



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

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

## **2010 Annual Report**

### **Introduction**

This report highlights the activities of the Eastern Border Transportation Coalition (EBTC) and its member provinces and states in working to improve the safe and efficient movement of people and goods between Canada and the United States.

2010 was a transition year for EBTC. Walter Steeves, EBTC's respected and long-time Executive Director retired in July. EBTC's U.S. Co-chair and New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) representative John Reed also retired leaving NYSDOT and EBTC in September. During the course of their careers with EBTC and their respective transportation agencies, both made significant contributions towards improving the movement of people and goods between Canada and the United States. Both will be missed by EBTC and its supporters.

The EBTC Board hired Z. Kris Wisniewski to replace Walter, assuming the Executive Director/Managing Consultant position on August 1. Kris is no stranger to Canada/U.S. border issues and to the EBTC, having served for many years as the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) border policy specialist and project manager for the Blue Water Bridge Plaza expansion project. Kris represented MDOT on the EBTC Board and during his time on the board served as its U.S. Co-chair.

Sara Moore, MDOT border policy specialist, was elected to complete John's term as U.S. Co-chair and Lynn Weiskopf replaced John as NYSDOT's board representative. Both members have extensive experience and knowledge of U.S./Canada border policies, programs, and initiatives, ensuring that EBTC will continue to play a vital role in representing the interests and needs of member provincial and state transportation agencies.

While the EBTC was going through this transition process, its members and staff actively worked to achieve the organization's mission and implement its strategic plan.

## **EBTC's Mission Statement**

EBTC defines its purpose in the following mission statement.

“The Eastern Border Transportation Coalition, through its member activities, will assist in the development of a seamless, multi-modal transportation network which is secure, safe, efficient and environmentally sustainable. EBTC will provide a proactive forum within which each state, provincial and metropolitan transportation and border service agencies, and likeminded public and private organizations, can work together to overcome barriers and impediments to our shared vision.”

## **EBTC Strategic Plan**

EBTC has developed a strategic plan to implement its mission statement. The five key elements of that plan are:

1. Provide organizational, communications and administrative support to EBTC members.
2. Develop a common understanding of cross-border issues among Coalition members and as they relate to other transportation organizations.
3. Influence the development and implications of federal and international policies that support the Coalition's missions and goals.
4. Work closely with U.S. and Canadian transportation and border agencies to assure the secure, safe, and efficient flow of people and goods across our borders.
5. Support and participate in the development of US/Canada cross-border planning and coordination initiatives.

## **2010 Accomplishments**

During 2010, the EBTC Board and staff worked closely together to carry out a broad range of activities aligned with the strategic plan. These included:

1. Maintaining an awareness of current border issues and provide ongoing updates to members through:
  - a. Regular board conference calls;
  - b. Frequent information bulletins on relevant border-related issues;
  - c. Reports on staff and board involvement in border-related conferences, workshops, and meetings sponsored by federal and private sector organizations;
  - d. Expanded use of the EBTC website to share information with EBTC partners and interested groups ([www.ebtc.info](http://www.ebtc.info));
  - e. Participation in border-related conferences and workshops;
  - f. Hosting the annual workshop focusing on current border issues impacting member provinces and states.

2. An important function of the EBTC board and staff was to maintain and broaden the organization's relations with U.S. and Canadian government and agency officials, with border operators, and with other organizations committed to improving border flows.
  - a. To ensure that member province and state issues and concerns were considered at the federal level, EBTC board and staff participated in the work and activities of the Transportation Border Working Group (TBWG). EBTC regards the TBWG as vital bi-national forum for identifying and addressing land border policies, programs, and issues that affect the safe, secure, efficient and environmentally responsible movement of people across U.S./Canada border. EBTC's involvement in the TBWG included:
    - i. Participation on the TBWG Steering Committee;
    - ii. Participation in TBWG subcommittees dealing with infrastructure, data, technology, and policy;
    - iii. Participation in the TBWG April and October Plenaries in Boston and Quebec.
3. EBTC seeks to work closely with other public and private sector organizations committed to improving the movement of people and goods across the borders.
  - a. In 2010, EBTC continued its cooperation with the Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance (CAN/AM BTA). EBTC Board members and the Executive Director actively participated in CAN/AM BTA's May Ottawa and September Washington, D.C. conferences.
  - b. The Executive Director participated in the annual October Trade Corridor, Border Gateway, and Bi-National Regional Economies Conference in Sarnia, Ontario, sponsored by the CAN/AM BTA.
  - c. EBTC believes that border programs, initiatives, issues, and policies on the southern border with Mexico have a profound effect on the U.S./Canadian border. EBTC maintains a relationship with the Border Trade Alliance, a public/private sector organization that focuses on improving the safe and efficient movement of people and goods on the U.S./Mexico border.
4. Each year EBTC hosts an annual workshop that focuses on key issues affecting the northern border. The workshop provides an opportunity for EBTC members to interact with key public and private sector officials involved in cross border commerce, security, and transportation. This year's annual meeting was held in Montreal, Quebec on September 29. The workshop had a distinct multi-modal focus that included cross border trucking, freight rail, and short-sea shipping concerns.

