

# Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

## Executive Order 13439 – July 18, 2007

### Establish an Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

*We need to continually improve our import safeguards to meet the changing demands of a global economy. We must ensure that our food supply and imported products remain among the safest in the world. Our purpose is not just to look at today, but to anticipate tomorrow.*

Secretary Michael O. Leavitt  
Chair, Interagency Working Group on Import Safety  
August 6, 2007

# Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

## Interagency Working Group Membership

- Secretary of Health and Human Services, Chair
- Secretary of State
- Secretary of the Treasury
- Attorney General
- Secretary of Agriculture
- Secretary of Commerce
- Secretary of Transportation
- Secretary of Homeland Security
- Director of the Office of Management and Budget
- United States Trade Representative
- Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
- Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission
- Other officers or full-time or permanent part-time employees of the United States, as determined by the Chair

# Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

## Basis of the Executive Order

- The United States import system faces challenges from a changing world that are driven in large part by consumer demand.
- Americans must be able to purchase products with confidence in the safety of the product, whether it is from a domestic source or imported.
- Although the current import safety system has served the U.S. well for many years, it needs to be strengthened to meet the challenge of an expanding global economy.
- A new system that promotes the country's interest in security, safety and trade will benefit American consumers.

# Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

## Mission of the Working Group

- Identify actions and appropriate steps that can be pursued to promote the safety of imported products, including the following:
  - Reviewing or assessing current procedures and methods aimed at ensuring the safety of imported products, including reviewing existing cooperation with foreign governments and foreign manufacturers.
  - Identify potential means to promote all appropriate steps by the U.S. importing community to enhance the safety of imported products, including identifying best practices by U.S. importers.
  - Surveying authorities and practices of Federal, State, and local government agencies regarding the safety of imports to identify best practices and enhance coordination among agencies.
- Issue recommendations to the President within 60 days of the date of this order (signed July 18, 2007) unless the Chair determines that an extension is necessary.

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## Existing Environment

- Reason for confidence in our current import system
- Current examples:
  - DHS screens all cargo imported into the U.S. for security threats.
  - EPA requires the registration of all pesticide imports.
  - DOT approves all foreign suppliers of aircraft components and requires that U.S. importers maintain an inspection presence in their suppliers' manufacturing facilities. These are subject to audit by FAA.
  - USDA approves foreign countries for the export of meat, poultry, and egg products to the U.S. and inspects every imported shipment of these products for safety.
  - FDA receives safety and security information prior to a shipment's arrival to determine whether or not a food product should enter the U.S.

