

US/Canada Transportation Border Working Group

SUBJECT: Briefing, Feb. 19, 2002 Montreal, Canada

ISSUE: Update of U.S./Canada Memorandum of Cooperation initiatives and US/Canada Border Working Group

BACKGROUND:

MOC October 2000

The Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) signed in October 2000 by David Collenette, Minister of Transport and Rodney Slater, then U.S. Secretary of Transportation provided the guiding principles for a Canada-U.S. bi-national planning working group. Under the MOC, Transport Canada and the U.S. Department of Transportation committed to increasing the degree of communication and coordination on transportation issues along the Canada-U.S. border.

MOC May 2001

The federal transportation agencies of the U.S. and Canada met to discuss how the establishment of a joint "border working group" (BWG) could be essential to the enhancement of bi-national planning and coordination on infrastructure and transportation issues along the Canada-U.S. border. While there are a number of existing regional, bi-national planning groups, there is currently no bi-national transportation planning working group encompassing all of the jurisdictions along the Canada-U.S. border.

It was determined that, the enhanced information/ data exchange, communication and dialogue resulting from the establishment of a Canada-U.S. bi-national planning working group could aid in decisions regarding how U.S. and Canadian federal programs such as TEA-21 and its successor legislation and Transport Canada's Border Crossing Transportation Initiative under the Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program (SHIP) could best complement state, provincial and territorial initiatives. At a more general level, a bi-national working group would allow problems at the Canada-U.S. border to be addressed in a more coordinated and effective manner.

MOC August 2001

A U.S.-Canada joint steering committee met to discuss the particulars of formally establishing a joint border-working group (BWG). The BWG will complement existing regional, bi-national initiatives and state/provincial responsibilities. .

First Meeting US/Canada Transportation Border Working Group (TBWG) Jan. 24-25, 2002

The first meeting of the U.S-Canada Transportation Border Working Group took place on January 24th & 25th, 2002 in Windsor, Ontario. The meeting established the purpose, goals and optional structures of a bi-national working group. Participants include: the Federal Highway administration, Transport Canada, U.S. Northern Border States, Southern Border provinces and the Yukon Territory, federal inspection border agencies, and GSA. Approximately 70 people attended. The group is developing an action plan to conduct border wide studies and has establish a working group for the Detroit area. The next meeting of the group is to be hosted by the U.S. in May in Buffalo New York.

Issues Identified:

- Evaluation of Border Infrastructure and future needs
- Border ITS Infrastructure Architecture
- Funding for Border Improvements
- Coordination of Transportation Systems for the Operation of Border Ports of Entry
- Short Term - Best Practices for secure, safe and efficient movement of traffic
- Impact of the implementation of section 110 by 2004, U.S. Exit control on cross border traffic
- Joint Evaluation of critical border crossings
- Enhanced communication and coordination of the Bi-national Transportation Planning Process
- Joint pilot projects for new technologies.