

U.S., United Kingdom Border Agencies Agree to Expedite Travel Between Nations

06/24/2008

Washington – U.S. Customs and Border Protection signed a joint agreement today with the government of the United Kingdom to develop a bilateral pilot program to facilitate travel between the two nations. The International Expedited Traveler Initiative will integrate CBP's Global Entry program with the British registered traveler program.

The signing between CBP and representatives of the United Kingdom Border Agency occurred at CBP's headquarters in Washington, D.C. this afternoon.

"This agreement is an important step in fortifying our international cooperation between the United States and the United Kingdom," said CBP Commissioner W. Ralph Basham. "We look forward to building the pilot that will extend the benefits of expedited and automated CBP processing to low-risk British travelers, while at the same time providing reciprocal benefits for U.S. citizens traveling to the United Kingdom."

CBP announced the Global Entry pilot program April 11 to build upon other CBP trusted traveler programs, such as NEXUS and SENTRI, designed to facilitate and expedite the entry process for pre-registered low-risk international travelers into the U.S. NEXUS is a joint program with the Canada Border Services Agency that allows expedited processing into the U.S. and Canada at the land border and at Canadian pre-clearance airports. SENTRI provides for dedicated processing at the U.S.-Mexico land border.

"The United States and the United Kingdom share the mutual interest of facilitating travel between our countries while we extend the zone of security beyond our physical borders," Basham added.

The Global Entry pilot kicked off for U.S. citizens and U.S. permanent residents on June 6 at three initial airports: John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York, George Bush Intercontinental Airport, Houston, and Washington Dulles International Airport. CBP started accepting online applications May 12. It is expected that citizens of the United Kingdom will be invited to apply as soon as late this year.

CBP signed a similar agreement with the government of the Netherlands May 19.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.