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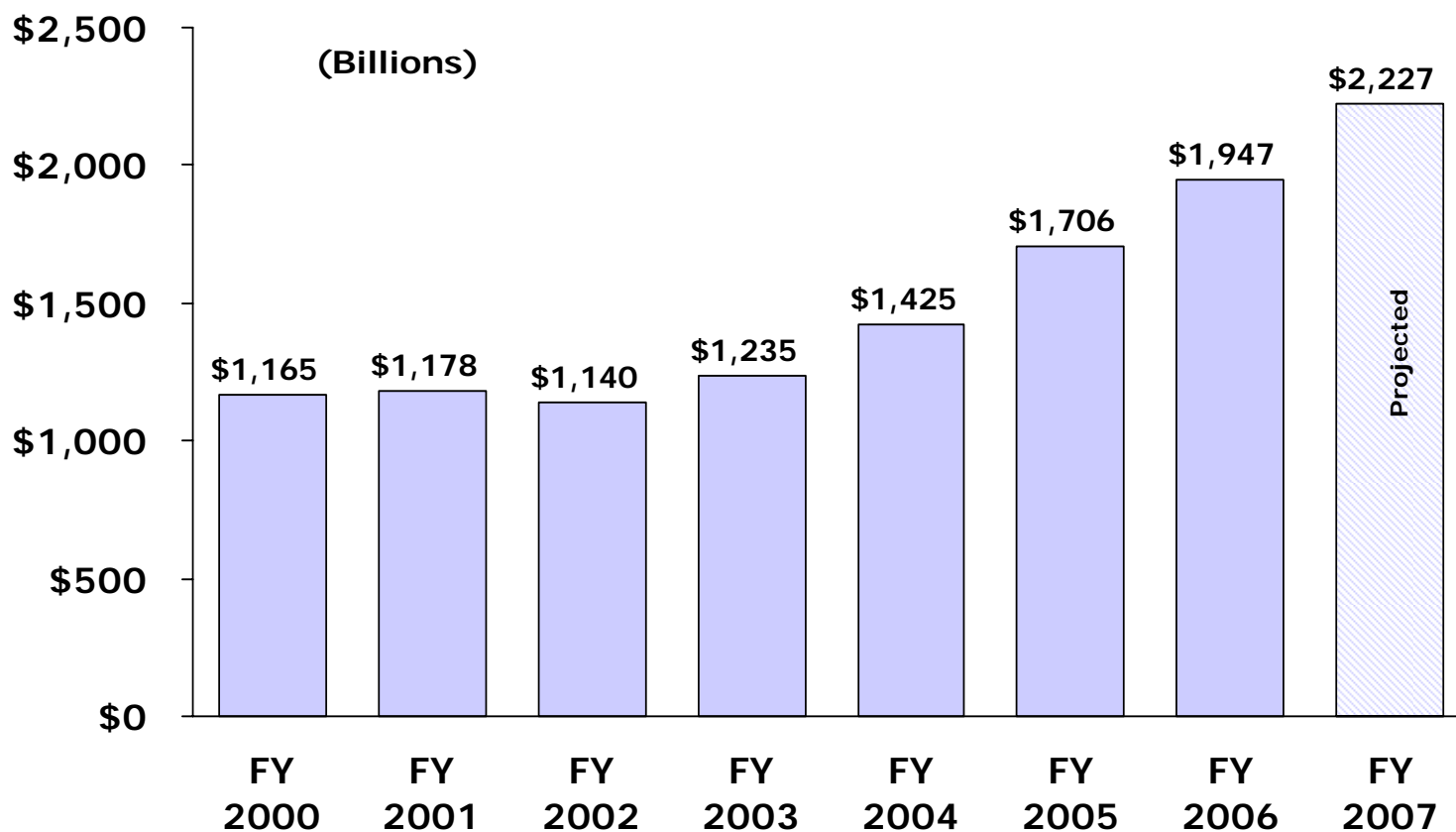
## Existing Environment (con't)

### – Deficiencies and Challenges:

- Intervention focus--government officials make determinations based on a “snapshot” of information about the safety of products.
- Security and safety relationship--Safety and security sometimes overlap and complement one another. To ensure the safety of imports, our actions must be coordinated.
- Need for additional authorities—In some cases, government officials lack authorities to identify or effectively address products found to be unsafe, to punish bad actors, or to implement effective preventive measures across the import life cycle.
- Insufficient data—In many cases, advance cargo information transmitted to border officials does not provide adequate detail to make safety determinations.
- Siloed systems—Federal and State agencies use multiple, non-integrated automated systems to process import safety information.
- Circumvention—Bad actors attempt to circumvent U.S. law to avoid detection of unsafe imports.

