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Muster 2010-21

Week of Muster: Upon Receipt

Topic: Hajj - 2010

Headquarters POC: Operations, Tactical Operations Division
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Message:

The Hajj (the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca) is one of the five tenets of Islam. It is every Muslim's desire to perform Hajj at least once in his/her lifetime and is considered obligatory for every sane, financially able, adult Muslim.

The five-day ritual of Hajj for 2010 is expected to occur between November 14 – 18, 2010, culminating with the religious celebration of Eid-Al-Adha (the Feast of Sacrifice), which will finish on November 19, 2010.

An average of two to three million pilgrims attended the Hajj in years past, including an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 American Muslims.

Locations should be prepared to deal with large influxes of American Muslims who have legitimately attended what is, for persons of the Muslim faith, an important religious event. Persons returning from the Hajj should be screened and processed using the same standards, procedures, and care that would be afforded to any international traveler entering the United States. CBP Officers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the attached Fact Sheet describing the Hajj.

This influx provides an opportunity for extremists and/or terrorists to use the increased passenger flow as a way to enter the United States, although there is no intelligence at this time indicating any specific threat associated with persons returning from the Hajj. As such, no extraordinary or special enforcement measures should be initiated based solely on the fact that a traveler is returning from his/her pilgrimage to Mecca.

Presenters Note: All officers must bear in mind that the authority to exercise discretion and make decisions affecting people's lives, carries with it the responsibility for ensuring that all actions advance the goals of professionalism, courtesy, and respect for the position of public trust that we hold. Whether enforcing the laws in denying entry to inadmissible aliens or exercising discretion to allow them into the United States, all officers and managers must maintain the highest levels of professionalism, impartiality, and courtesy to the traveling public. As always, please take this muster opportunity to stress the importance of professionalism when dealing with members of the public.

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