



## **Overview**

The FAST program is a bilateral initiative between the United States and Canada designed to ensure security and safety while enhancing the economic prosperity of both countries. In developing this program, Canada and the United States have agreed to harmonize, to the maximum extent possible, their commercial processes for clearance of commercial shipments at the border. This will promote free and secure trade by using common risk-management principles, supply chain security, industry partnership, and advanced technology to improve the efficiency of screening and clearing commercial traffic at our shared border.

## **Objectives**

FAST is an ambitious program both in terms of its scope and its implementation date. For the United States and Canada, the initiative's objectives promise to revolutionize the processing of transborder trade:

1. The program aims to increase the integrity of supply chain security by offering expedited clearance to carriers and importers enrolled in Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) or Canada's Partner's in Protection (PIP).
2. It's designed to streamline and to integrate registration processes for drivers, carriers, and importers; minimizing paperwork and ensuring only low risk participants are enrolled as members.
3. The initiative seeks to expedite the clearance of transborder shipments of compliant partners by reducing Customs information requirements, dedicating lanes at major crossings to FAST participants, using common technology, and physically examining cargo transported by these low-risk clients with minimal frequency.
4. The program is a catalyst for both Customs administrations to participate in the enhanced technologies by using transponders, which would make it easier to clear low risk shipments, and would mitigate the cost of program participation for FAST partners.

## **Benefits**

FAST approved U.S./Canada highway carriers will benefit from:

1. Dedicated lanes (where available) for greater speed and efficiency in the clearance of FAST transborder shipments.

2. Reduced number of examinations for continued compliance with Customs FAST requirements.
3. A strong and ongoing partnership with the Canadian (PIP) and Customs (C-TPAT) administrations.
4. Enhanced supply chain security and safety while protecting the economic prosperity of both countries.
5. The knowledge that they are carrying shipments for a C-TPAT approved importer.
6. A head start for the upcoming modifications to FAST that will expand eligible electronic cargo release methods. The FAST processing of Pre Arrival Processing System (PAPS) is currently in use and will commence at expanded locations along the northern border during the year.

### **Inauguration**

The initial phase of FAST for U.S. and Canada bound commercial shipments began in December 2002. FAST processing is currently available for qualifying commercial shipments at the following U.S./Canadian ports:

#### ***U.S. Border***

Buffalo, New York  
 Blaine, Washington  
 Champlain, New York  
 Detroit, Michigan  
 Lewiston, New York  
 Alexandria Bay, New York  
 Derby Line, Vermont  
 Highgate Springs, Vermont  
 Pembina, North Dakota  
 Portal, North Dakota  
 Sweetgrass, Montana

#### ***Canada Border***

Fort Erie, Ontario  
 Douglas, British Columbia  
 Lacolle, Quebec  
 Windsor, Ontario  
 Queenston, Ontario  
 Landsdowne, Quebec  
 Stanstead Place, Quebec  
 Phillipsburg, Quebec  
 Emerson Junction, Manitoba  
 Beinfait, Saskatchewan  
 Coutts, Alberta

Further expansion of the FAST program will include the following sites by July 1, 2005:

#### ***U.S. Border***

Houlton, Maine  
 Calais, Maine  
 Massena, New York  
 Ogdensburg, New York  
 Sault Ste Marie, Michigan  
 International Falls, Washington  
 Oroville, Washington

#### ***Canada Border***

Woodstock, New Brunswick  
 St. Stephen, New Brunswick  
 Cornwall, Ontario  
 Prescott, Ontario  
 Sault Ste Marie, Ontario  
 Fort Frances, Manitoba  
 Osoyos, British Columbia

### **Qualifications**

FAST is a harmonized clearance process for shipments of known compliant importer. Thus, any truck using FAST lane processing must be a C-TPAT approved carrier, carrying qualifying goods from a C-TPAT approved importer, and the driver must

possess a valid FAST-Commercial Driver Card. FAST processing is based upon advanced electronic transmission of information. The following are the key components:

- **Importer Registration:** Importers will complete separate applications to the Customs administrations. Importers authorized to use the FAST program for clearance into the United States will have a demonstrated history of complying with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, and will have made a commitment to security enhancing business practices as required by C-TPAT.
- **Carrier Registration:** Carriers will complete the FAST U.S./Canada Border Highway Carrier Application Process requirements that include corporate information, a security profile, and a written U.S./Canada Border Highway Carrier Agreement. In order to qualify for FAST Highway Carrier membership into the U.S. and Canada, two separate applications must be submitted to each country's respective FAST Processing Centers. Each country will perform an independent risk assessment and each country will issue independent approvals for participation. For the United States, a FAST approved carrier will have met all aspects of C-TPAT through the FAST registration process.
- **Commercial Driver Application:** Drivers will complete a U.S./Canada FAST Commercial Driver Application for the U.S. and Canada. The application will be risk assessed by the customs and immigration services of both countries. Applicants identified as low risk will report to an enrollment center where they will be interviewed, have their original identification and citizenship documents reviewed, fingerprinted and have a digital photo taken. Low-risk applicants will then be issued a FAST – Commercial Driver Identification Card.

### **Cargo Release Methods**

The two present cargo release methods for FAST shipments are the National Customs Automated Prototype (NCAP) and the PAPS. NCAP/FAST processing for FAST began in December 2002. The FAST processing of PAPS shipments is currently taking place.

**FAST:** FAST is the first completely paperless cargo release mechanism put into place Customs and Border Protection. This paperless processing is achieved through electronic data transmissions and transponder technology. FAST is highly automated and allows for the expedited release of highly compliant cargo from major importers, reducing congestion at our land borders.

**The Pre-Arrival Processing System (PAPS):** PAPS is a Customs Automated Commercial System (ACS) border cargo release mechanism that utilizes barcode technology to expedite the release of commercial shipments while processing each shipment through Border Cargo Selectivity (BCS) and the Automated Targeting System (ATS).