

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The incumbent performs a variety of highly specialized duties involving the development, implementation, and maintenance of an active Safeguarding, Intervention and Trade Compliance program. Duties and functions performed by the incumbent play a vital role in APHIS PPQ's mission and program efforts to safeguard US agriculture from plant and animal pests and diseases. The work requires extensive coordination and communication with industry and stakeholders engaged in international trade. Program activities are generally focused on single port, work unit, or comparably dispersed field operations.

## **II. MAJOR DUTIES**

Responsible for the operational planning, development, implementation, coordination, and evaluation of operations designed to meet the needs of PPQ in the areas of safeguarding, intervention and trade compliance. Conducts formal reviews and provides timely written recommendations based on systematic evaluation and monitoring of activities. Provides written reports to management and conducts formal briefings when appropriate. Based on investigation and analysis, the incumbent develops comprehensive multifaceted strategies, plans, and activities that would include interagency or work unit blitzes, surveys, intensified inspections, devanning containers, and public outreach.

Responsibilities include developing and maintaining a local network for gathering intelligence, disseminating information concerning suspected violators, entry pathways, seasonal prohibited products, countries of origin, and internal destination markets. Conducts analysis of applicable intervention intelligence, trends, and safeguarding techniques. Based on knowledge of search and seizure authorities, the enforcement process, compliance agreements, and evolving inspection methods, the employee leads local efforts to develop and implement new procedures.

Recommends modification of existing methods and regulations as needed for the success of the port program activities.

A critical component of analytical assignments is conducting formal risk assessments in accordance with established agency methodology. Based on agency policy and supplemental guidance provided by state and/or regional safeguarding trade compliance staff, the incumbent conducts complex formal evaluations of actual and potential safeguarding/trade compliance risks focusing on the special circumstances of the assigned port or geographic coverage. In addition to evaluating relative risks, performs cost analysis and develops alternatives for management to consider. Makes recommendations to management concerning the prioritizing of goals and objectives.

Coordinates the timing of local surveys and blitzes. Determines staffing needs, schedules, and work plans. Consults, cooperates with, and enlists the aid of US Customs and other Federal agencies that have informational databases that can be used for identification of suspect smugglers and cargo shipments.

Serves as a technical consultant team leader, and provides operational guidance to PPQ field officers and IES investigators, as well as to officials in other Federal agencies, state cooperators, industry, and local law enforcement officials. Represents the program at port meetings internally or with industry concerning safeguarding, intervention and trade compliance, as needed.

Provides training of port officers and state cooperators when needed.

### **III. FACTORS**

#### **Knowledge Required by the Position**

Comprehensive professional knowledge of plant and animal pests, diseases, and invasive species is required. Knowledge of pest life cycles and pest dissemination risk factors is needed to assess their potential economic impact on the US agricultural industry. An in-depth knowledge of agricultural quarantine policies, principles, regulations, and methods is also required, as is a thorough knowledge of Federal and state plant pest programs and animal byproducts regulations and guidelines.

Extensive knowledge of the legal authority, both Federal and state, derived from the Plant Quarantine and Plant Pest Acts as they apply to PPQ regulatory enforcement strategies. Knowledge of IES liaison and contact activities, basic investigative procedures, preparation and documentation of violations, and regulatory enforcement methods is required to successfully prosecute violators. A working knowledge of other Federal and state agency laws, rules, and regulations concerning safeguarding, intervention methods, procedures, and techniques, as they relate to agricultural products and pest risk, is also required.

Knowledge of both foreign and domestic agricultural industry practices, procedures, and carrier modes. A high degree of understanding of agricultural business practices of both foreign and domestic producers is needed to gain compliance and to establish and maintain a good working relationship with industry representatives and stakeholders. Knowledge of media policies and systems is needed to provide adequate public outreach and educational services. An understanding of inter-cultural differences and a high degree of interpersonal skills are required to deal with industry representatives, government officials, stakeholders, and the general public.

The incumbent must have analytical skills necessary to investigate complex issues, carry out difficult endeavors requiring extensive planning and coordination, and develop approaches for gathering and synthesizing information. He/she must possess communication skills necessary to logically present findings and recommendations through written reports or oral presentations.

