

# **Teleconference Summary**

## **TBWG Policy Research Subcommittee**

### **May 15, 2006 2:00 PM EST**

#### In on the call:

Wayne Sauer, **Canada Border Services Agency**; Isabelle Trepanier, Michael Makowsky, Saskatchewan Highways and Transportation; **Transport Canada**; Nena Morgan, Steve Tzikas **U.S Customs and Border Protection**, Pedro Erviti, **U.S. Department of State**; Alicia Nolan, Valencia Williams, **U.S. Federal Highway Administration**; David Davidson, **Western Washington University, Border Policy Research Institute**; Hugh Conroy, **Whatcom Council of Governments**.

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Hugh Conroy started the discussion with roll-call and a review of the agenda.

Roll call (listed above)

- 1) Roll call
- 2) Review of agenda
  - a) Additions?
- 3) Any brief, policy-related news items from participants.
- 4) Remaining from our last call:
  - a) Follow up on the FMCSA cross-border enforcement information project.
  - b) The suggestion that this group solicit information from state-province pairs on existing binational arrangements for project and program delivery, etc.
  - c) Status of U.S. and Canadian intermodal-policy and strategy statements inasmuch as more-developed national positions could provide the basis for a TBWG-based discussion on coordination of U.S. & Canadian support for optimization of cross-border freight-movement systems.
    - i) US/Canada/Mexico standards for multi-modal manifest, a common ANSI standard, that works with US ACE systems.
    - ii) Recent, tri-national short-sea-shipping conference and declaration. Notable mention of border-congestion as a motivator.
  - d) Policy sub-committee products on the TBWG website: running inventory of relevant research initiatives, directory?, meeting summaries?, others?
- 5) Emerging issues, things we come across, etc.
  - a) Currently in the U.S. House of Representatives, a bill: the “Secure Traveler Improvement Act of 2006.”
  - b) The Canada-United States-Mexico declaration on short sea shipping signed in Vancouver the week before last: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/POL/EN/acf/shortseaS/namc2006/declaration.htm>
  - c) Recent report of the U.S.-Canada Border Planning Group – including a library of U.S.-Canada agreements.
- 6) The Policy Subcommittee and the June TBWG meeting – draft outline of presentation and break-out session attached.
- 7) Next steps, next meeting, adjourn.

#### **Discussion of agenda**

Isabelle noted that some of the subject matter listed in the draft outline for June plenary meeting breakout session was very similar to what the Compendium subcommittee has been discussing.

## **Brief policy updates**

Isabelle reported that eastern states and provinces have met and are proposing a delay to the U.S. WHITI. The meeting was under an association of eastern premiers and governors.

Hugh updated the group on his participation in the recent trilateral short sea shipping conference in Vancouver, BC where Canada, Mexico, and the United States signed a declaration furthering work on coast-wise marine transportation, building on the existing 2003 MoU between the three countries.

## **Follow-up items from last conference call (April 3)**

### **FMCSA cross-border enforcement project**

Alicia Nolan will see if Milt Schmidt can give an overview of this project at the TBWG plenary in Bellingham.

### **Soliciting additional regulatory information from state-province pairs.**

Following up on suggestions that our subcommittee make such a solicitation, Hugh suggested that the TBWG website might be a good place to start an organized file of relevant material. Isabelle wasn't sure that the TBWG website should be the host of the material but perhaps links to this kind of content would be a better way to go.

### **Status of Intermodal policy and coordination between the U.S. and Canada**

Earlier discussion on the call, following mention of the shortsea shipping conference, gave rise to some updates that fall under this heading.

Isabelle Trepanier mentioned that the Council of the Federation (of provinces) has published a document called Looking to the Future that covers some intermodal policy goals.

[http://www.councilofthefederation.ca/pdfs/NTS\\_Booklet.pdf](http://www.councilofthefederation.ca/pdfs/NTS_Booklet.pdf)

Isabelle mentioned the new Canadian federal budget for the SHIP and BIF programs and questioned what this might support in the way of intermodal programs.

Alicia Nolan noted that, internally, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation wants to initiate a dialogue about congestion and this is inclusive of congestion at the border. Alicia also reported that white papers are being drafted within FHWA regarding freight and freight-movement objectives with a look towards program funding re-authorization in 2009.

### **Multi-modal manifest**

Hugh reviewed a presentation, given by CBP and CBSA representatives in Ottawa at a recent Can-Am Border Trade Alliance meeting about progress on standardizing the message-sets used for manifest data between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. This work ties into the U.S. CBP Automated Commercial Environment platform and is a standard developed in conjunction with the World Customs Organization. This development could have further relevance to the BIFA committee. But Hugh's primary interest was in the way that this new information-flow standard could help rationalize internationally-coordinated policy responses in support of intermodal connectivity and efficiency.

### **Shortsea Shipping Conference – declaration**

As noted above, a declaration on shortsea shipping was signed in April between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Cross-border congestion relief was called out as a primary motivator of the declaration and future support for pilot projects addressing cross-border congestion is suggested. <http://www.tc.gc.ca/POL/EN/acf/shortseaS/namc2006/declaration.htm>

### **TBWG Web site for the policy subcommittee**

The group had a brief discussion of future ways to use the website. It was agreed to post the subcommittee's meeting summaries. Other ideas included a "wiki" format for compiling regulatory information by specific topic (bridges, plazas, worker-access, etc.)

### **Other emerging issues**

Hugh passed along information on a couple of items.

A bill was recently introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives under the title, "Secure Traveler Improvement Act of 2006." The bill (H.R.5286) would support some changes to programs like FAST and NEXUS. The text of the bill (and updated status) can be found at: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

Hugh passed along information he recently received about a report issued by the Border Planning Group, an independent U.S.-Canada organization formed by international agreement to look at updating the U.S. and Canada's defense and security strategies. The group works alongside NORAD. Of particular interest is the groups development of a library of 850 existing U.S.-Canada agreements (mostly defense and security oriented but not, reportedly, limited to that).

Information and a link to the full report can be found here.

[http://canada.usembassy.gov/content/can\\_usa/bpg\\_finalreport\\_040606.pdf](http://canada.usembassy.gov/content/can_usa/bpg_finalreport_040606.pdf)

Hugh will keep trying to find a functional link to the library of agreements. Any help in this regard is appreciated.

### **Plenary meeting in June**

Updates to outlined agendas to the policy subcommittee's activities at the June meeting have been made. The policy group was satisfied with the outlines as presented.

Meeting adjourned.