

Free and Secure Trade

The Free and Secure Trade (FAST) program is a commercial clearance program designed to ensure safety and security while expediting legitimate trade across the Canada–U.S. border.



About FAST

FAST is a joint initiative between the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection that enhances border and trade chain security while making cross-border commercial shipments simpler and subject to fewer delays.

It is a voluntary program that enables the CBSA to work closely with the private sector to enhance border security, combat organized crime and terrorism, and prevent contraband smuggling. Under the U.S. Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, FAST members who are Canadian or U.S. citizens can use their FAST membership card as an alternative document to the passport when entering the United States by land or water. Permanent residents of Canada or the United States still require a passport and visa (if applicable) to enter the United States.

The CBSA and industry are mutually committed to maintaining the FAST program requirements and they work together to achieve compliance and to find solutions to problems.

How it works

All FAST program participants (drivers, carriers and importers) must undergo a risk assessment. FAST-approved participants are identified as low risk, which enables the

CBSA to focus its resources and security efforts on travelers of high or unknown risk.

When a FAST-approved driver arrives at the border, he or she presents three bar-coded documents to the border services officer (one for each of the participating parties: the driver, the carrier and the importer). The officer can quickly scan the bar codes while all trade data declarations and verifications are done at a later time, away from the border.

Under FAST, eligible goods arriving for approved companies and transported by approved carriers using registered drivers are cleared into Canada or the United States with greater speed and certainty, which reduces costs for FAST participants.

Also, as of November 25, 2009, FAST members can use their FAST membership card as proof of identity and citizenship to enter Canada in all lanes, including regular highway lanes, even in a non-commercial vehicle.

Where it is available

Dedicated FAST lanes have been established at a number of [major border crossings](#).

Benefits

- You gain access to dedicated lanes (where available) for faster and more efficient border clearance;
- In all highway lanes, including the regular, non-dedicated lanes, you can use your FAST membership card as proof of identity and a document that denotes citizenship when entering Canada;
- FAST is a streamlined process that reduces delivery times and landed costs of imports;
- There is no need to transmit transactional data for every transaction;
- Minimal documentation required to clear the border;
- FAST provides increased certainty at the border resulting in fewer delays;
- FAST is a unified, ongoing partnership with the CBSA;
- The program promotes Canadian competitiveness; and
- The program advances voluntary compliance and self-assessment.

FAST-eligible goods

In order to qualify for the streamlined FAST process, goods imported into Canada must meet these conditions:

- They must not be prohibited, controlled or regulated importations as set out in any act of Parliament or provincial legislation;
- They must not be subject to the release requirements of any other government department; and
- They must be shipped directly to Canada from the continental United States or Mexico.