
- Works collaboratively with foreign partners to equip seaports with radiation detection equipment.
- Has an international focus but began the process of implementing domestic detection programs.

Findings

- Only 19 ports have agreed to implementation and few of these are considered high threat ports.
- Accurate reporting of alarms is undermined by bribed officials disabling equipment.
- Cost of hiring and training is too expensive for many nations and port operators.

Summary compiled from GAO reports and shipping industry news articles.

DHS SAFE Ports Act (2006)

- Attempts to organize 80 federal agencies and 74 federal programs, including domestic aspects of the Megaports Initiative.
- Uses a computer algorithm to determine the threat levels of different cargos before cargo is ever loaded onto ships.

Findings

- Programs required upgrades for improving security and maintaining ports but many programs did not receive enough funding to fulfill these obligations.
- Local unions and port authorities have blocked implementation or installation of the detection equipment. In a number of cases the large number of false alarms have caused port authorities to simply turn off the equipment to avoid backing up regional rail systems.

This research undertaken as part of Domestic Nuclear Detection Office - National Science Foundation Academic Research Initiative (ARI) project: A Framework for Developing Novel Detection Systems Focused on Interdicting Shielded HEU under the direction of William S. Charlton, Arnold Vedlitz, Gary M. Gauker, and Wolfgang Bangerth.