



Department of Homeland Security

Customs and Border Protection – Information Center (CIC)

2020 Action Plan

Federal Customer Experience

US BY THE PEOPLE
FOR THE PEOPLE
WITH THE PEOPLE

Who are we?

The CBP Information Center (CIC) is the agency's primary liaison with the worldwide public that enables the CBP mission of legitimate trade and travel by providing in a professional and expedient manner, accurate and timely information about CBP regulations, procedures, policies, programs, and interactions. The CIC is a one-stop shop for the public to contact CBP with general inquiries that pertain to international travel, immigration, and trade issues.

The CIC has the following goals:

- Provide a positive and professional experience for our customers.
- Promote a valued customer experience culture that is focused on accurate and prompt action to address all customer questions and concerns.
- Protect sensitive and personal identifiable information.

In addition to above mission, the CIC Compliments and Complaints Branch receives and process compliments, complaints, and comments. They oversee the process throughout CBP, especially with cases that originate in the field. They receive complaints from travelers, import/export businesses, members of the international trade communities , and other persons affected by CBP operations, through phone calls, emails, written correspondence, and the DHS/TRIP redress system. The CIC works primarily with the Office of Field Operations and Border Patrol for the resolution, tracking, and analysis of complaints. The Complaints team identifies emerging areas of concern and analyzes trend and patterns of complaints to assist CBP personnel to effectively communicate with the public.



How do we deliver value to the public?

Occasion

CBP Information Center provides responses to questions about CBP requirements for trade and travel via email and/or telephone operators.

CIC Website contains a searchable knowledgebase of information, the ability to submit questions and comments and also houses the online Compliments and Complaints module.

Compliments and Complaints Branch (CCB) Analysts receive and process compliments, complaints, and comments. They oversee the process throughout CBP, especially with cases that originate in the field.

Analysts also receive and refer tips about:

- illegal aliens
- smuggling
- trade violations
- potential terrorist threats
- immigration-related fraud

High-Impact Service

The public can submit emails to the CIC 24/7 or reach a Public Information Officer (PIO) during the normal business hours of 8:30am to 5:00pm EST.

Provides the public an opportunity to talk to a live operator and discuss their question if it cannot be resolved via the self-service website and other information CBP has published.

CIC provides accurate and uniform information about CBP regulations and procedures via: <https://help.cbp.gov> and <https://helpspanish.cbp.gov>
Both sites house an extensive database of answers to frequently asked questions.

The general public can submit web questions, complaints, and compliments to the CIC through these portals.

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Offering

CBP strives to inform the public on laws and policies affecting customs, immigration, border security, agriculture, travel and trade in an objective, consistent, accurate, timely, and professional manner. The range of issues that CBP offers coupled with individual scenarios the customer may have, results in the need for 1 on 1 discussion with a Public Information Officer (PIO) and customer to answer the requestor's question. This offering provides the user with a personal touch via phone and/or email interaction with a PIO.

The goal of the website is to provide the public with a self service option to answer questions without waiting in the queue to talk to a PIO and/or await an email response. The CIC through analysis determines the most frequently asked questions and tailors the information to current policies affecting the travel and trade communities. The objective is to provide the public a speedy and correct answer to their questions and avoid having to join busy phone queues.

Provide the public an avenue to submit complaints and compliments (either anonymously or with contact information provided, if follow up is requested) regarding CBP employees, officers, general operations etc.

CBP has received compliments about officers and agents in the field for exceptional conduct while on and off duty.

All allegations against CBP employees are taken seriously and addressed according to the appropriate established procedures.

Where could we improve?

Steps

Customer Steps

Name and describe the main steps that a person takes to use the service, left to right, start to finish.

Service System

Describe the channels, roles, and tools from your agency or partners.