Approximately forty participants representing state, provincial, federal, and private sector organizations participated in the workshop. Representatives from Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railroads provided their perspectives

on the challenges facing the safe and efficient movement of goods across the Canada-U.S. border.

Participants also learned about bi-national issues impacting short-sea shipping on the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway, including a report on goods moving through the Port of Montreal.

Representatives from CBSA, CBP, and GSA provided updates on projects and program initiatives (e.g. implementation of WHTI) being implemented at land crossings in the EBTC region.

The primary concern expressed by the audience was the continuing “thickening of the borders.” Programs created to expedite the processing of trusted travelers appear to be slowing border crossing times. All of these presentations have been made available on the EBTC website.

5. EBTC’s annual meeting was held on the day following the workshop where consideration of the annual budget, election of officers and preliminary work on the 2011 workplan were undertaken. Sara Moore, Michigan DOT and Dave Henry, Quebec Ministry of Transportation, were elected as the EBTC co-chairs for 2011. Maurice Rasheed, NYSDOT, and Susi Derrah, New Brunswick DOT were elected to the Treasurer and Secretary positions, respectively on the Executive Committee.

The Board of Directors decided that EBTC would focus its efforts in 2011 on six priority issues. These are:

1. Federal Border Policy
2. Federal Funding of Transportation Border Infrastructure
3. Cross Border Rail Passenger Service
4. Information Needs in Support of Transportation Planning
5. Green Initiatives at U.S.-Canada Border Crossings
6. Master Planning at Land Border Crossings

For more information regarding these issues and EBTC’s proposed strategies to address them visit [www.ebtc.info](http://www.ebtc.info).

## **2010 EBTC Provinces and States – Highlights of Cross Border and Trade Initiatives**

To improve the movement of people and goods safely, efficiently, securely, and in an environmentally sustainable manner, EBTC state and provincial departments of transportation made significant investments in border-related infrastructure improvements, research, project planning and design, technology, safety, and public education. These actions required close cooperation between EBTC members, federal authorities, local and regional governments, bridge operators, and private companies. In 2010, EBTC members implemented programs, projects, and policies that are supporting increased trade between Canada and the U.S. This report highlights a few of these initiatives and urges readers to visit the respective websites for more information.

### **Nova Scotia**

Canada's land borders with the United States are a fundamental component of our country's trade corridors. While border safety and security are always the top priority, efficient border crossings are essential to ensuring the smooth flow of trade between Canada and the United States, particularly as a significant amount of cargo landed in Canada is ultimately destined for the US.

Efficient trade flows at the border are important to the Province of Nova Scotia, as work continues to advance our gateway for import and export trade, for both the Atlantic region and Canada. The Nova Scotia Gateway Secretariat supports the Government of Canada's efforts towards improved dialogue with our American counterparts, as well as processes and programs that support and encourage trade flows across the borders.

### **New Brunswick and Maine**

In 2010, Maine DOT and NBDOT signed an agreement to design and construct a new international bridge at Clair (N.B.)/Fort Kent (Maine). At this point, the environmental and design work on both sides is nearing completion. Provided all funding and approvals are in place, the target tender date for initiating construction is April 2011. The success of this project depends on not only cooperation between New Brunswick and Maine, but also financial participation by the U.S. and Canadian border agencies.

The new Calais (ME)/St. Stephen (N.B.) border crossing had a successful first year of operation as the first new stand-alone border crossing to be constructed on the U.S./Canadian border in recent memory.

### **Quebec**

The Ministère des Transports du Québec completed two infrastructure projects in 2010 approaching major port of entries with Vermont and Maine:

**Highway 55, Approaching the Stanstead, Qc./Derby Line, Vt. Crossing:** Variable message signs to manage traffic in real time ahead of the border were installed and are being calibrated. This Intelligent Transportation Strategy (ITS) compliments the construction of a two kilometer-long third southbound lane that is dedicated to commercial vehicles.

