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BORDER SECURITY

Improvements Needed to Increase Vehicle Scanning at Land Ports of Entry

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GAO-26-108767

Chairman Guest, Ranking Member Correa, and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss our work on U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) non-intrusive inspection (NII) systems. Within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), CBP is the lead federal agency charged with a dual mission of facilitating the flow of legitimate travel and trade at U.S. borders while also keeping terrorists and their weapons, criminals and their contraband, and inadmissible people out of the country. As part of its responsibilities, CBP coordinates the inspection and processing of pedestrians, passengers, and cargo at land, air, and sea ports of entry (POE).[1]

Land POEs are a key drug smuggling route for transnational criminal organizations. According to CBP, most illicit drugs, including fentanyl, enter the United States through southwest border POEs hidden in passenger vehicles or belongings, concealed in commercial vehicles, and carried by pedestrians.[2] To help detect illegal drugs and other contraband, CBP uses large- and small-scale NII systems, like X-ray machines, at land POEs to enable officers to inspect travelers and their belongings, and vehicles and their contents, without the need for unloading or disassembly.[3]

Since 2019, CBP's NII program has received over $2 billion for NII systems, which it has used to enhance inspections of commercial and passenger vehicles and trains, and to increase the number of vehicles that are scanned using large-scale NII systems as they enter the United

[1]POEs are facilities that provide for the controlled entry into or departure from the United States. Specifically, a POE is any officially designated location (seaport, airport, or land border location) where CBP officers or employees are assigned to clear passengers, merchandise, and other items, collect duties, and enforce customs laws; and where CBP officers inspect persons seeking to enter or depart, or apply for admission into the United States, pursuant to U.S. immigration and travel controls. A single land POE may be composed of one or more crossings.

[2]James Mandryck, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Office of Intelligence, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Protecting the U.S. Homeland: Fighting the Flow of Fentanyl from the Southwest Border*, testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Border Security and Enforcement (Washington, D.C.: July 12, 2023).

[3]CBP officers use large-scale NII systems to scan entire vehicles. The process produces an image that CBP officers review to identify anomalies that may be an indication of contraband or hidden people. CBP officers use small-scale NII systems to localize those anomalies, among other things.

States. In 2021, the Securing America's Ports Act required CBP to develop a plan to achieve 100 percent scanning of commercial and passenger vehicles and freight rail entering the United States at land POEs by 2027 using large-scale NII systems.[4]

My statement today discusses (1) how CBP assesses large-scale NII system performance, (2) the status of large-scale NII system deployment, and (3) CBP's plans for future large-scale NII system deployments. This statement is based primarily on a report we published in September 2025 in response to a request to review the implementation and effectiveness of CBP's NII program.[5]

To inform that report, GAO analyzed NII program documentation, including inspection procedures, performance data, and deployment plans, and interviewed program officials. GAO also interviewed and observed CBP officers conducting inspections at land POEs where large-scale NII systems had been deployed in preprimary inspection areas. More detailed information on the objectives, scope, and methodology for that work can be found in the report. Our work was performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Background

CBP began using large-scale NII systems to scan vehicles in 1996 and has generally deployed them in secondary inspection areas at land POEs. When deployed in secondary inspection areas, they are only used to scan vehicles that were referred by CBP officers in primary inspection. In 2020, CBP began deploying new large-scale NII systems in preprimary inspection areas—before a traveler is interviewed by a CBP officer, where vehicles are scanned before they reach the primary inspection booth (see fig. 1). Previously, NII systems were generally used only when an officer determined that further inspection was required after the interview. Placing NII systems in preprimary inspection areas significantly increases the number of vehicles scanned because all vehicles approaching a

[4]Securing America's Ports Act, Pub. L. 116-299, 134 Stat. 4906 (2021), codified at 6 U.S.C. § 211 note.

[5]GAO, *Land Port Inspections: CBP Should Improve Performance Data and Deployment Plans for Scanning Systems*, GAO-25-107379 (Washington, D.C.: Sep. 15, 2025).

primary inspection booth that do not choose to go through an opt-out lane are scanned, rather than only those referred for secondary inspection.[6]

Figure 1: Non-Intrusive Inspection Systems in Passenger and Commercial Preprimary Inspection Areas at Land Ports of Entry in Mission, Texas (left) and Laredo, Texas (right)

Source: GAO (photos). | GAO-26-108767

As part of its overall inspection process, CBP uses large-scale NII systems to scan vehicles. These scans produce images that are reviewed by officers to identify any anomalies that might be contraband or hidden people. If officers identify any anomalies, the vehicles undergo further inspection, which can include the use of detection canines; small-scale NII systems such as videoscopes to look into hard-to-reach areas of vehicles or baggage scanners to scan vehicle contents to localize the anomalies; and manual inspection procedures.