Pain Points

Describe the highest priority problems to solve

1: Customer searches the Help.CBP.gov website	2: Customer reviews FAQs and knowledge articles	3: Customer question is either answered or they reach out to the CIC via email/phone
<p>CIC manages the help.cbp.gov website where customers can search CBP's online knowledgebase to have their questions answered about wide variety of topics related to CBP. Customers are provided with a list of most frequently asked questions but also have the ability to search on keywords for their specific question.</p>	<p>Customers are provided results either in FAQ or knowledge article format. Many of the documents contain links to forms that may be required and/or to external websites for further processing and information.</p>	<p>If they are not satisfied with the answer provided they then can submit their question to CBP to have a representative answer their specific question.</p>
<p>Within the CIC, the Operational Support Branch (OSB) is responsible for providing and updating the content for the website. Based on requests from the CIC Director and General Inquiries staff, they develop and update materials for the website.</p>	<p>OSB is continuously working to keep the information on the website current and accurate for the public.</p> <p>Based on the current technology all information is provided as webpages or in some cases, PDF forms the requestor may be looking for.</p>	<p>The system returns information based on the customers keyword searches. For each result returned, the customer has the opportunity to submit a question via email for more clarification. Additionally, the phone number is prominently listed for the customer to contact the CIC via a live operator. However, there is an automated phone script on the line that provides the caller with an opportunity to get their question answered.</p>
<p>There can be changes to CBP policies and procedures relating to travel and trade and the CIC ensures that the most current, relevant information is updated on the site. Additionally, the CIC seeks to improve its ability to measure what information the public is looking for.</p>	<p>We currently do not have a survey instrument in place to measure whether the self-service information satisfies a customer's inquiry.</p> <p>The only way would be to query the phone comments "tried searching the website" or perform an analysis on calls/emails received vs website hits.</p>	<p>Phone call and email volume continues to increase leading the CIC to believe that self-service materials on the website can be improved so that we can increase the number of users that have their questions answered and resolved and do not need to contact a PIO. A survey could provide that data.</p>

What will we do?

Purpose

*Why did your agency undertake this project?
What does it hope to achieve, in specific performance indicators, if possible.*

What is the problem?

There is currently no formal process to ascertain if information is useful for the customer. Whether it be the actual information or the way it is presented, text format vs video, interactive chat, and/or social media.

CIC needs to assess if information is helpful and public is getting questions answered, as well as create a more interactive platform to make things easier for people to understand how to do business with CBP in clearing goods or people whether it is for personal or commercial use.

Desired future state?

Implement a survey instrument to gauge the customer experience in real-time with the self-service website and also with PIO interaction via phone and emails.

Any measurable indicators and targets?

Reduction in calls/emails to the CIC and positive feedback from customers regarding the usefulness of information provided via the website.

Approach

Describe the timeline and work plan to achieve that purpose. If this is an ongoing initiative, describe your progress.

Process, methods, and expertise?

Implement web and phone survey using the TouchPoints platform and A-11 280 guidance on customer survey questions.

Timeline, stage gates and dates?

Go live NLT end of CY2020. Meet with TouchPoints staff from GSA in June 2020. Work with CBP OIT staff and CIC phone system vendor to implement survey on web, via email and phone system.

Deliverables being produced?

Reports and analytics.

Resources

Describe the stakeholders involved, financial and human capital dedicated to the work, and any partners contributing to the work.

Who is responsible?

Darren Neely, CIC Director

Who is contributing to the project?

CIC staff, OIT staff (specifically the Salesforce Center of Excellence), Presidio (phone system) and OMB staff for TouchPoints.

What are we proud of this year?

Service Improvement

Who is the user and what was the problem?

The CIC website prior to October 2019 was out of date and not completely in sync with our phone and customer management system.

What did you build / improve? What does it do for the public or how you deliver your mission? What was the resulting impact? (Include numbers whenever possible)

The CIC transitioned to the use of Salesforce as our customer relationship management system, added phone lines in addition to upgrading the phone technology and modernized the website for ease of navigation and functionality.

Any lessons for other agencies emulating this work?

Important to have integrators that fully understand the software solution, in this case, Salesforce.

Sum up what happened in two sentences.

Project was a success and new phone system, website and Salesforce all launched at the same time. Phone calls now create a ticket automatically in the system as do web submissions. Data on types of calls and emails are readily accessible to the staff and leadership.

Capacity Building

Was this a governance, measurement, organizational, customer understanding, service development, or service delivery capability?

The CIC wanted to improve the service delivery capability to our customers while at the same time improving the process steps that staff are required to take to resolve a customer inquiry. The end goal was a greater understanding of CBP policies and procedures as they relate to travel and trade.

What was the new action taken capability and it's goal or purpose?

As previously mentioned, we modernized our technology platforms for all stages of the customer interaction lifecycle- website, phone and case management with the Salesforce system.

What was the resulting impact?

All information and processes are inter-connected. Phone calls create tickets just like emails or website questions. More than doubled the available phone lines. Enhanced technology has allowed CIC to extend hours to 5pm from 430pm with additional hours under consideration.

Any lessons for other agencies emulating this work?

In retrospect we wouldn't have done all three phases at the same time, phones, web and software but because of funding and contractual issues, we were required to do so.