

# Fentanyl Forum 2024

## Disrupting the Opioid Supply Chain by Land, Air, and Sea

February 22, 2024





On behalf of the Homeland Security Technology Consortium's Executive Committee, I am happy to welcome you to the Fentanyl Forum 2024: Disrupting the Opioid Supply Chain by Land, Sea, and Air.

The [White House](#) stated in 2023:

*Today, the drugs most responsible for killing Americans are illicit synthetic opioids like fentanyl and its analogues, which are easier to produce and transport and also significantly more lethal. The nature of these drugs, and their ease of access and potency, presents a national security, public safety, and public health threat.*

Both the [Biden-Harris Administration](#) and Congress are seeking a whole-of-government response to the threat posed by illicit opioids. Among other things, Federal agencies have been directed and encouraged to further research, pilot and prototype advanced screening technologies to interdict fentanyl; to enhance intelligence-gathering on traffickers at land, air, and sea ports of [entry](#); and to disrupt fentanyl trafficking through improved command, control, communications, and data sharing in all [domains](#).

A principal theme of many of the high-quality strategies produced by Federal agencies and their components in response to the fentanyl threat is the need for collaboration between government stakeholders. This collaboration will benefit from useful engagement with private sector innovators in industry, labs and academia who can create and deliver the communications, sensing, analytics and investigative tools that our operators need to win this fight.

It is for these reasons that the HSTech Consortium is sponsoring the Fentanyl Forum. We offer our sincere thanks to those who are participating in this event and to the sponsors who have made the Forum possible.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Schuler", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ari Schuler  
Chairman  
HSTech Consortium

# Fentanyl Forum 2024

## AGENDA

### 9:00am: KEYNOTE

**Joseph Draganac**, Director, Fentanyl Campaign Directorate, U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

### 10:00am: OPERATIONAL AND TECHNICAL CHALLENGES OF INTERDICTING ILLICIT OPIOIDS ON THE BORDERS

**Andrew Foland**, CTO, Leidos Security Enterprise

**Darby LaJoye**, Vice President, Leidos

**Col. David Paravecchia**, Senior Liaison Officer, National Capital Region, JTF-N (NORTHCOM)

**Dr. Kristofer Roe**, Chief Innovation Officer, Viken Detection

**Gary Wade**, Senior Vice President for Global Security, Atlas Air

### 11:00am: MARITIME CHALLENGES

**LCDR Nicole Bredariol**, U.S. Coast Guard, Congressional Fellow, House Committee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transport

**Dr. Jason McKenna**, Director of Research, Development, Testing, Evaluation and Training, the Wicker Center for Ocean Enterprise, University of Southern Mississippi

**Scott Leach**, Director of Maritime Operations and Investigations, Air and Marine Operations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

### 11:45am: LUNCH

### 12:30pm: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CBP AND DEA PARTNERSHIPS

**Patricia Todaro Bolin**, HSTech Executive Committee

**Larry (Dave) Fluty**, Assistant Commissioner of CBP Laboratories and Scientific Services

**Scott Oulton**, DEA – Assistant Administrator, Forensic Science Division (appearing remotely)

### 1:30pm: CHALLENGES IN TRADE AND E-COMMERCE

**Christa Brzozowski**, A/S for Trade and Economic Security, DHS PLCY

**Ronald Appel**, Division Chief, Homeland Security Investigations

**Travis Brown**, Program Manager for Opioid and Fentanyl Detection Program, DHS S&T

### 3:00pm: FIRESIDE CHAT

**Ryan Scudder**, Executive Assistant Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

**Jorge Comas**, Director, Counter Network Division, National Targeting Center, U.S. Customs and Border Protection



**Joseph Draganac**  
**Assistant Director**  
**National Targeting Center – Cargo Division**  
**U.S. Customs and Border Protection**

Joseph Draganac currently serves as the Assistant Director at Customs and Border Protection (CBP) National Targeting Center, Cargo Division, Anti-Smuggling Branch which assesses risk at every stage in the cargo supply chain and travel life cycle to identify shipments of concern and illuminate criminal networks. Mr. Draganac also serves as the inaugural Director of CBP's Fentanyl Campaign Directorate which has unified CBP's efforts to combat fentanyl and other synthetic drugs by coordinating and leveraging agency wide capabilities in alignment with the *2023 CBP Strategy to Combat Fentanyl and Other Synthetic Drugs*.

