



## 6 Steps to Become NEEC Certified

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Nuevo Esquema de Empresas Certificadas, or NEEC, is the new supply chain security program in Mexico. Much like its predecessor, Empresa Certificada, NEEC certification allows companies to move goods in and out of Mexico faster and with less paperwork. However, NEEC is more security focused and has been built based on both the SAFE Framework from the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the US Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT). Applying for NEEC certification is more than just filling out the necessary paperwork. Below are some key steps that companies should consider in order to achieve NEEC certification.

- 1. Develop a Mission, Vision and Specific Objectives Regarding Supply Chain Security.** The first step in implementing any new program is to understand the mission, vision and specific objectives that a company wants to achieve. This is no different for the NEEC certification. A company that wishes to implement and maintain a participation in a trusted trader program (NEEC, C-TPAT, AEO, etc.), must have clear goals set in order to make smart investments (time and money) in areas of security.
- 2. Perform a Risk Assessment of Your Supply Chain.** In order to detect vulnerabilities within the supply chain, companies should utilize and follow the risk assessment principles provided in the International Standard ISO 31000, and more specifically ISO 31010. These principles should be implemented pursuant to your business model and be in place well before the NEEC certification process is started.
- 3. Utilize a Centralized Database to Manage, Organize and Analyze Risk Assessments.** Companies that automate the solicitation of suppliers within the supply as well as organize the results are able to manage NEEC certification and maintenance easier and without additional headcount. By placing all information in a centralized, web-based database, companies can share information across company business units as well as throughout the supply chain.
- 4. Create a Company Security Manual.** It is important to have all supply chain security procedures documented and kept in a central place that is accessible by the entire company. This allows all departments within the company to know what security procedures exist and where to find answers to questions about them. Also, creating a security manual shows that the company is committed to ensuring that the supply chain is secure now and in the future.
- 5. Perform Regular Audits of your Supply Chain Security Controls.** Through the regular auditing of security controls, companies can measure the effectiveness of current controls as well as see where gaps exist. These security audits should be performed on a regular basis and have a dedicated person to follow through from the audit findings to implementing any necessary corrective actions. Companies looking to achieve and maintain NEEC certification will need to do these types of audits regularly to show that security controls are in place and working.
- 6. Designate a Specific Person to Manage the NEEC Certification Process and Maintenance.** Companies need to have one person in charge of the certification process for NEEC as well as for implementing, managing, and auditing the supply chain security program going forward. With one person in charge, companies are less likely to have something be overlooked.