commerce.
- Incorporating a trace-back and trace-forward tracking system for analyzing data about various pathways and the commodities entering through those pathways into the United States to provide better detailed information to the field officers concerning the identified locations and product movement.
- Generating reports to evaluate quality control of entered data and effectiveness of the program for risk based decisions, staffing models, statistical analysis, work efficiency and productivity based on that data.
- Generating reports to capture day to day field operations e.g. locations surveyed, seizures made (existing and new commodities), traces issued, etc.

- Generating data that are used for investigating or prosecuting a violation of law, or for enforcing, implementing, or complying with a statute, rule, regulation, or order at the Federal, State, and Local level.
- Allowing for enhanced communication with other SITC personnel and Federal and non-Federal personnel to identify smuggling trends and to eliminate duplication of efforts during pathway analysis.
- Providing data for modeling potential pest and/or disease outbreaks based on the product pathway as it correlates to the country of origin's pest and/or disease status.
- Providing data which links smuggling and overall business practices to potential violations in human health and welfare, labeling, packaging, and overall sanitation practices.

4. How does it demonstrate innovation or initiative?

The project was a collaborative effort between technical specialists and managers in both the Eastern and Western Regions. The Agency has realized considerable savings by producing the system in-house with current personnel. The development and program implementation of this system has revolutionized the process used by SITC for tracking and field tracing smuggled goods and prohibited/restricted products. It has enhanced our capability to capture and communicate program information in real time.

5. Which of the four areas of the Safeguarding Review does the activity support?

Pest Exclusion, Data Management and Pathways

6. What recommendation or safeguarding principle does the action support?

The action supports recommendation E-53 of the **Safeguarding Review**. SNICAS was a direct result of Dr. Dunkle's initiation of the **SITC National Review** in November of 2003. The implementation of a comprehensive National Database was based on recommendations from this review for better Management of Data and System Information, Risk Analysis, Program Development, Communications, Program Operations, Program Results, and Program Reporting. SNICAS supports those recommendations by providing data used for purposes of science, analysis, budget, trade, metrics, supervision and management decisions.

7. Provide any information that demonstrates the outcome/success of the activity.

SNICAS was implemented in October 2006 by the SITC Program throughout the United States. It is utilized daily by National, Regional and field personnel. Positive feedback has been reported by Officers and Supervisors from all Areas in the program. The trace request and seizure reference library features have been reported as very beneficial by field staff. The work activity and accomplishment tracking component of the system has been well received and utilized by management personnel. This highly effective model is being studied for potential use within other programs in USDA APHIS PPQ.