Prior to this appointment, he served as the Deputy Executive Director, Operations, at CBP Headquarters, with oversight over 20 major field offices, 328 Ports of Entry (POE), and 16 Preclearance Stations in Canada, Ireland, the Middle East, and the Caribbean. He was responsible for reinforcing the frontline by supporting Field and Executive Leaders with critical information, guidance, and expertise. Mr. Draganac started his career in 2000 as a Customs Inspector at the Port of Derby Line, Vermont and has held numerous leadership positions within CBP to include: Assistant Port Director for Trade in the Port of Buffalo, New York; and Deputy Director of the CBP Field Operations Academy (FOA) where he was responsible for delivery of basic training for CBP Officers and advance training programs for all CBP operational components.



**Andrew Foland**  
Chief Technology Officer  
Leidos Security Enterprise Solutions

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Andrew Foland has over 30 years of detection experience and has designed fielded security scanner systems with units at airports around the world. He is currently CTO of the Leidos Security Enterprise Solutions (SES) business, leading the innovation team for the operation. Dr. Foland has published over 300 peer-reviewed technical articles and holds over a dozen US patents related to scanner technology, automation, and AI/ML. Dr. Foland earned his PhD at Cornell University and has taught as a physics professor at Harvard University. He has won numerous academic and industry awards and been a session chair and invited plenary speaker at many conferences and events in physics, aviation security, and AI/ML.



**Darby R. LaJoye**  
**Vice President and Strategic Account**  
**Executive**  
**Homeland Security**

Darby LaJoye serves as the Vice President and Homeland Security Account Executive for Leidos, a technology, engineering, and science solutions leader. Mr. LaJoye is responsible for integrating business development and strategy across a broad homeland security portfolio covering nearly 20+ federal agencies as well as commercial customers in the U.S. and around the world.

Mr. LaJoye joined Leidos in 2022, having retired from the federal government with nearly 30 years of service in the United States Army and the Department of Homeland Security.

He served for nearly five years as the senior most career official in the Transportation Security Administration where he held the title of Executive Assistant Administrator for Security Operations. In this role, Mr. LaJoye was responsible for all global counter-terror and security operations leading a workforce of nearly 60,000 personnel. In 2021, he served as the acting head of the TSA where he directed Covid-19 public safety measures across all forms of public transportation and implemented industry wide cyber regulations in response to ransomware attacks.

Mr. LaJoye served as the Federal Security Director in both New York and Los Angeles where he oversaw all security, regulatory and crisis management activities. He has led response operations across the homeland and national security landscape from active shooter events to terrorism and natural disasters.

He is a recognized expert in the convergence of physical and cyber security and serves on several advisory committees helping to shape the technology and security landscape. He is a recipient of the Presidential Rank Award and was bestowed the Outstanding Service Medal for his contributions to the Department of Homeland Security.

LaJoye's military service was in the United States Army where he led soldiers in Airborne and Light Infantry units.

Mr. LaJoye holds advanced degrees from Liberty University and the National War College and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor's degree from the University of Richmond.



## **COL DAVID R. PARAVECCHIA**

**Senior Liaison Officer (LNO), National Capital Region  
Joint Task Force - North (NORTHCOM)**

COL Paravecchia has over 27 years of military and government service. He currently serves as the Senior LNO in the National Capital Region to JTF-North. In this capacity COL Paravecchia facilitates communication between interagency partners and JTF-North to ensure mutual understanding and unity of purpose and action.