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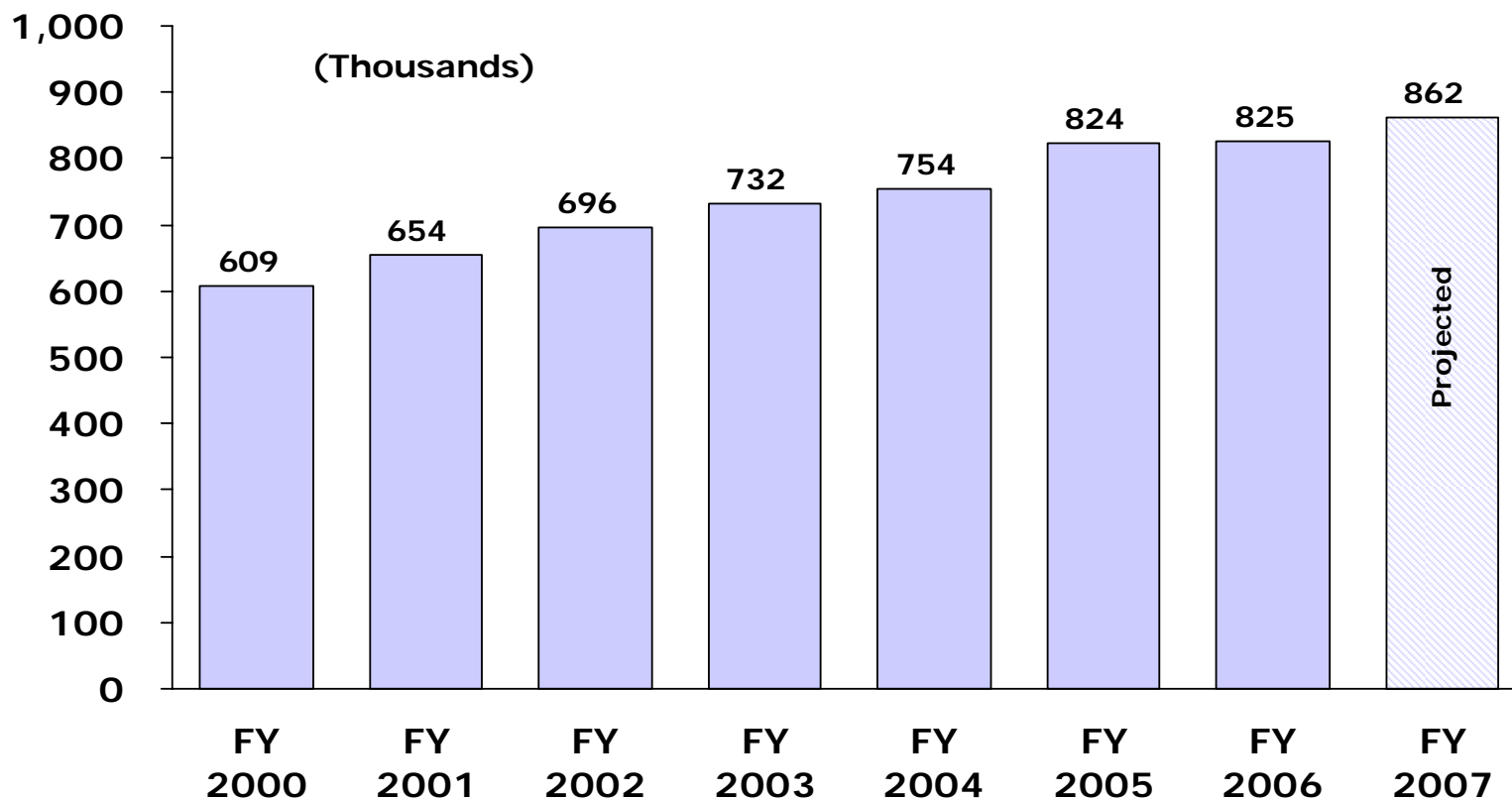
## U.S. Import Value



Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection

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## U.S. Importers

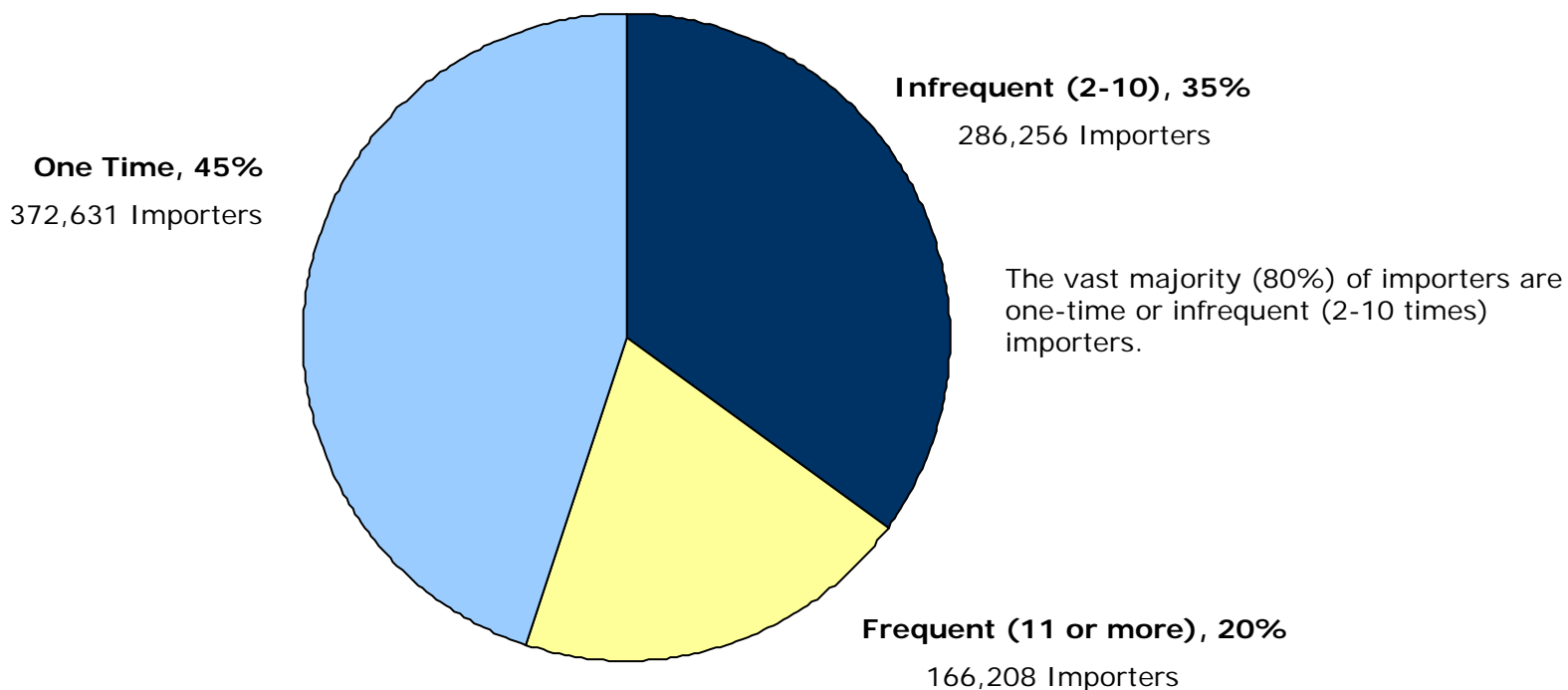


Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection



# Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

## Importers by Frequency of Shipments – FY 2006



\* In FY 2006 merchandise was imported for over 825,000 importers.

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection

# Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

## Strategic Framework and Action Plan

- Strategic Framework: Protecting American Consumers Every Step of the Way
- A Strategic Framework for Continual Improvement on Import Safety
  - The Import Safety Working Group developed a strategic framework for ensuring import safety.
  - Issued September 10, 2007
- Action Plan to Implement Strategic Framework
  - By Mid-November, the Import Safety Working Group will provide a follow-up Action Plan.
  - Action Plan will include short-and long-term recommendations for ensuring import safety in the United States.

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## Elements of the Strategic Framework

- Outlines an approach that can improve the safety of imported products while facilitating legitimate trade.
- Shifts the primary emphasis from Intervention to Prevention.
- Moves from “snapshot” to “video”.
  - From an assessment at the border to an assessment that spans the full import life cycle.

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## Strategic Framework

### Prevention

### Intervention

### Response

- Some agencies and members of the import community have already begun this shift from “snapshot” to “video”, from Intervention to Prevention. Others have nearly completed the transition.
- The shift needs to rapidly encompass all who participate in the import supply chain.

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## Organizing Principles/Keystones

- Prevention—Prevent harm in the first place
  - Safety must be built into manufacturing and distribution processes every step of the way.
  - Federal government will need to work with the import community to better identify vulnerabilities and determine effective controls.
- Intervention—Intervene when risks are identified
  - Federal, State, Local and foreign governments, along with the import community, must adopt more effective techniques for identifying potential import hazards.
- Response—Respond rapidly after harm has occurred
  - Act swiftly to limit potential exposure and harm if an unsafe imported product enters domestic commerce.
  - Need robust, collaborative system of response.

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## Building Blocks

- **Advance a Common Vision** --Shared vision and shared goals for import safety across the Federal government.
- **Focus on Risks Over the Import Life Cycle** --Focus on most important safety risks throughout the import life cycle—from overseas production to point of final consumption or use in U.S.
- **Increase Accountability, Enforcement and Deterrence** —Targeted investigation and enforcement can send a clear message to the trade community and in doing so, provide proper incentives and deterrence.
- **Build Interoperable Systems** —Complete the implementation of interoperable data systems that exchange import product information.
- **Foster a Culture of Collaboration** —Foster collaboration among government, the private sector, and with external partners.
- **Promote Technological Innovation and New Science** —Develop and apply new science to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the U.S. import safety system.