[6]According to CBP officials, travelers may opt out of undergoing a scan by an NII system in preprimary inspection by using an opt-out lane to drive to the primary inspection booth, and officials at the POEs have discretion as to how vehicle inspections are handled when drivers choose to opt out.

CBP Assesses Large-Scale NII Performance, but Has Not Clearly Defined All Key Performance Parameters

CBP collects and uses performance data to help ensure that its large-scale NII systems are operational and available for use to scan vehicles. For example, these data include a daily list of system outages, and operational availability, which is the percentage of time systems are available for use.

CBP uses performance data to inform actions it takes to improve NII system performance. For example, CBP's fiscal year 2024 target for system performance was for individual large-scale NII systems, and for the average across all large-scale NII systems, to have an operational availability of 95 percent or greater. However, in fiscal year 2024 just over half of individual large-scale systems met this target, while the average across all large-scale NII systems was 90 percent. CBP officials told us that CBP included penalty clauses in its new maintenance contracts in September 2024, which are intended to improve contractors' accountability for maintaining the targeted level of operational availability.

In 2015, CBP established three key performance parameters for NII systems. These include (1) meeting an average NII imaging system operational availability of 95 percent, (2) inspecting 100 percent of all designated high-risk commercial vehicles and containerized cargo, and (3) maintaining 100 percent inspection of targeted containers, cargo, and international mail. According to DHS guidance, key performance parameters reflect the most important and nonnegotiable requirements that NII systems must meet to fulfill their purpose.

CBP collects data for operational availability and reports the results in its annual operational analysis reports. However, as we found in our September 2025 report, CBP has not clearly defined its other two key performance parameters or reported their results in operational analysis reports. Specifically, CBP has not clearly defined what "high-risk" means for the inspection rate key performance parameter or what maintaining 100 percent inspection of targeted containers, cargo, and international mail means for the examination key performance parameter. CBP officials said that because they are unclear how CBP intended to define or measure these key performance parameters, they have not reported data related to them.

Clearly defining its key performance parameters and using them for reporting would enable CBP to determine whether large-scale NII systems are working as intended. Doing so would also help CBP identify any system deficiencies or possible cost savings, achieve its objectives more efficiently and effectively, and help inform future procurement

decisions. In our September 2025 report, we recommended that CBP should clearly define all NII key performance parameters and report performance using them. The agency concurred with the recommendation and said that its NII program will capture and clearly define system-level key performance indicators and reporting requirements for NII systems within new contract statements of work.

CBP Has Made Progress Deploying Large-Scale NII Systems, but Has Encountered Increased Costs and Schedule Delays

As part of its efforts to increase vehicle scanning at land POEs, CBP is deploying additional large-scale NII systems in preprimary inspection areas. Specifically, CBP is deploying low-energy portals (LEP) in passenger vehicle preprimary inspection areas and multi-energy portals (MEP) in commercial vehicle preprimary inspection areas. These systems will allow CBP to scan vehicles prior to primary inspection to identify potential anomalies and assist in determining whether to refer vehicles for secondary inspection, rather than only scanning vehicles referred for secondary inspection.

Beginning in fiscal year 2020, CBP awarded contracts to procure and deploy 153 large-scale NII systems to land POEs. As of February 2025, 52 of these 153 systems CBP planned to deploy were fully operational, nearly all located at preprimary inspection areas. An additional 101 systems were in preplanning, design, or construction phases (see table 1). These systems include 12 high-energy NII rail systems that CBP plans to deploy to replace existing gamma-ray systems that they are retiring.

Table 1: Deployment Status of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Large-Scale Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) Systems at Land Ports of Entry, as of February 2025

Type of system	Pre-planning	Design	Construction	Fully operational	Total[a]
Low-energy portal (LEP)	4	34	23	35	**96**
Multi-energy portal (MEP)	6	7	15	17	**45**
High-energy NII rail	0	11	1	0	**12**
Total	**10**	**52**	**39**	**52**	**153**

Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Customs and Border Protection information. | GAO-26-108767

[a]Total does not include three LEPs deployed to Donna, Texas, for the DHS Science and Technology demonstration that are no longer operational.