He served in active Military Police units until 2008 as Platoon Leader; Special Reaction Team Commander; Company Commander; Police Operations Officer at West Point; and Operations and Executive Officer with the Protective Services Battalion (CID). In 2008 he entered the Army Reserve and served in increasingly responsible strategic positions as an Exercise Planner and Liaison with Joint Forces Headquarters -National Capital Region; Protection Strategist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Protection Directorate (G-34), HQDA, G-3/5/7; Readiness and Mobilization Chief, HQDA G-3/5/7; Insider Threat Senior Advisor to the Joint Staff; and Faculty Instructor at the U.S. Army War College. COL Paravecchia has deployed in support of peacekeeping operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and spent time in Afghanistan conducting Executive Protection operations.

As a Senior Government and Industry Civilian, Mr. Paravecchia served as the Chief of the DoD Prevention, Assistance, and Response (PAR) with the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA). In this capacity he was responsible for ensuring delivery of violence prevention capabilities to joint bases and military installations across the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, and Guam. Prior to coming to DCSA, Mr. Paravecchia served as the Chief, U.S. Army Insider Threat Operations Hub, HQDA, G-3/5/7 (2018 to 2022); Chief, Operational Protection Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (2015 to 2018); and Division Manager/Principal Analyst with Analytic Services Inc (2008-2015) where he supported numerous government clients. He authored the first Army Antiterrorism Field Manual and played a key role in the development and drafting of the National Preparedness Frameworks.

COL Paravecchia received a B.A. in Criminal Justice from Temple University, an M.A. in Business and Organizational Security Management from Webster University, and an M.A. in National Security & Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy (Session 222). He is also a Certified Counter-Insider Threat Professional - Fundamentals (CCITP-F) and Analysis (CCITP-A)

His awards and decorations include the 2023 DCSA Senior Employee of the Year, the Army Superior Civilian Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medals, Joint Commendation Medals, Army Commendation Medals, Army Civilian Service Commendation Medal and Achievement Medals, various campaign and service medals, the Joint Staff Badge, Army Staff Badge, and Parachutist Badge.



**BIO: Dr. Kristofer Roe**  
Chief Innovation Officer  
Viken Detection

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Dr. Kristofer Roe is currently Chief Innovation Officer for Viken Detection, a developer and manufacturer of innovative detection technologies and solutions based in the Boston, Massachusetts area. Dr. Roe has over 20 years of experience in the security and industrial imaging space, holding leadership positions at Smiths Detection Inc. and Varex Imaging in addition to his work with Viken Detection. Throughout his career, Dr. Roe has successfully led multi-disciplinary technology teams responsible for developing and supporting security imaging systems, applications, and a portfolio of CBRNE detection products. He has served as principal investigator of multiple technology development programs in areas such as deep learning and explosives detection equipment development and capability upgrades. In these pursuits, Dr. Roe has a track record of incubating new products and technologies from proof-of-concept through certification and successful deployment in the homeland security arena.

Dr. Roe earned his Doctoral, Masters, and Baccalaureate degrees in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the University of Delaware. He is the holder of multiple patents and is a long-time supporter of STEM education.





**GARY WADE  
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT  
GLOBAL SECURITY**



Gary Wade is the Senior Vice President for Global Security at Atlas Air Worldwide, Inc. Since joining the company in 2002, he has led the important mission to secure Atlas Air cargo and passenger charter operations worldwide to over 110 countries and over 400 cities. His efforts directly support safe and secure operations to some of the most far-reaching, sensitive zones in the world bringing life-sustaining food and supplies to US forces and allies as well as humanitarian relief.

Prior to joining Atlas, Mr. Wade served over 32 years in Federal Law Enforcement. His most recent Federal assignment was Special Agent in Charge of the TSA Federal Air Marshal Service Atlanta Field Office. For over 30 years, he served as a Special Agent for the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) assigned to offices in Detroit, Miami, Washington, D.C. and Quantico, VA retiring as a Senior Executive. During his tenure, he led the DEA Undercover Training programs for four years and served as Chief of the DEA Office of Congressional Affairs. As a recognized expert in drug trafficking interdiction efforts, he testified before the U.S. Congress and led numerous Congressional delegations overseas to give members firsthand insight into DEA operations and international cooperation with myriad foreign governments to combat international drug trafficking. He was subsequently selected to participate in the Department of Justice's Executive Exchange Program and was assigned for one year to FBI Headquarters as the Senior Drug Policy Advisor. Mr. Wade retired in 2002 as the Special Agent in Charge of the DEA Training Academy in Quantico, VA.