**Route 173, Approaching the Armstrong, Qc./Jackman, Me. Crossing:** Signage and landscaping were added to a one-kilometer commercial lane, completed in 2009.

The Ministère collaborated with the Vermont Transportation Agency to plan the restoration of the Sutton/East Richford Bridge commonly owned at the border. Both agencies evaluated the level of degradation of the bridge and began to work on an agreement to share the costs and management responsibilities of the project.

The Freight Motor Carrier Division of the Ministère des Transports, via "*Le Forum sur le camionnage*", (a public-private sector consultation mechanism focusing on commercial vehicles operations), held two information sessions in February 2010 for the benefit of carriers crossing the border. The intent of those sessions was to allow both the Canadian and American border agencies to present updates on border and security requirements and to allow carriers to ask their questions.

The Ministère des Transports du Québec worked with other Québec provincial ministries and agencies to assess the impacts of the announcement, in July 2010, of the closure of two port of entries and reduction of operating hours at three others in Québec scheduled for April 2011.

The completion of those infrastructure projects and continuous support to the trucking industry for compliance to border and security requirements was part of the first year of the 2009-2014 Road Freight Transportation Policy action plan.

The Ministère collaborated with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation for the validation and enhancement of the 2006-2007 National Roadside Survey data base.

## **Vermont**

**Cross Border Commodity Flow Analysis:** As part of Vermont's Statewide Freight Plan, VTrans conducted an analysis of cross border commodity flows. The cross border component is intended to supplement domestic commodity databases in order to gain a good understanding of U.S.-Canada flows through Vermont. This analysis will help us understand how current and future freight flows will affect Vermont's roadway and rail infrastructure.

**Intercity Passenger Rail to Montreal:** VTrans is coordinating with NYSDOT and Quebec on a host of operational cross-border passenger rail issues. VTrans is interested in return passenger rail service to Montreal via the Vermonter Amtrak service, which currently ends in St. Albans, VT. Issues include the design of a customs facility in Montreal, track infrastructure, and needed operator/service agreements.

## New York

**Lewiston-Queenston Bridge Travelers Early Warning System:** The joint Niagara Falls Bridge Commission/NYS DOT project to implement an advanced warning system to increase mobility and safety in the L/Q Bridge corridor was completed in 2010. The project has five primary attributes:

1. Monitoring of real time conditions and alerting travelers of changing conditions
2. Identifying alternative routes and real time updates on border crossing delays in the region
3. Monitoring and recording real time travel demand on crossing approaches to enable border agencies to determine appropriate staffing levels
4. Sharing of information with the regional transportation technology network
5. Integrating with the similar early warning system being installed on Canadian Highway 405

**U.S. Route 219/Continental One:** The first segment of the overall 28 mile project to upgrade the U.S. Route 219/ Continental One corridor to a 4-lane expressway was completed and opened to traffic. The newly completed segment extends 3.5 miles from the end of the existing freeway section in southern Erie County to a new interchange in northern Cattaraugus County and was opened to traffic in November. Ultimately, the Continental One corridor would extend as a limited access highway approximately 1,500 miles through eight states to connect southeast Ontario with Miami, Florida

**Rouses Point POE:** The upgrade project for the small border crossing POE linking Rouses Point, NY and Lacolle, Quebec was completed. The upgrade included minor road realignment and channelization to address and deter port running.

**Ogdensburg International Bridge:** A \$5 million project that included paving, pavement markings, improved signage, updating channelization devices and barriers, while relocating the toll booths and installing a WIM was completed in December.

A \$21 million project to repaint and redeck the major span linking Ogdensburg, NY and Prescott, Ontario was initiated in May 2010 and will continue into the 2011 construction season.

**Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition (NITTEC):** NITTEC continued to make progress in regional collaboration and management of the key transportation facilities on both sides of the border for the bi-national region. NITTEC delivered services through the regional Traffic Operations Center, the development of an Integrated Corridor Management plan, dissemination of border crossing wait times and other traveler information and incident management collaboration. Other services and policies were advanced through its committees, including Strategic Planning, Border Crossing & Policy, Construction Coordination and Technology & Systems. NITTEC is collaboration between state and regional transportation agencies, binational bridge operators, and both border enforcement agencies.