As a result of the deployment and use of LEPs and MEPs, CBP has increased its scanning of passenger vehicles from 2 percent in fiscal year 2020 to 8 percent in fiscal year 2024, and scanning of commercial vehicles from 16 percent to 27 percent during this same timeframe. Some factors have limited the use of the systems, such as limited staff and

system outages. For example, when these systems are deployed in preprimary inspection areas at land POEs, they require additional staff to operate them and to review the images from the vehicle scans. CBP officials we met with at all four field offices with land POEs where large-scale NII systems had been deployed in preprimary inspection areas told us they did not always have sufficient staff to fully use the systems. CBP headquarters officials said they are discussing ways to mitigate staffing challenges, such as reviewing images at regional command centers rather than at the POEs, which could improve efficiency. Additionally, CBP officials at these POEs said that system outages, which were sometimes frequent or lengthy, have affected their operations.

In our September 2025 report we found that, although CBP has made progress deploying large-scale NII systems, it has encountered significant challenges that have led to deployments costing more and taking longer than expected.

CBP has developed and updated cost estimates for deploying MEP, LEP, and high-energy NII rail systems, but costs have exceeded those estimates. One reason for higher costs than anticipated are substantial increases in the costs for civil works and construction. For example, the estimated costs to install each MEP increased from $1.3 million in fiscal year 2020 to $4.1 million in fiscal year 2023. Further, in October 2024 CBP estimated the cost to complete installation of each remaining planned MEP system would range from $4.2 million to $9.7 million.

As a result, CBP has requested and received additional funding to deploy its large-scale NII systems and to meet its initial goals to increase vehicle scanning rates. According to CBP officials, in fiscal years 2019 through 2024, CBP received over $2.1 billion for the NII program (see table 2).[7] Most of these funds were intended for the deployment of large-scale NII systems in preprimary inspection areas. In October 2024, CBP reported that it had sufficient funds to finish deploying most of the large-scale NII systems but needed an additional approximately $173 million to complete deployment for 31 of the systems.

[7]In July 2025, Congress passed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which included an appropriation of funds available to CBP for, among other things, NII. See Pub. L. 119-21 Title IV, Subtitle A, § 90004, 139 Stat. 72, 359.

Table 2: U.S. Customs and Border Protection Reported Funding for Non-Intrusive Inspection Program Fiscal Years 2019 Through 2024 (dollars in millions)

Type of funding	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Procurement, Construction, & Improvements	$570	$66	$0	$87	$95	$381	**$1,199**
Operations and Support	$116	$127	$152	$167	$177	$177	**$917**
Total	**$686**	**$193**	**$152**	**$254**	**$273**	**$558**	**$2,117**

Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Customs and Border Protection data. | GAO-26-108767

Large-scale NII system deployments have also taken longer than originally planned. The Securing America's Ports Act required CBP to develop a plan to achieve 100 percent scanning of commercial and passenger vehicles and freight rail entering the United States at land POEs by 2027 using large-scale NII systems. As of February 2025, CBP did not expect to complete all of its planned large-scale NII deployments until December 2029. CBP's original timelines to complete system deployments ranged from 12 to 24 months. However, some installations have taken longer than expected.

CBP officials identified various factors that have contributed to system deployments taking longer than expected. For example, some POEs require major site upgrades to enable NII systems to be installed in preprimary inspection, including the construction of command centers or installation of power and data connections to the new systems. In other instances, vendors have taken longer than expected to resolve issues encountered during system deployment, such as during site acceptance testing. CBP said they are aware of these issues and are taking actions to address them, such as considering future NII system installation needs when making infrastructure improvements at POEs along the northern border.

CBP's Deployment Plans Do Not Include All Ports of Entry Along the Southwest Border, Including Three of its Highest-Traffic Locations

In response to the Securing America's Ports Act, in January 2022 CBP submitted its plan to Congress to increase vehicle scanning with these large-scale NII systems at land POEs.[8] In its January 2022 scanning plan, CBP estimated that it would need 434 large-scale NII systems to achieve 100 percent scanning of vehicles and rail containers along the southwest and northern borders (see table 3). While the plan described how CBP intended to deploy large-scale NII systems to both the southwest and northern borders, CBP has focused its initial efforts on the southwest border because most CBP contraband seizures have occurred there.