Mr. Wade received his Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Management and Marketing from West Virginia University and attended graduate school at the University of Virginia.

Adjunct to his duties at Atlas Air, he is a current member of the TSA Aviation Security Advisory Committee serving on the full committee as well as the Air Cargo subcommittee, Insider Threat subcommittee and contributing to countless ASAC working groups. He is the current Chairman of the Cargo Airline Association Security Committee, Immediate Past Chairman of the Airlines for America (A4A) Security Council, former Chairman of the A4A Working Group on Cargo Security and a designated Subject Matter Expert for security and intelligence sharing partnerships between the airline industry and the US Department of Defense and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Mr. Wade previously served on the International Association of Chiefs of Police Homeland Security Committee and the US Air Force Air Mobility Command's Phoenix Mentor Program for Security Forces.

Mr. Wade leads the Atlas Air Worldwide support to the K9s for Warriors program raising tens of thousands of dollars to provide service dogs to US veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injuries or sexual assault. He also leads Atlas Air's fundraising and mentorship efforts supporting youth development and enrichment programs in Miami Florida's Liberty City, one of the most economically disadvantaged communities in Miami.



# BIOGRAPHY

## **UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

### **LIEUTENANT COMMANDER NICOLE E. BREDARIOL**

Lieutenant Commander Bredariol is currently a Congressional Fellow at the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation at the House of Representatives. Previously, she served as a Special Assistant United States Attorney (SAUSA) at the Southern District of California where she worked as a prosecutor in the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force with a focus on disrupting and dismantling multinational maritime drug trafficking organizations. She received the Executive Office for United States Attorneys Directors Award for Superior Performance as a SAUSA. Before that, she served as a Judge Advocate for the First Coast Guard District in Boston, Massachusetts and was responsible for providing legal advice to the district commander, as well as to subordinate units and partner commands across an eight-state region in the Northeast that includes over 2,000 miles of coastline.



Prior to attending law school, Lieutenant Commander Bredariol served as the Assistant Operations Officer and Navigation Officer on USCGC BERTHOLF (WMSL 750). She participated in patrols in the Eastern Pacific, Alaska and the Arctic, and RIMPAC 2012. Prior to that, Lieutenant Commander Bredariol served as the Supply Officer, Weapons Officer, and a Boarding Officer aboard USCGC VENTUROUS (WMEC-625). During this time she assisted in the response to the 2010 Earthquake in Haiti and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.

Lieutenant Commander Bredariol graduated from The United States Coast Guard Academy in 2009, with a Bachelor's of Science in Government and a Bachelor's of Science in Operations Research and Computer Analysis. She graduated magna cum laude with a Juris Doctor from the University of Pennsylvania in 2016 and is a member of the Massachusetts bar. While in law school, she was an Articles Editor on the University of Pennsylvania Law Review and participated in the Supreme Court Clinic. She graduated with a Masters of La (LL.M.) from Harvard Law School, with a concentration in National Security Law in 2023.

Individual military awards include one Meritorious Service Medal, two Coast Guard Commendation Medals, the Coast Guard Achievement Medal, two Letters of Commendation, and the Coast Guard Arctic Service Medal.

Lieutenant Commander Bredariol resides in Washington D.C. Her hobbies include traveling, surfing, eating, and running.