He/she must also possess the skills needed to successfully advise, consult, and negotiate with other Federal/state agency officials concerning ongoing PPQ initiatives and program activities.

### Supervisory Controls

The supervisor of record is the Supervisory SITC Officer.

The supervisor provides general administrative and very limited technical guidance which may be supplemented by limited technical guidance from the State or Regional Safeguarding Intervention Coordinator. The incumbent is responsible for planning and scheduling work and has authority to act based on independent judgment for assigned program areas. The supervisor and higher level staff officials are informed of progress, potentially controversial matters, and issues with far reaching implications. Decisions having a major impact on operations are subject to higher level review.

The incumbent's work is reviewed primarily in terms of success in meeting program objectives and compliance with agency and PPQ policies and regulations.

### Guidelines

Guidelines include Federal, state, APHIS, and PPQ laws, regulations, directives, manuals, joint memoranda of understanding, scientific and technical literature, cooperative agreements, policies, and procedures.

The incumbent must seek resolution to operational problems and issues within the framework of existing guidelines. The incumbent interprets and applies guidelines to a variety of situations and problems, adapting and extending guidelines where there are gaps in coverage or information is unclear. To meet the needs of the individual work unit, the incumbent may develop supplemental operational guides.

### Complexity

The work involves coordinating and implementing a broad range of safeguarding, intervention and trade compliance program initiatives and requirements. The incumbent frequently deals with unique situations, diversified interests, and recurring problems and developments. Situations arising from the work often involve numerous complexities requiring careful analysis and evaluation. The incumbent frequently must interpret available guidelines and select a course of action that best meets PPQ's program objectives as well as all regulatory requirements.

Extensive analysis, problem solving skills, and originality are required to effectively deal with all of the known and unknown variables involved. The work remains difficult and challenging as smugglers continuously devise new ways to actively thwart current intervention methods.

### Scope and Effect

The work involves operational planning and guidance that will ensure the Agency's ability to detect and prevent the smuggling of agricultural products. Success in limiting smuggling activities will prevent serious economic hardship due to pest outbreak within domestic agricultural crops. An exotic pest, disease, or invasive species outbreak would likely cause substantial crop, livestock, and/or economic loss. The use of additional pesticides to combat these pests or diseases could lead to further loss of export trade markets. Program success will decrease smuggling activities at the ports of entry.

Because of the controversial nature of the incumbent's work, actions taken are subject to legal scrutiny and challenge. The employee's adherence to agency policy and procedures is therefore essential to protect the interest of the agency against lawsuits, complaints, and unfavorable media coverage.

### Personal Contacts

Responsibilities require frequent contacts with PPQ officials including officers, supervisors, Safeguarding Intervention Coordinators, and other program management officials at various levels in the organization. Additional agency contacts are with officials of the Investigative and Enforcement Service. Regular contact with officials of other Federal agencies, state agencies, and local government entities is also required. In addition, the employee confers on a regular basis with officials of agribusiness firms and has contact with the general public.

### Purpose of Contacts

Contacts are for work planning, detection, intervention, public outreach, discussion of technical matters, and explanation of PPQ requirements and policies. In addition, there are extensive demands for gathering intelligence; reporting information; maintaining local communication with fellow officers, stakeholders, and cooperators; gaining compliance; enlisting cooperation and obtaining information necessary for the documentation of violations.

The incumbent must use tact and diplomacy based on extensive technical and program experience to facilitate agreement on difficult and controversial topics and develop suitable alternative solutions to problems.

Success in carrying out primary responsibilities is heavily dependent on the incumbent's initiative and innovation in developing and maintaining intelligence networks and resources. Aggressive or unusual behaviors from contacts may be encountered. In some instances, threatening situations require the incumbent to seek the support of local law enforcement agencies.

### Physical Demands

The work requires frequent climbing and crawling through shipments of containerized cargo and other conveyances during intervention/inspection activities. The work also involves frequent travel to and from field activities and locations, ongoing training, and irregular hours. May also require loading or unloading of contraband, which might involve heavy lifting.

### Work Environment

Work takes place in a wide variety of settings including, but not limited to, offices, warehouses, airports, seaports, markets, border crossings, and weigh stations. In some cases the incumbent may be exposed to moderate discomfort due to extreme weather conditions.