Table 3 : Numbers of Additional Large-Scale Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) Systems Needed for 100 Percent Scanning, Based on U.S. Customs and Border Protection Fiscal Year 2021 Scanning Plan

	Low-energy portal (LEP)	Multi-energy portal (MEP)	High-energy NII rail	Total
Planned NII systems, total	337[a]	65	32	**434**
Current procurements, total	96	45	12	**153**
Southwest border	90	39	6	**135**
Northern border	6	6	6	**18**
Future procurements, total	241	20	20	**281**
Southwest border	56	5	1	**62**
Northern border	185	15	19	**219**

Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Customs and Border Protection information. | GAO-26-108767

Note: The total number of systems acquired and needing future procurement reflects CBP's estimate of the number of multi-energy and low-energy portals and high-energy NII rail systems it would need to scan 100 percent of passenger and commercial vehicles and rail containers at the southwest and northern border land ports of entry. CBP made these estimates in its Large Scale Non-Intrusive Inspection Scanning Plan, Fiscal Year 2021 Report to Congress. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Large Scale Non-Intrusive Inspection Scanning Plan, Fiscal Year 2021 Report to Congress (January 18, 2022).

[a]LEP totals include additional systems CBP plans to deploy in secondary inspection areas.

CBP submitted its fiscal year 2022 update in March 2023 including the steps it had taken to increase scanning.[9] Specifically, in its March 2023 scanning plan update, CBP reported procuring 129 large-scale NII systems for scanning passenger and commercial vehicles to be deployed

[8]Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, *Large Scale Non-Intrusive Inspection Scanning Plan Fiscal Year 2021 Report to Congress* (Washington, D.C.: January 18, 2022).

[9]Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, *Large Scale Non-Intrusive Inspection Scanning Plan - Annual Update Fiscal Year 2022 Report to Congress* (Washington, D.C.: March 31, 2023). In November 2025, CBP issued its fiscal year 2024 update to its scanning plan.

at POEs along the southwest border, which, once fully deployed, would give CBP the capacity to scan up to 40 percent of passenger vehicles and 70 percent of commercial vehicles.

As we stated in our September 2025 report, however, the CBP scanning plan does not include NII system deployments needed to scan passenger vehicles at nine POEs along the southwest border. This includes three of its highest-traffic locations that together accounted for almost 24 percent of passenger vehicle crossings at all land border POEs in fiscal year 2024 (see table 4). Combined, these nine POEs comprised about 30 percent of total passenger vehicle traffic entering the United States and almost 40 percent of passenger vehicle traffic entering the United States at the southwest border in fiscal year 2024.

Table 4: Southwest Border Passenger Vehicle Crossings Not Included in U.S. Customs and Border Protection Deployment Plans, as of March 2023

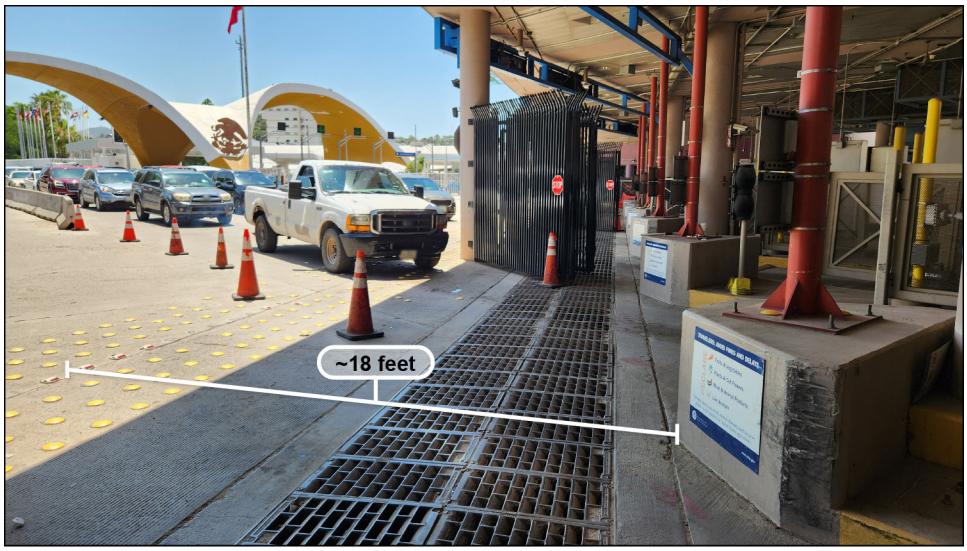
	Fiscal year 2024 passenger vehicle arrivals			
Land border crossing	**Volume rank**	**Vehicle count**	**Percent of total, southwest border**	**Percent of total, all land borders**
San Ysidro, CA	1	15,112,930	19.8%	15.4%
Otay Mesa, CA	2	6,244,660	8.2%	6.3%
Nogales-DeConcini Crossing, AZ	11	2,200,556	2.9%	2.2%
Gateway to the Americas Bridge, TX	17	1,553,481	2.0%	1.6%
Brownsville and Matamoros International Bridge, TX	20	1,397,149	1.8%	1.4%
Gateway International Bridge, TX	21	1,135,410	1.5%	1.2%
Andrade, CA	29	605,876	0.8%	0.6%
Lukeville, AZ	36	389,566	0.5%	0.4%
Naco, AZ	37	336,582	0.4%	0.3%
Total		**28,976,210**	**38.0%**	**29.4%**

Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Customs and Border Protection information. | GAO-26-108767

CBP officials told us they have not included the three high-traffic crossings because there is not enough space to install the large-scale NII systems in preprimary inspection areas (see fig. 2). While CBP has not determined how it will overcome the lack of space at these POEs, they are considering some possible solutions, including working with the DHS Science and Technology Directorate to develop LEPs that could be installed where space constraints and interference with radiation detectors make deployment of large-scale NII systems difficult. Other solutions they are considering include deploying the systems after the

primary inspection booth, which they have done at other POEs; redeveloping the border crossings so there is enough space in preprimary; or installing the equipment across the international border, as they have done on the northern border, although this may not be possible on the southwest border.

Figure 2: Limited Space in the Preprimary Inspection Area at the DeConcini Passenger Vehicle Crossing, Nogales, Arizona



Source: GAO (photo). | GAO-26-108767

Note: The U.S.-Mexico international border is indicated by a line of red and white bumps, centered between the yellow bumps.

While CBP's scanning plan states its intent to scan 100 percent of passenger and commercial vehicles and rail containers entering the United States at land POEs, the plan does not include the deployment of large-scale NII systems to some of CBP's highest passenger traffic POEs along the southwest border. Without these crossings in its plan, CBP risks entry of many unscanned passenger vehicles, hampering its ability to prevent illegal drugs and other contraband from entering the United States.

In our September 2025 report, we recommended that CBP determine how to include deployment of large-scale NII systems to all southwest border land POEs in updates to its deployment plans. CBP concurred with GAO's recommendation and said it is collaborating with the DHS Science and Technology Directorate to address the radiation interference

between the large-scale NII systems and the radiation detection equipment, which could allow for placement of NII large-scale systems within limited real estate constraints.

We will continue to monitor CBP's efforts to address our recommendations. Addressing our recommendations would strengthen CBP's management of the NII program and its interdiction efforts to help it achieve its mission.

Chairman Guest, Ranking Member Correa, and Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes my prepared statement. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have at this time.

Staff Acknowledgments

If you or your staff have any questions about this testimony, please contact Hilary M. Benedict, Director, Science, Technology Assessment and Analytics, at benedicth@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this statement. GAO staff who made key contributions to this testimony are Rich Hung (Assistant Director), Maria Stattel (Analyst in Charge), Rebecca Gambler, Kirk Kiester, Dave Bieler, Nathan Hamm, Megan Graves, Ashley Stewart, Michele Fejfar, Mark Kuykendall, and Anika McMillon.

Testimony
of

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Regarding a Hearing
on

"Smarter Borders, Safer Nation: Expanding the Use of Non-Intrusive Inspection Technology"

Before the

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Subcommittee on Border Security and Enforcement

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Introduction

Chairman Guest, Ranking Member Correa, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today about U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) use of non-intrusive inspection technology. This critical capability strengthens our ability to continue securing our Nation's borders while facilitating the flow of lawful trade and travel.

Under President Trump and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Noem's leadership, the CBP Office of Field Operations plays a central, critical role in securing our nation's borders. With nearly 34,000 highly trained personnel, the Office of Field Operations is CBP's largest component and oversees 328 ports of entry and 15 preclearance locations domestically and abroad, performing complex customs, immigration, agriculture, and trade activities. Every day,[1] the Office of Field Operations processes more than 1 million passengers and pedestrians, facilitates the importation of nearly $10 billion in goods, and collects nearly $600 million in duties and taxes. At the same time, on average, we prevent the entry of nearly 1,200 inadmissible persons, seize more than 1,300 pounds of drugs, confiscate $165,000 in illicit currency, and intercept 3 counterfeit documents.