Updated (January 2024)



Jason McKenna, PhD, PG  
Director of Research, Development, Testing, Evaluation & Training (RDTE&T)  
Roger F. Wicker Center for Ocean Enterprise &  
The Institute for Advanced Analytics & Security  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Marine Research Center  
1030 30th Ave Gulfport, MS 39501

Dr. McKenna is responsible for USM's Roger F. Wicker Center for Ocean Enterprise (RFWCOE) Research, Development, Testing, Evaluation, and Training Programs. He possesses over 25 years of data science, analytics, engineering, executive and program management experience to plan, program, and execute research and development to solve complex problems in terrestrial and maritime domain awareness, environmental intelligence, and national security. He has previously served as CEO, CTO, and Chief Scientist in the private sector, and Lead Technical Director for Geospatial Engineering and Senior Research Geophysicist for the US Army. He is currently a Research Professor in Southern Methodist University's Roy M. Huffington Department of Earth Sciences.

Dr. McKenna directs USM's blue-water and brown-water Coastal CUBEnet, a series of high-resolution sensor networks that acquire oceanographic, meteorological, and sensor data at various depths in the Northern Gulf of Mexico to support testing and validation of Maritime Crewed, Optionally Crewed, and Uncrewed Systems as well as oversees development of its derived data analytics and machine learning products for prediction of various phenomena. He also oversees RFWCOE's Maritime Training in Uncrewed Systems, Trusted Maritime Autonomy, Data Analytics, Renewables, and Maritime Cyber.

In December 2009 Dr. McKenna received the 54th US Department of Defense Distinguished Civilian Service Award, the DOD's highest award for Career Civilians for his work in the US Central Command Area of Responsibility. He is also a recipient of the Secretary of Defense's Medal for support to the Global War of Terror (2009), the NATO/International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Service Medal (2011), as well as numerous R&D and service awards from the US Army.

Dr. McKenna holds a B.S. in Geophysics from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and both a M.S. and Ph.D. in Geophysics from Southern Methodist University. He is Certified Professional Geologist #11151 from The American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG), Professional Geologist #717 in Louisiana, and a Registered Professional Geologist in the State of Alaska (#GEOG607).

He is a lifetime member of both the Society of Exploration Geophysicists, and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) and is currently the Mississippi Chapter President for AUVSI ([www.auvsi.org](http://www.auvsi.org)). He has authored or co-authored over one hundred peer-reviewed articles and technical reports in geophysics, uncrewed systems, and data science. In his spare time, he enjoys photography, coaching youth sports and robotics, baking, and writing poetry.



**BIO: Scott Leach**  
Director of Marine Operations and Investigations  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

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Scott Leach currently serves as the Director of Marine Operations and Investigations for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Air and Marine Operations, Headquarters in Washington D.C.. With over 25 years of federal service, Scott has served in multiple leadership positions within AMO. Scott joined AMO as a Marine Enforcement Officer with the U.S. Customs Service in 2002. After serving as a Supervisory Marine Interdiction Agent at Great Lakes Air and Marine Branch and the National Marine Training Center, he was promoted to AMO Headquarters.

Scott began his federal career in 1996 with the U.S. Coast Guard, where he served as a Boatswain's Mate aboard the 270' Cutter Campbell and Small Boat Stations in South Padre Island Texas and New London Connecticut.

Scott has floated over 8,200 underway hours, has held Vessel Commander and instructor designations on multiple vessels, and holds a USCG 100-ton Master Merchant Mariner Credential. Scott is a graduate of Customs and Border Protection's Leadership Institute.



***Patty Todaro Bolin***  
***ICS Advisory***  
***Managing Partner***

Ms. Todaro Bolin is a senior business leader with more than 30 years of experience in government and industry. She has designed, developed, and directed multifaceted transformational projects, programs, resources, staffing, and budgets; and has provided full-scope strategic support for large, complex, multi-agency collaborative efforts across complex regional and national organizations. Ms. Todaro Bolin's resource management, strategic planning, acquisition strategy, and business development and capture expertise greatly benefits her clients. She served 20+ years with Legacy US Customs Service (USCS) and then Customs and Border Protection (CBP). During her last year in federal service, Ms. Todaro Bolin drove all financial/budget, human capital, strategic planning, competitive and strategic sourcing, Investment Review Board, and business case development for agency-wide programs as a Director at CBP. Ms. Todaro Bolin also served in various leadership and enterprise roles for legacy USCS and CBP (Trade, International Affairs, Air & Marine, Asset Management, Human Capital/LER and Budget); and was part of the initial DHS stand up, focusing on CBP, USCIS and ICE mission, technology, branding, budget and staff.