**Movement of Adirondack Train Border Inspection to Central Station:** Amtrak and New York State DOT are in discussion with CBSA, USDOT, Quebec Officials including MTQ, Vermont AOT and others to develop a project that will construct facilities in Central Station, Montreal that will meet CBSA rail border crossing inspection requirements and provide better connecting service to VIA rail. Ultimately, the goal is for this facility to serve not only the Adirondack Service through New York, but re-instituted services to Vermont, and for the project to provide the facilities needed for pre-clearance of rail passengers.

## **Ontario**

**Windsor Border:** Ontario is the responsible authority for the development and delivery of the access road. The Windsor-Essex Parkway will be delivered through Ontario's Alternative Financing and Procurement model, contingent on a positive value for money analysis. Ontario has committed to fund Ontario's share of The Windsor-Essex Parkway. Ontario's investment is approximately \$246 million to date.

Significant progress is being made on various activities prior to the 2011 full construction start of the Parkway. Partnering with Infrastructure Ontario, MTO is working through a competitive procurement process to engage a private sector partner to design, build, finance and maintain the Windsor-Essex Parkway.

Since it was announced in 2004, the \$300 million *Let's Get Windsor-Essex Moving* strategy continues to move forward. To date we have invested more than \$200 million with Transport Canada to improve efficiency and reduce congestion in Windsor-Essex leading to the four border crossings.

**Sarnia-Point Edward:** The \$281-million investment under the Border Infrastructure Fund announced May 6, 2004, included \$115 million for the Blue Water Bridge crossing in Sarnia-Point Edward, with a commitment of \$56.5 million from Ontario and \$57.5 million from Canada.

The improvement projects included in the \$115-million investment are:

1. Reconstructing Highway 402 from Lambton Rd. 26 to Highway 21 (shared cost \$46 million; project value \$70 million)
2. Widening and operational improvements to Highway 402 from east of Murphy Road to the bridge for a truck express lane (shared cost \$40 million; project value \$65 million)

Installing ITS technology along Highway 402 on the bridge approach (shared cost \$4 million; project value \$4.3 million).

**Niagara Frontier:** The \$281 million investment under BIF announced May 6, 2004, included \$166 million relating to the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge on the Niagara Frontier, and the QEW in the Niagara area, with a commitment of \$75.5 million by each of Ontario and Canada, and \$15 million by the Niagara Falls Bridge Authority. Four improvement projects were included in the \$166 million investment.

MTO worked in partnership with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and other cross-border agencies to develop a Bi-National Transportation Strategy for the Niagara Frontier. The Strategy identified a long term vision for a



coordinated border transportation system, and shorter-term initiatives supporting the vision.

A border coordination group was formed to meet on a monthly basis to promote and oversee implementation of the strategy recommendations and to consider new and emerging border issues.

Work is nearing completion on the extension of the Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition TRANSMIT travel time system. In Ontario TRANSMIT uses E-Z Pass toll tags to determine travel times along the QEW, Hwy 405 and Hwy 420 from St. Catherine's to the Queenston-Lewiston, Rainbow and Peace Bridges.

**Thousand Islands (Ivy Lea) and Seaway International Bridge (Cornwall):** Ontario has invested about \$2 million for improvements to the Hwy 137 approach to the Thousand Islands Bridge at Ivy Lea, including installation of a Queue Warning System on Highway 401 and Highway 137. Weigh-In-Motion scales were also previously installed at the Bridge.

**Ontario-Québec Continental Gateway and Trade Corridor:** The Continental Gateway is Canada's key trade corridor. It carries 74% of Canada's international trade and the top five Canada-United States border crossings are located along the Ontario-Quebec Corridor. This represents almost 65% of total trucks crossing the Canada-United States border.

The Ontario and Quebec ministries of transportation and Transport Canada have produced a draft strategy for the Continental Gateway and Trade Corridor, which aims to improve Canada's economic competitiveness by making strategic improvements to the multimodal transportation system and border crossings in both provinces to support international trade. The Gateway Strategy was approved by Cabinet in Ontario in October 2009 and in Quebec in January 2010.

**Intelligent Border Crossings:** Intelligent Border Crossings initiatives actively promote safe, secure, and efficient border crossing operations that support economic and social prosperity in Ontario. A number of initiatives have been completed including: a Windsor Regional Construction Traffic Management System; Windsor-Detroit Tunnel Traffic Management System and a Highway 401 CCTV (closed-circuit TV) expansion. Work is underway to complete the border wait time and Windsor-Sarnia Border Advisory systems.

