Customs and Border Protection fact sheet

- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is monitoring developments in Japan carefully and is specifically assessing the potential for radiological contamination associated with the ongoing impact of the earthquake and tsunami to Japan's nuclear facilities.

- Out of an abundance of caution, CBP has issued field guidance reiterating its operational protocols and providing specific field personnel direction with regard to monitoring of maritime and air traffic from Japan.

- In general, travelers that have been exposed to radiation are not a risk to other persons. When a radiation alarm occurs, CBP has protocols in place to isolate the affected traveler, baggage, or cargo, and resolve the concern. Travelers who manifest signs of radiation sickness will be referred to health authorities and provided appropriate treatment.

- CBP employs several types of radiation detection equipment in its operations at both air and sea ports. CBP frontline personnel are equipped with Personal Radiation Detectors (PRDs) that can detect the presence of radiological materials. All airports and seaports have sensitive Radiation Isotope Identification Devices (RIIDs) to determine both the presence and type of radiation encountered. Upon radiation detection, CBP exercises specific protocols to resolve any security or safety concerns for inbound travelers, baggage, and cargo.

- CBP resolves over half a million radiation alarms per year in the course of their normal duties.

- In addition to airplanes and ports, CBP utilizes radiation portal monitors at international mail facilities as well. The monitors provide a non-intrusive method to screen mail items for the presence of nuclear and radiological materials. The U.S. Postal Service assists Customs and Border Protection officers with response and mitigation of items when radiation is detected to ensure the safety of our employees and the American public.