CBP's Office of Field Operations employs a dynamic, intelligence-driven, law enforcement strategy that integrates advanced data analysis, information sharing, and coordination with federal, state, and international partners to identify and disrupt threats. By leveraging cutting-edge technologies such as non-intrusive inspection systems, artificial intelligence, and facial biometrics, the Office of Field Operations enhances its ability to detect contraband, verify identities, and streamline inspections, all while maintaining the flow of lawful trade and travel.

Today, I will provide an overview of CBP's non-intrusive inspection technology, its role within CBP's broader security strategy, and the progress made in deploying these critical assets. I will also discuss the deployment and operational challenges we face and outline our plans to address them as we continue to enhance our border security capabilities and protect our communities from transnational threats.

Border Security Threats at U.S. Ports of Entry

As CBP reasserts control of our borders in accordance with President Trump's directives, transnational criminal organizations and foreign terrorist organizations continue their efforts to smuggle people, contraband, and other potentially harmful materials into the United States. These organizations possess immense resources and sophisticated capabilities and can adjust their concealment tactics to evade detection by law enforcement.

Most illicit drugs seized by CBP, including fentanyl, are seized during smuggling attempts at Southwest Border land ports of entry. In fact, last fiscal year, approximately 75 percent of the total weight of illicit drugs seized by CBP at the Southwest Border were seized at ports of

[1] Average daily enforcement actions based on preliminary Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 data.

entry.[2] Drug cartels and other transnational criminal organizations conceal these drugs in passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles, mail, and even on pedestrians.

To counter these threats, CBP's Office of Field Operations continues to integrate law enforcement intelligence, data analysis, and advanced detection technologies to enhance its ability to intercept contraband and other potential threats. Among these capabilities, CBP's non-intrusive inspection technology remains one of CBP's most effective tools for detecting radiological materials as well as anomalies that may indicate concealed contraband.

Non-Intrusive Inspection Technology as Part of CBP's Multi-Layered Strategy

CBP employs a diverse range of non-intrusive inspection systems tailored to the unique needs of our operational environments. Large-scale systems are used at sea and land ports of entry to scan passenger vehicles, commercial trucks, railcars, and cargo containers. Small-scale systems are used to scan baggage, mail, and parcels. Together, these technologies provide a versatile and effective detection capability across all operational environments.

Simply put, non-intrusive inspection allows CBP to "see" inside vehicles, packages, cargo containers, and other conveyances without physically opening or unloading them. Using advanced imaging technologies, such as X-ray and gamma-ray, these systems detect anomalies that may indicate the presence of illicit drugs, contraband, or other threats.

The key advantage of non-intrusive inspection technology is its ability to conduct thorough inspections quickly, efficiently, and safely. This enables CBP to detect and interdict suspected dangerous materials without causing unnecessary delays to lawful trade and travel that physical inspections would cause.

Most of CBP's large-scale non-intrusive inspection systems are deployed in secondary inspection operations at ports of entry, where they are used to examine targeted or referred vehicles or shipments. CBP leverages advance electronic shipping information, actionable law enforcement intelligence, and CBP's Automated Targeting System to identify high-risk shipments for inspection before they arrive at ports of entry. This proactive approach allows CBP to allocate resources efficiently and focus on the highest-priority threats, while facilitating the critical flow of lawful goods into the United States.

To further advance the efficiency of our operations, CBP prioritizes the implementation of drive-through operational concepts. New non-intrusive inspection systems are positioned in pre-primary inspection areas, allowing for a greater capacity of vehicles to be scanned without interrupting traffic flows. The scans are transmitted to remote command centers, where officers review the images in real time for anomalies and flag those requiring secondary inspection. This approach streamlines the vehicle inspection process and allows more vehicles to be scanned.

[2] Of the 255,243 pounds of drugs CBP seized at the Southwest Border in FY 2025, 192,701 pounds were seized at land ports of entry. https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/drug-seizure-statistics.