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## Import Safety Strategic Framework

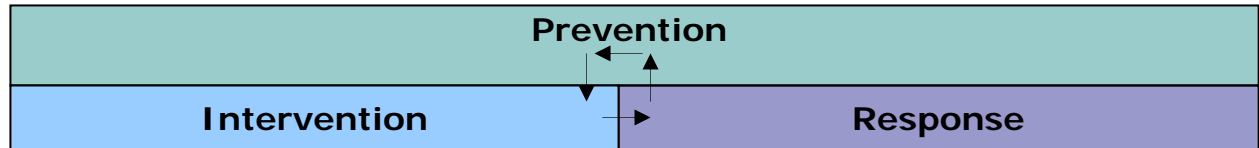
**Vision**  
*Our aspiration*

Continuously improve the safety of imported products

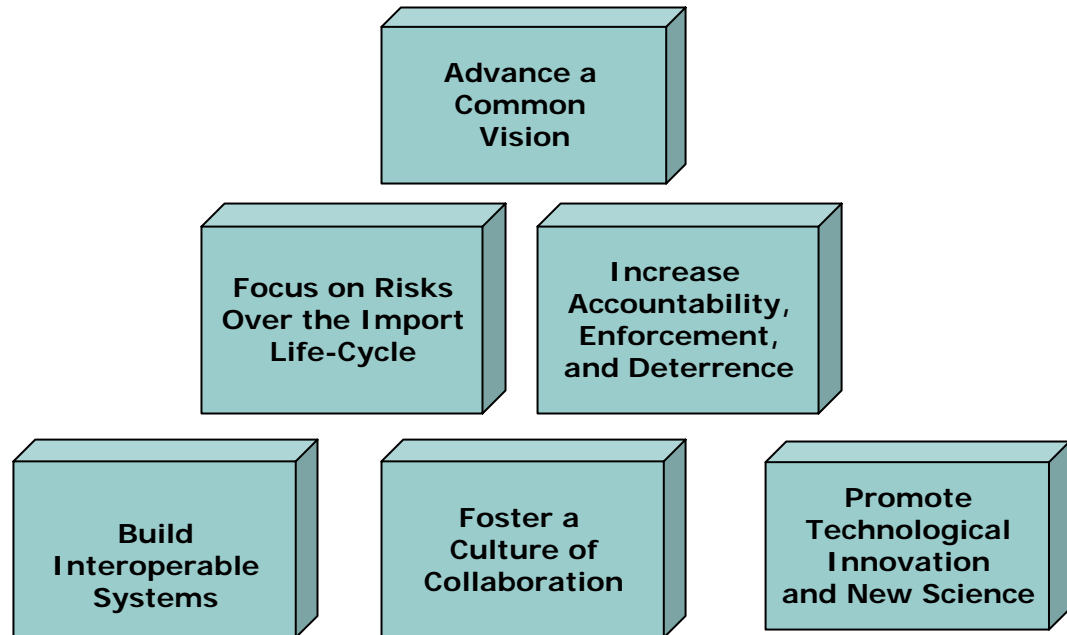
**Strategy**  
*How we achieve our vision*

Shift focus from intervention to prevention (over the entire import life cycle)

**Organizing principles**  
*How we organize our strategy*



**Building Blocks**  
*Steps necessary to achieve our vision*



# Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

## Upcoming Activities

- Over the coming weeks, we plan to receive extensive comments and recommendations from the public.
  - Briefings and Outreach
  - Public Meeting—October 1, 2007
    - Federal Register notice published on August 31, 2007
  - Process for submitting electronic or written comments
    - Division of Dockets—docket open until October 1, 2007
    - Visit [www.importsafety.gov](http://www.importsafety.gov) on how to submit comments



# Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

## Conclusion

Americans have high expectations for the safety of the products they eat and the products they use.

The Strategic Framework, when coupled with the forthcoming Action Plan, will ensure that as a global economy expands, public and private sector actors will be working to continue to meet the expectations of the American consumer—not just today, but for years to come.