Ms. Todaro Bolin launched her own business, Innovation Consulting Services (ICS Advisory), where she provides business to business consulting services. Founded in 2017, her firm is an SBA-certified Woman-Owned business. ICS Advisory is result-focused influential leader within the federal space, with more than 30 years of government and industry experience. ICS Advisory provides business-to-business advisory services, as well as business-to-government, and has a portfolio of mission, technology, and operational services for law enforcement, international/trade support, and technology innovation.

Just prior to that, she was Senior Vice President, Business Development and Capture/Vice President, Homeland Security and Justice, for a mid-tier firm driving all acquisition, pricing, business development, capture management, and proposal development. She was Project Manager and Subject Matter Expert (SME) for various US Secret Service (USSS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) law enforcement and technology programs. She was Program Executive for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Office of Information Technology; US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Office of Technology Innovation and Acquisition Environmental Support; and, other components of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of State, Department of Defense (DOD), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Programs.

Previously, for other large business firms, Ms. Todaro Bolin served as a SME for: Core Financial Project; Real and Personal Property Assessments; Work Management Strategies; Workplace Transformation Initiative; Shared Accounting Services; and an International Affairs Strategic Blueprinting Project. She served as PM for the initiation and stand-up of an Enterprise Risk Management Deployment, Revenue Transformation/Revenue Stakeholder Engagements. Earlier, she managed numerous CBP programs and served as SME/Team Lead for the Secure Border Initiative (SBInet); and Intelligence/Targeting, Wireless Systems and Cargo Projects in the Office of Information Technology.



**BIO: Larry (Dave) Fluty**  
Assistant Commissioner  
Customs and Border Protection  
Laboratories and Scientific Services (LSS)

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Larry (Dave) Fluty has been employed with the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) since 1994 and has worked in several high level executive positions in CBP and the Department of Homeland Security. In 2011, Mr. Fluty was appointed to the Senior Executive Service as the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of CBP's Office of Training and Development and became the Assistant Commissioner for Laboratories and Scientific Services (LSS) in 2018. Mr. Fluty oversees a diverse organization of scientists and engineers who support CBP's operations and trade enforcement. His work ranges from providing forensic laboratory and engineering services to support law and trade enforcement activities, operating a 24/7 technical reachback center, and conducting technology assessments in collaboration with operators, private industry, and partner government agencies. LSS's laboratory system consists of eight decentralized laboratories and 16 forward operating laboratories that provide forensic, scientific, and engineering support to CBP's 40,000 plus officers and agents and other law enforcement agencies.



**BIO: Scott Oulton**  
Assistant Administrator  
Drug Enforcement Administration  
Office of Forensic Sciences

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Scott R. Oulton has been employed with the Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) since 1990 and has worked in various positions (Chemist, Supervisor, Program Manager, Section Chief, Associate Laboratory Director/Quality Assurance Manager and Laboratory Director) throughout the DEA. In 2011, Mr. Oulton was appointed to the Senior Executive Service as the Associate Deputy Assistant Administrator and became the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Forensic Sciences in 2022. He oversees DEA's laboratory system and headquarter components comprised of over 500 employees conducting seized drug analysis, friction ridge and digital evidence examinations. DEA's laboratory system consists of nine decentralized and four sub-regional laboratories that provide analytical, intelligence, scientific and other forensic and administrative support, to special agents of the DEA and other federal law enforcement officers.



**BIO: Christa Brzozowski**  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
for Trade and Economic Security

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

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Currently, Christa Brzozowski serves as the Acting Assistant Secretary for Trade and Economic Security at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In this capacity, Christa oversees a team focused on a wide range of national trade and economic security policy issues and serves as DHS's representative to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) and Team Telecom (which oversees foreign investment in telecommunications).

