

Work in progress

Irvin Varkonyi reports on the Homeland Security Institute's Cargo Security Summit, which took place in Washington in December



Irvin Varkonyi is Director of Education for the Trade Security Institute. He has spoken at some of the leading organisations in transportation and supply chain security, including the American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS), Air Cargo Americas, Technology Asset Protection Association (TAPA), the International Cargo Security Council (ICSC), Transportation Lawyers Association and the National Defense Transportation Association. Irvin is a regular contributor to *Cargo Security International*.

Well over 200 experts in homeland security, transportation and technology attended the **Homeland Security Institute's Cargo Security Summit** at the **Georgetown University Conference Center** in Washington, DC on 9-10 December. They were there to discuss, comment and participate in workshops focusing on the **Department of Homeland Security's (DHS)** draft National Cargo Security White Paper.

Elaine Dezenski, Director of Cargo and Trade Policy at the **Border and Transportation Security Directorate (BTS)**, and her team, brought together a diverse group of private sector representatives and security experts to express opinions which will find their way into the final version of the White Paper.

Outgoing Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, Outgoing Deputy Secretary Admiral James Loy, Undersecretary Asa Hutchinson and Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Robert Bonner all spoke at the conference. The dialogue then continued at the CBP's Annual Trade Symposium (12-14 January), also in Washington, DC, where updates for the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) programme were high on the agenda.

The meeting addressed these items:

- purpose of the White Paper
- examine goals, mission and guiding principles
- the case for securing intermodal cargo
- strategic objectives
- utilise breakout sessions in key areas
- conclusions and expectations.

White Paper

The White Paper seeks to coalesce and focus DHS' units on the critical issue of protecting cargo movements

and cargo carriers from being used as weapons of mass destruction. Equally as important, the private sector expects, if not demands, that DHS initiatives and actions minimise detrimental effects on the global supply chain.

Dezenski is charged with developing the White Paper. The BTS is one of the five directorates reporting to the DHS Secretary. The BTS must also minimise the overlap of agencies such as the **Customs and Border Protection Agency (CBP)** and the **Border and Transportation Security Administration (TSA)** with respect to such areas as cargo imports.

Goals, mission and principles

The White Paper states that the US government's (USG) primary responsibility in cargo security is the prevention of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) infiltration exploiting transportation and distribution systems. Enhancing physical security in and efficiency of the international cargo transportation system are mutually beneficial goals. All – 100% – 'high risk' cargo is to be inspected. All the goals are to be in partnership with the business and international communities.

The USG will continue to push out its borders, using multiple technologies, as part of its layered strategy. Working with the private sector, it would establish 'best of class' domestic security systems and performance metrics to assess the security and economic impact of the USG's efforts, leveraging a maximum amount of resources.

'Our efforts must be tailored to mitigate varying threats and vulnerabilities across the transportation and distribution systems,' stated the White Paper. The DHS intends to be process-driven to maximise flexibility and the ability to incorporate emerging technologies.