

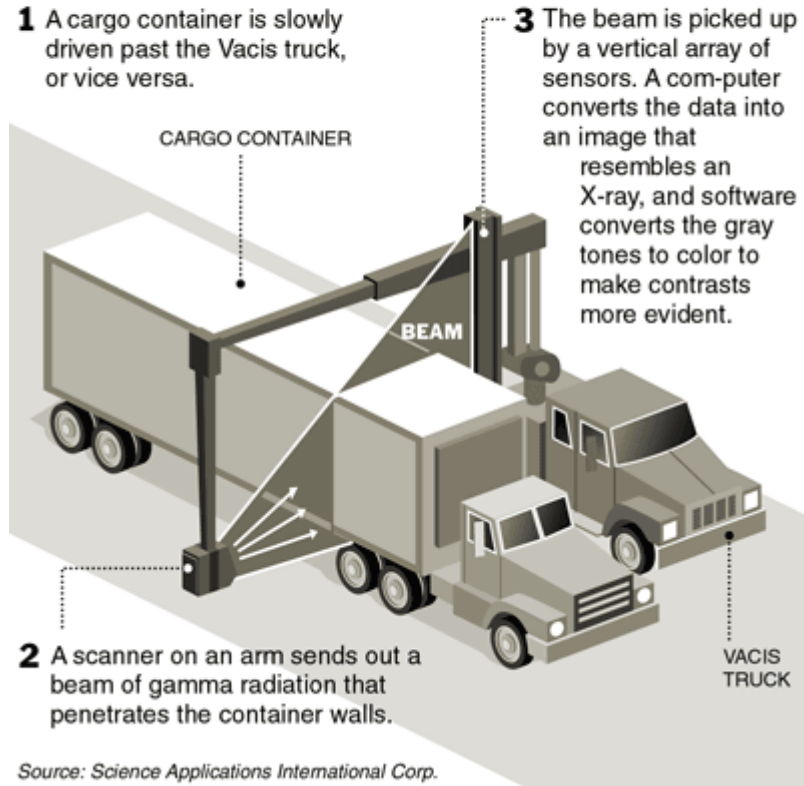


VACIS Exam- An X-ray exam. VACIS is the name of the machine used to x-ray the cargo. The container does not have to be opened, but it does need to be loaded on a chassis and moved through the VACIS equipment (see diagram.)

VACIS stands for "Vehicle Cargo and Inspection Systems". A VACIS exam can occur at any time after arrival in the USA and at any in-transit point. Most often, a VACIS exam is ordered at the port of entry. In some cases, a VACIS exam can be ordered even as the trucker is exiting the port with the container. U S Customs is not required to give prior notice that a VACIS exam is ordered.

A Look Inside

One method used to examine cargo shipments for the makings of terrorist weapons is a scanning device called Vacis, for vehicle and cargo inspection system. The truck-mounted system uses gamma rays, emitted by cesium or cobalt, and hundreds of advanced sensors that can detect anomalies in density within the container.



The following exams MAY involve opening the shipment:

USDA/APHIS – this exam is usually looking for pests. USDA is the agency that requires Solid Wood Packaging Materials Certificates to be issued from China and Hong Kong because of the long horn beetle. This exam can occur at any time after arrival in the USA and at any in-transit point.

FDA – this exam is reviewing food, beverages, medical devices, and other items. Please refer to New England Household's first HOT TOPICS message which explains the Prior Notice System of the FDA.

CET – this exam, performed by a U.S. Custom's Contraband Enforcement Team, is specifically looking for contraband (drugs, etc). This exam can occur at any time after arrival in the USA and at any in-transit point.

Stratified Exam -Exam done at the time the Customs entry (normally for household goods shipments, a 3299 entry) is made. On this exam Customs officials are verifying a particular item and must unload the container to verify count, classification, value, etc. This exam occurs at the final clearance point.

There are fees associated with most of the above exams. The charges may come from U.S. Customs, from port authorities, truckers, and bonded warehouses, etc.

Port Storage, demurrage, container detention, chassis detention, per diem charges, all may accrue when exams are ordered and performed. The charges are the responsibility of the owner/importer of the goods to pay.