

## **Questions and Answers about Sequestration and Wildlife Trade**

As part of its efforts to implement sequestration, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has decided that no overtime will be authorized for any Service employee. This ban on overtime work applies to Service wildlife inspectors and all other Service staff.

As of Monday, March 11, 2013, the Service eliminated inspection and clearance of wildlife import/export shipments during overtime hours on weekdays, weekends, or Federal holidays. <http://www.fws.gov/le/publicbulletin/pb031113-sequestration-impacts.pdf>

### **Where does this ban apply?**

It applies at all ports of entry staffed by Service wildlife inspectors and at any other location where the Service provides inspection services under a designated port exception permit.

### **Will there be exceptions at ports where large numbers of shipments are routinely inspected on an overtime basis?**

No.

### **Don't Service regulations require the inspection program to provide overtime services?**

No. Our regulations (50 CFR 14.94(g)) clearly state that our ability to perform inspections during overtime hours will depend upon the availability of Service personnel. Requesting overtime is a privilege, not a right. Up to now, we have been able to accommodate most overtime requests. With sequestration, that will no longer be possible.

### **Can Customs clear these shipments for the Service?**

Our provisions allowing Customs to clear live or perishable wildlife shipments for the Service (50 CFR 14.54) apply only to times during normal working hours when a Service officer may not be available.

### **Don't importers and exporters pay extra fees for overtime inspections? If they pay for it, why wouldn't the Service retain this service?**

Sequestration affects all agency monies, including collections. Inspection fees (including those for overtime work) have never covered all costs of the inspection program. A portion of all fees paid to the Service will now be "sequestered" and thus unavailable to the agency, thus reducing funds available for the inspection program.