



EBTC Members are the Transportation Agencies of the U.S. States of Michigan, New York, Vermont and Maine and the Canadian Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec

(Honorary members are the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council and the Regional Municipality of Niagara)

ISSUE: Beyond the Border: A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness

Background:

On February 4, 2011, the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States issued *Beyond the Border: A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness*. The Declaration established a new long-term partnership built upon a perimeter approach to security and economic competitiveness. This means working together, not just at the border but “beyond the border,” to enhance our security and accelerate the legitimate flow of people, goods, and services.

Core principles of the Declaration included:

- Implementation of effective risk management
- Engagement with all levels of government, communities, and other stakeholders
- Mobility promotion between the two countries through an integrated entry-exit program
- Investment focused at the busiest land border ports of entry
- Expansion of trusted traveler and trader programs
- Development of joint programs and facilities

In addition to the *Beyond the Border* initiative, the two leaders also created a Canada-United States Regulatory Cooperation Council (RCC). The RCC aims to better align regulatory approaches to protect health, safety, and the environment while supporting growth, investment, innovation and market openness.

Current Situation:

President Obama and Prime Minister Harper jointly released the *Beyond the Border and RCC action plans* in December 2011. The two plans provide the blueprint for the implementation of the Canada-U.S. *Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness* initiative.

Key elements of the *Beyond the Border Action Plan* impact EBTC member transportation agencies in critical areas such as: border infrastructure planning, environmental clearance, project and program development, construction, congestion mitigation, operations and funding. The Action Plan not only impacts border crossings themselves, but also roads and highways leading to the border, local border communities, economic development opportunities in border states and provinces, and transportation system users, including travellers, carriers, and traders.

Since the inception of the *Beyond the Border Action Plan*, EBTC has been pleased with the successful implementation of some of the outlined initiatives and pilot programs that are keys to providing significant trade and travel benefits to our member states and provinces. Over the past three years this progress has included:

- Facilitation of cross-border business by taking steps to ensure that business travelers benefit from more efficient and predictable border clearance processes
- Increased membership in the NEXUS trusted traveler program to more than one million
- Implementation of the NEXUS eGate pilot project at the Peace Bridge in Fort Erie, Ontario / Buffalo, New York, allowing 24 hour access to the NEXUS lanes
- Increased and harmonized the threshold value for low-value commercial shipments, reducing transaction costs for industry by millions of dollars each year
- Successful implementation of phase I of the rail pre-inspection pilot for inbound marine cargo at the Port of Prince Rupert (British Columbia) destined to the U.S. by rail
- Successful implementation of phase I of the truck cargo pre-inspection pilot at Pacific Highway in Surrey, British Columbia / Blaine, Washington, in which U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers pre-inspected approximately 3,500 U.S.-bound commercial trucks
- Successful implementation of phase II of the truck cargo pre-inspection pilot at the Peace Bridge in Fort Erie, Ontario / Buffalo, New York to test the feasibility of reducing wait times and border congestion by conducting U.S. primary inspection of U.S.-bound commercial trucks in Canada
- The announcement of an *Agreement on Land, Rail, Marine and Air Transportation Preclearance between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States* in March 2015 (subject to ratification by Canada's Parliament and the U.S. Congress before any aspects can be implemented)
- Successful testing of the initial phases of the entry/exit pilot initiative to develop a system to allow the exit from one country to serve as the record of entry to the other country.

While EBTC applauds the successful implementation of a number of pilot projects, there are a number of key areas and initiatives from the *Beyond the Border Action Plan* where there has been limited progress and the initial deadlines were not met as we entered into the fourth year of the accord. Likewise, there are other concepts and projects identified in the Action Plan, such as the identification of funding for U.S. infrastructure projects included in the Border Infrastructure Investment Plan that have still not been completed.

The delays that are still occurring at the busiest border crossings result in lost opportunities to the economies of both countries in the form of billions of dollars in additional costs and fewer jobs. EBTC is preparing an updated report - *The Importance of Efficient Canada/U.S. Border Crossings and Recommendations* - that will identify a list of low-cost actions that could significantly improve trade and travel flows while other initiatives are being implemented. EBTC will also continue to advocate for the implementation of all of the initiatives from the *Beyond the Border Action Plan*, including:

- Implementation of a border wait-time measurement system at the high priority United States–Canada border crossings outside of the pilot sites in the Niagara Region and the Pacific Highway corridor
- Installation of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology at the appropriate Canadian crossings
- Establishment of a “single window” system to significantly reduce the number of forms required by shippers and carriers
- Ratification of the pre-clearance agreement for land, rail, marine and air and expansion of pre-clearance to major ports of entry on the northern border, including continuation of the progress initiated under pre-clearance pilot projects
- Adequate levels of federal government funding on both sides of the border to address infrastructure needs in the EBTC region
- Development of joint Canada/U.S border facilities where feasible.

EBTC ACTION:

EBTC and its member organizations strongly support the implementation of these principles and initiatives to improve the movement of people and goods between the United States and Canada. EBTC and its members seek to partner with U.S. and Canadian federal transportation and inspection agencies to ensure the successful implementation of the action plans by:

- Participating in the planning and implementation of these initiatives at appropriate times, such as during the planning and testing of border wait time measurement systems
- Actively participating in public forums, meetings, and other working sessions, such as peer exchanges on issues ranging from border wait times to freight planning
- Participating in the development and update of the five-year border infrastructure investment plan

- Working with the Canada-U.S. Transportation Border Working Group (TBWG), including the Cross-Border Rail Discussion Group and other appropriate bi-national organizations to assist the U.S. and Canadian governments as they implement the action plans.