Prior to her transitioning to her current position in early November, Christa was a Senior Manager, Public Policy at Amazon (2020-2023) where she focused on brand protection and customer trust issues.

Before Amazon, Christa served in the U.S. Government for 18 years, most recently as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Foreign Investment & Trade Policy, within the Office of Policy, Strategy, and Plans (DHS). In that position, Christa was responsible for multiple economic competitiveness and trade-related security issues, to include cross-border e-Commerce, supply chain security, national security reviews of foreign investment, and an array of trade facilitation and enforcement topics. In addition, Christa served as the Co-Chair of the OECD Task Force on Countering Illicit Trade, which worked to enhance cooperative mechanisms and good governance standards across law enforcement institutions. Christa also served in the White House as the Director for Global Supply Chain Security at the National Security Council, where she led the development of Executive Order 13659: Streamlining the Export/Import Process for America's Businesses (2014) and the National Strategy for Global Supply Chain Security (2012). Christa started her career in the U.S. Customs Service in 2001, working in the Office of Congressional Affairs on the development of legislation such as the Security and Accountability for Every Port Act (2006) and the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act (2007).

Christa has received master's degrees from the University of Cambridge, Georgetown University, and the Naval Postgraduate School.





**Ronald J. Appel, Jr.**  
**Division Chief**  
**Homeland Security Investigations Cyber Crimes Center**



Ronald J. Appel, Jr. serves as the Division Chief for the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Cyber Crimes Center (C3), within the HSI Cyber and Operational Technology Division. At C3, he leads a workforce comprising multiple units utilizing cutting-edge technology and 21st century investigative techniques to combat cyber and cyber-facilitated transnational criminal activity. C3 provides investigative, technical, and resource support to all HSI domestic field offices and international Attaché offices in support of a broad spectrum of cyber and cyber-related investigations. C3 also oversees HSI's Computer Forensic Program and coordination of all cyber training, outreach, and specialized solutions to counter illicit use of technologies.

Prior to his current assignment, Mr. Appel was the Unit Chief for HSI's TIII/Wire Intercept Unit. Mr. Appel has 30 years of law enforcement experience. Mr. Appel has held a number of key leadership positions within HSI, including Assistant Special Agent in Charge for the Knoxville, Tennessee office, Resident Agent in Charge for the HSI Chattanooga, Tennessee office, and Section Chief for the Contraband Smuggling, Border Enforcement Security Taskforce (BEST), Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Taskforce (OCDETF), and Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) units at HSI headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Appel began his law enforcement career as a Deputy Sheriff with the Broward Sheriff's Office in South Florida before joining the Royal Palm Beach Police Department where Mr. Appel served as a Police Officer and Detective. Mr. Appel began his federal law enforcement career as a Special Agent with the U.S. Customs Service in Sells, Arizona. Mr. Appel graduated Summa Cum Laude from Champlain College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Forensics and Digital Investigations

# Travis J. Brown

**Strategic Program Manager,**  
Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate



Travis has more than a decade of experience in DHS at both Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Science and Technology (S&T) . In his current role at S&T, Travis serves as the Strategic Program Manager for the Opioid and Fentanyl Detection and Disruption Program, prior to this position he served as an S&T Portfolio Manager supporting Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and worked with both components to identify research and development requirements.

Early in his DHS career with CBP, Travis pioneered the early use of artificial intelligence and machine learning in Border Patrol's maritime operations under the Maritime Detection Project. He also served as Program Manager for Border Patrol's Northern Border Remote Video Surveillance Program and the California Coastal Surveillance Demonstration. Prior to his time at DHS, Travis served as both a federal employee, and contractor with both the National Nuclear Security Administration, and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. In this capacity, he led nuclear non-proliferation projects in Russia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan. Travis holds DHS Level III certification with IT Specialization in Program Management and is a Level III Contracting Officer's Representative. Additionally, he holds certifications as a Project Management Professional, Disciplined Agile Scrum Master, Certified Scrum Master, and Advanced Certified Scrum Product Owner. He holds a Master of Business Administration degree, a graduate certificate in Information Security, and is an instrument rated private pilot.

