



U.S. Customs and  
Border Protection

# Press Release

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## U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION MODIFIES PROCEDURES REGARDING ENTRY REQUIREMENTS OF FOREIGN JOURNALISTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Commissioner Robert C. Bonner announced today that new guidance has been issued to all CBP Port Directors regarding discretionary authority to permit travel for foreign journalists who attempt to enter the U.S. with the wrong visa, while reminding those foreign journalists that they should be aware of immigration policies before they depart for the United States.

Representatives of foreign press, radio, television, or other foreign information media have occasionally applied for admission to the United States as nonimmigrants with "B-1" business visas, or as business visitors under the Visa Waiver Program. The Immigration and Nationality Act does not allow them to enter in that manner. They are required to enter under an "I" visa that applies to working journalists.

"Customs and Border Protection's priority mission is keeping terrorists from entering this country. We also enforce all laws, including immigration laws at our borders and ports of entry," said Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Bonner. "While we carry out our mission and enforce our laws, we realize there is a difference between fraud and failure to be informed of the legal requirements for entering the United States. That is why we are giving our Port Directors leeway when it comes to allowing journalists to enter the U.S. who are clearly no threat to our security," Commissioner Bonner concluded.

Under the new CBP policy, a Port Director may consider a **one time** discretionary authorization to enter the U.S. If that discretion is exercised, the journalist will be advised of the requirement to have a visa in the correct classification for any future trips to the U.S.

"We are an open society," said Commissioner Bonner, "and we want people to feel welcome here. We want everyone to know the rules before they get here, visa requirements can be found on the U.S. Department of State web site at <http://travel.state.gov/ireval.html> or at <http://travel.state.gov/visa;media.htm>.

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U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the protection of our nation's borders. CBP unified Customs, Immigration, and Agriculture Inspectors and the Border Patrol into one border agency for the United States.

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