

NOTES: BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
HYATT REGENCY HOTEL, DEARBORN, MICHIGAN
JUNE 2, 2005

BACKGROUND:

- At the October 2004 TBWG plenary meeting in Calgary, the Border Needs Compendium Subcommittee met to take stock of progress on the Compendium project and to discuss next steps. TBWG members agreed at that meeting that the Compendium project was worth pursuing further. Subcommittee members agreed that work on the project should continue, and that the Compendium should be improved and updated with 2005 information.
- The Subcommittee identified the following issues that need to be addressed in the course of updating the Compendium throughout 2005:
 - The need for a more detailed set of information for the individual border crossings
 - A need to focus on the most important commercial crossings, likely the top 30.
 - A need to develop a strategy/method for proceeding with the update
 - A need to identify who will house the Compendium, and leads for the updating process
 - A need to address the issue of information sharing among jurisdictions
 - A need to more closely involve customs agencies in the project
- Between February and May 2005, a series of Compendium Subcommittee conference calls took place. The first priority item was to confirm the Subcommittee's membership. In addition to a few state and provincial DOTs, the Subcommittee confirmed members from the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and US Customs and Border Protection (CBP). As well, it was agreed that Transport Canada (TC) would take the lead in organizing the 2005 update.
- TC took the lead in revising the Border Crossing Report and Project Report templates from the 2003 Compendium and distributed them to Subcommittee members for review. As well, CBSA, CBP and TC undertook an effort to identify the border crossing trade and traffic information that is readily available to all agencies, to propose a list of top 30 commercial border crossings, and to develop a fields dictionary for the Compendium templates. Finally, TC, CBSA and CBP agreed to populate the revised Border Crossing Report templates. TC also committed to tabling a proposed strategy document for the consideration of Subcommittee members in Dearborn.

NOTES FROM THE DEARBORN MEETING:

- The Border Infrastructure Compendium Subcommittee meeting in Dearborn had the following agenda:

- Finalize the revised Border Crossing Report and Project Report templates
 - Finalize the field template dictionary
 - Finalize the list of top 30 commercial crossings
 - Finalize a strategy – complete with timelines – for proceeding with the 2005 update
 - Confirm a list of contacts with assigned responsibilities for the update effort
- TC took careful note of comments that were made with regard to improving the Compendium templates and the Fields Dictionary. It was agreed that the term Customs Facility needed to be defined, and that border and corridor projects should be narrowed in scope to within 100 km of the border.
 - The issue of adding a vulnerability assessment checkbox to the Border Crossing Report template was raised and was deferred for later discussion.
 - The issue regarding the submission of aerial photos was also raised. While the Subcommittee recognized the added benefits of including aerial photos, a few individuals pointed out the technical difficulties of receiving photos from so many different jurisdictions. It was agreed that the photos issue would remain outstanding until such time that the Subcommittee can convene a conference call over the summer to discuss the user-friendly aspects of the Compendium interface.
 - CBSA and CBP proposed a list of the top 33 commercial crossings based on traffic volume. The list was accepted by the Subcommittee, and it was agreed that the 33 crossings would form the focus of the first phase of the 2005 update exercise. Provided that the first phase proceeds according to schedule, the Subcommittee could consider – by the next TBWG – the possibility of expanding the 2005 update exercise to include more crossings.
 - TC proposed the following 6-month strategy for updating the Border Needs Compendium, while recognizing that there needs to be some flexibility in the schedule:

DATE	DELIVERABLE	LEAD AGENCY
June 2, 2005	Compendium Subcommittee meeting in Dearborn to finalize agenda items identified above	All
June 6-20, 2005	Finalize the Compendium templates; populate Border Crossing Reports for top 30 commercial crossings with complete 2005 trade, traffic, and other data	TC, CBSA, CBP
	Distribute revised Border Crossing Report	

June 21, 2005	template, Project Report template, and field dictionary to state and provincial DOTs	TC
July 1, 2005	Convene Subcommittee conference call to solicit comments with regard to improving the Compendium interface	TC
July 2005	Explore the possibility of hiring a consultant to revise the Compendium	TC
August 1, 2005	Deadline for submitting populated templates	State and Provincial DOTs
August 1-14, 2005	Consolidate templates into one database	TC
August 30, 2005	Subcommittee decision regarding how to proceed with improving the Compendium interface (including a decision on hiring a consultant and funding)	All
October 1, 2005	Review updated, improved Compendium in advance of fall TBWG plenary	All
End of October, 2005	Subcommittee to meet face-to-face at TBWG plenary in Canada to finalize changes and modifications to the 2005 Compendium	All
November 21, 2005	Distribution of final, updated 2005 Compendium to both customs agencies and all state and provincial DOTs	TC

- The goal of the strategy is to update the Compendium with 2004 information primarily for the top 33 commercial crossings by the end of summer 2005, and to pursue the possibility of establishing an on-line Compendium – housed on an independent TBWG website – by the next TBWG plenary in Toronto in November 2005. Provided that this goal is met according to schedule, the possibility of expanding the update to include more crossings will be considered at the next TBWG plenary meeting.

NEXT STEPS:

- It was agreed that a “core group” of Compendium Subcommittee members would immediately convene a conference call following the Dearborn meeting to finalize the Border Crossing Report template and to populate it with 2004 traffic volume, commodity, and other descriptive information. Core group members would include TC, CBSA, CBP and GSA.
- It was agreed that traffic volume information would be assembled from both Canadian and US sources, and would be comprised of Calendar Year 2004 data.
- TC agreed to take the lead to organize the core group’s efforts and to distribute the finalized and populated templates to state and provincial partners for their input near the end of June.
- TC agreed to follow-up with provincial partners and asked for a US volunteer to help contact and follow-up with state partners. New York State Department of Transportation agreed to do so, as did the Federal Highway Administration.
- The Subcommittee agreed that the next conference call would be convened just prior to sending out the revised templates to states and provinces for the 2005 update. Thus, the next call will proceed around the planned June 21, 2005, distribution date.