Queue Warning Systems have been installed on the QEW approaching the Peace Bridge, on Highway 405 approaching the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge, on Highway 402 approaching the Bluewater Bridge and on Highway 401 at the Thousand Islands Ivy Lea Bridge.

A Variable Message Sign (VMS) on Highway 401 at Highway 402, and Portable Variable Message Signs (PVMS) on QEW in St. Catherine's provide border delay information to drivers. These signs are supplemented by additional PVMS closer to the border crossings that provide border incident and closure information. A project has started on the development of a new system to more accurately measure border delays and provide additional border delay signage on the approaches to the border crossings in Windsor and Sarnia.

**Security Initiatives:** Ontario launched its voluntary Enhanced Driver's Licence (EDL) program in May 2009 to support tourism. Licensed drivers can apply for an EDL by making an appointment online or by telephone at one of nine Service Ontario centres across the province processing EDLs. As of October 24, 2010, there are approximately 31,937 EDL card holders in Ontario.

MTO has implemented truck lane signage to support the Canada / U.S. FAST program. MTO introduced regulations to make FAST signage legally enforceable in spring 2006. MTO and Transport Canada are partnering to improve real time traffic data that could assist CBSA and Homeland Security to improve management of traffic demand.

**Border Data:** In 2010, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) completed studies, data collection and analyses, and other initiatives to provide policy makers, planners, business, and the general public with information supporting the safe and efficient movement of people and goods between Ontario and the United States. The following are examples of the work done by the ministry:

1. Managed the collection of economic activity based data to demonstrate the economic importance of critical capital investments at the border.
2. Supported the publishing of annual communications products (MTO Pocket Guide) with analysis (text, tables, graphs), related to border traffic and domestic activity indicators.
3. Managed a freight data collection program to support MTO's broad investment strategies to ensure that freight is well represented in multi-modal prioritization decisions, including development of plans to initiate 2011 roadside commercial vehicle intercept border survey.
4. Replaced Transport Canada – Ontario Region – Border Wait Time system with GPS border and corridor performance methodology.
5. Supported development of a Ontario-Quebec Freight Model with forecasting components from the Continental Gateway & Trade Corridor Program.

## **Michigan**

**International Bridge (Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan – Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario):** The International Bridge Authority (IBA) which operates the bridge for the owners, the State of Michigan and the St. Mary's Bridge Company (SMRBC). The IBA worked with the SMRBC to move forward on the \$44M (Cdn) CBSA plaza redevelopment project for which Canadian federal funding was announced in late 2009. In 2010, the Design Consultant team was selected and the design was initiated.

\$1.3M in federal funding through GSA was secured to widen the approach pavement to enable the lengthening of PIL lanes and thereby reduce traffic bottlenecks caused by inadequate truck queuing capacity of the extension of PIL lanes.

Remote monitoring of bridge security cameras was expanded to include 2 additional Canadian first responder/ law enforcement agencies.

**Blue Water Bridge (Port Huron, Michigan – Sarnia, Ontario):** Due to federal-funding shortfalls, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), U.S. Customs and

Border Protection (CBP), and the General Services Administration (GSA) announced in December a scaled-back plaza expansion plan. The new plan entails a 16-acre expansion to the north of the existing elevated plaza, which overall provides a 34-acre plaza for customs processing and MDOT bridge operations, maintenance and toll collections. This includes:

1. A new commercial primary processing facility, which will eliminate the existing commercial traffic weave on the bridge.
2. 25 primary inspection lanes (12 commercial, 13 passenger/bus). Future delays coming are anticipated to be reduced to less than 5 minutes when all lanes are fully utilized.
3. 15 commercial vehicle loading/unloading docks.

**Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) (Detroit, Michigan – Windsor, Ontario):**

MDOT completed the following DRIC initiatives:

1. Issued a Request for Proposals of Interest (RFPOI) in January, to gauge private sector interest in the project world-wide. 20 proposals were received, representing 37 firms.
2. Completed an investment grade traffic and revenue study in February, which confirmed that traffic volumes will increase over the long-term.
3. Prepared a report to the legislature in May, which detailed the Public-Private Partnership potential for the project and requested the approval of the Michigan State Legislature.
4. Completed the base plans for the U.S. interchange preliminary design. Ontario reached financial close on the Windsor-Essex Parkway (WEP) in December.