The effectiveness of CBP's non-intrusive inspection systems is clear. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, CBP officers used large-scale non-intrusive inspection systems to scan over 17 million sea containers, rail cars, and vehicles, resulting in the interdiction of 110,000 pounds of narcotics, approximately $2.2 million in unreported U.S. currency, and the apprehension of 66 undeclared passengers. Just this past November, CBP officers at the Laredo–Colombia Solidarity International Bridge in Laredo, Texas intercepted nearly 2,000 pounds of methamphetamine with a street value of $16 million concealed in a commercial truck hauling decorative items.[3] These enforcement results underscore the critical role of non-intrusive inspection technology in combating the smuggling of illicit drugs.

While non-intrusive inspection technology is a powerful tool, it is just one component of CBP's broader multi-layered enforcement strategy. This strategy provides our skilled personnel with advanced technology, law enforcement intelligence, and partnerships to create a comprehensive approach to border security.

A key example of this integrated approach is the work of CBP's National Targeting Center, which integrates law enforcement intelligence and data analysis to identify potential high-risk shipments for inspection. Skilled trade specialists and CBP officers, trained to operate and interpret non-intrusive inspection systems, play a critical role in identifying suspect shipments. In addition, CBP canine teams further enhance our detection capabilities and often work alongside officers conducting inspection activities. These specially trained dogs can detect undeclared passengers, narcotics, unreported currency, prohibited agricultural items, and other contraband.

Together, these resources form a multi-layered approach that ensures that no single tool or capability is relied upon exclusively. By combining technology, intelligence, and specialized personnel, CBP adapts to emerging threats while maintaining the balance between security and the facilitation of lawful trade and travel.

Non-Intrusive Inspection Technology Investments and Deployment Plans

Congressional funding is instrumental in advancing CBP's non-intrusive inspection system program. As of December 2, 2025, CBP has deployed 405 large-scale non-intrusive inspection systems at air, sea, and land ports of entry, including 67 fixed systems added during FY 2024, FY 2025, and FY 2026 to date. By the end of FY 2026, CBP plans to deploy 38 additional systems currently under construction or in an active construction planning phase. These drive-through non-intrusive inspection system deployments are part of a multi-year effort to close the vehicle scanning capacity gap and address high-priority threats.

Looking ahead, CBP has allocated more than $1 billion from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act for the procurement and integration of new non-intrusive inspection systems, artificial intelligence, and other mission support capabilities.[4] The President's FY 2026 Budget also requests $137 million to procure more systems and to enhance non-intrusive inspection capabilities. These investments will enable CBP to expand pre-primary non-intrusive inspection operations,

[3] https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/local-media-release/cbp-officers-seize-more-16-million-methamphetamine-colombia-solidarity
[4] Public Law 119-21

integrate systems, and implement artificial intelligence to reduce manual image analysis to further increase security and enhance the flow of legitimate trade and travel through ports of entry.

CBP's non-intrusive inspection system program represents a tremendous investment in our border security capabilities, and we are committed to maximizing the impact of these systems. CBP has ambitious plans to expand the use of non-intrusive inspection technology and increase scanning rates at our ports of entry. With current deployment plans, CBP aims to scan 40 percent of passenger vehicles and 70 percent of commercial vehicles at Southwest Border land ports of entry by the end of FY 2026.

CBP also has a recapitalization plan to replace aging non-intrusive inspection systems, ensuring the continued functionality and availability of this critical technology to support port of entry operations. Replacing this equipment with the latest cutting-edge technology is expected to increase our scanning capacity and improve our ability to detect anomalies.

Despite its benefits, non-intrusive inspection technology faces deployment challenges, including limited real estate at some ports of entry and placement constraints to avoid interference with radiation detection systems. CBP addresses these challenges by evaluating facilities and infrastructure at ports of entry and exploring innovative solutions to increase and improve scanning at these locations.

Conclusion

Non-intrusive inspection technology is an essential component of CBP's layered enforcement strategy. It enables our frontline personnel to focus on their critical border security mission, facilitate lawful trade and travel, and protect American communities by disrupting transnational criminal organizations that attempt to smuggle contraband through ports of entry.

CBP will continue to implement President Trump's policies to enforce the law, prevent criminals from entering our country, and strengthen border security.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Congress for its unwavering support of CBP's mission. Specifically, your commitment to funding advanced technologies, such as non-intrusive inspection systems, is instrumental in addressing the complex challenges we face at our Nation's ports of entry. With your support, CBP will further expand its non-intrusive inspection capabilities, enhance and modernize data systems, and address infrastructure and technology challenges. These advancements will enhance our ability to detect and interdict threats, disrupt criminal and terrorist networks, and safeguard the American people.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.