*[January 2024]*



**Ryan J. Scudder**  
Executive Assistant Commissioner  
Enterprise Services

Ryan J. Scudder assumed the role of Executive Assistant Commissioner (EAC) for Enterprise Services (ES) at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in Washington, DC on July 2, 2023. He began serving in this EAC role in an Acting capacity in November 2021. In this position, he leads approximately 4,000 ES personnel at over 200 locations across the United States, providing mission-critical support to all CBP employees and operations. The ES portfolio includes programming for a \$16B+ annual appropriated CBP budget; 116 acquisition programs, demos, and investments valued at \$5B; more than 5,500 facilities; over 24,000 vehicles; \$8.1B in property assets; over 3,000 hiring actions per year; six national training academies; and an IT infrastructure consisting of a data center supporting the over 60,000 users and 27 mission-essential systems.

Prior to this assignment, he served as the Directorate Chief of the Strategic Planning and Analysis Directorate within the United States Border Patrol (USBP) starting in October 2020. During his 29 years of federal service, EAC Scudder has served 22 years in various leadership positions throughout the Agency.

EAC Scudder entered on duty with USBP in 1994 as a member of class 275 and was assigned to the Nogales Station in the Tucson Sector. In 2004, he transferred to the Erie Station in Pennsylvania as a Supervisory Border Patrol Agent, and later as Acting Patrol Agent in Charge (PAIC). In 2007, he was promoted to the position of Assistant Chief overseeing the USBP Operational Requirements Branch, which was responsible for constructing 201 miles of pedestrian fence and 226 miles of vehicle fence along the border in 2009. He was appointed an Associate Chief in 2009 in Washington, DC, overseeing Southwest Border Operations for the California Corridor, and in 2010 became PAIC at the Weslaco Border Patrol Station in the Rio Grande Valley Sector in Texas. In 2012, Chief Scudder became PAIC of the Rio Grande City Station, in the Rio Grande Valley Sector. In 2014, he relocated to San Diego, California, to serve as the Sector's Division Chief of Operations and later as Division Chief of Law Enforcement Programs, and in 2016 he became Deputy Chief Patrol Agent of El Centro Sector.

In 2011, Chief Scudder completed the CBP Leadership Institute program and served as the Deputy Principal Executive for the Office of Program Development in Washington, DC during his 90-day capstone assignment. In this position, he assisted in the formation of a strategic framework that aligned CBP's resources to its highest mission priorities. He is also a graduate of the Department of Homeland Security's Senior Executive Service Development Course in 2018 and was selected to serve as the Border Security Counselor for the Secretary of Homeland Security for an 11-month assignment.

## **Jorge Comas**

Director

*Counter Network Division*

*National Targeting Center*

*U.S. Customs & Border Protection*

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Jorge Comas is the Director of the Counter Network Division at U.S. Customs & Border Protection's (CBP) National Targeting Center. The Counter Network Division was established in 2015 to maximize the impact and contribution of CBP's unique position in the United States government based on its authorities, data holdings, competencies and partnerships. Mr. Comas is responsible for overseeing integrated teams, comprised of CBP Officers, Border Patrol Agents, and CBP Intelligence Research Specialists who are augmented by liaisons from across the U.S. government, all-source analysts, and in-house analytic and targeting systems developers. These integrated teams focus on developing threat mitigation approaches supporting national and homeland security strategies to counter transnational terror and criminal organizations impacting U.S. border operations.

Mr. Comas has previously served as the CBP National Security Advisor for the Office of the Commissioner. During his tenure in this capacity, Mr. Comas oversaw and developed CBP's strategies related to response to the migrant surge at the U.S. Southern Border, Operation Allies Welcome, and the Russian/Ukrainian conflict, among other world events.

Mr. Comas is a 23 year veteran of CBP, his career began at the Dulles International Airport, Washington, DC. Mr. Comas has served in various roles through out his career, focusing on targeting efforts in all passenger and cargo environments, to include at the tactical, intelligence, programatic, and oversight levels.

