

WEEKLY MUSTER

Week of Muster: February 17, 2008 – February 23, 2008

Topic: Commercial Aircraft APIS Pre-Departure Procedures

Headquarters POC: (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) OFO – APIS Program Manager
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Message: Inform CBP Officers of Commercial Aircraft APIS Pre-Departure Requirements Effective February 19, 2008.

On August 23, 2007, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) published the APIS Pre-Departure Final Rule enabling the Department of Homeland (DHS) to conduct applicable watch list screening prior to the issuance of a boarding pass.

Under the APIS Pre-Departure Final Rule, February 19, 2008, is the date by which all commercial air carriers must comply with the requirements set forth in the rule. Many carriers have expressed that APIS Quick Query (AQQ) is its preferred method of compliance and that carriers are working diligently to implement AQQ.

CBP has determined that for a period of 180 days from February 19, 2008, CBP will exercise enforcement discretion for carriers that have contacted CBP to allow them to continue their internal process of screening travelers against the watch list prior to issuing a boarding pass, to avoid impacting current boarding processes while transitioning to AQQ. However, during this 180-day period, carriers will be required to submit required APIS data for travelers on board each flight 30-minutes prior to securing of the aircraft.

CBP anticipates, and expects, that the carriers will ensure that the vast majority of traveler information will be available and provided at 30 minutes prior to securing of the aircraft but does not intend to disrupt departure schedules for those flights where travelers are transiting to or arriving late for an international flight.

Beginning on February 19, 2008, CBP will begin enforcing 100-percent APIS sufficiency for all air APIS manifests. This is an increase from the 97-percent sufficiency that CBP is currently enforcing.

CBP is committed to working with each carrier as it transitions into an interactive environment to ensure that security requirements are not compromised during this period. After each carrier completes its system changes and has been certified, it will be transitioned over to a fully interactive system and will no longer be responsible for passenger watch list screening.