

# CANADA—U.S. TRANSPORTATION BORDER WORKING GROUP NEWSLETTER

## Issue 11 — Spring 2014

### Safety Concerns Result in New Railroad Directives

Shipments of oil on rail in the United States and Canada have increased significantly in the past several years. Even with the 99.997 percent safety record for the shipment of hazardous material touted by the railway industry, the exponential growth in oil shipments (current estimates of 400,000 oil shipments this year, up from just over 10,800 shipments in 2009) means that serious oil derailments may occur in the future. As a result, there have been calls for more regulation to prevent and minimize spills, and to assist state, provincial and local responders in the event of an accident.

In response to concerns, the U.S. Department of Transportation and many U.S. railroad operators have reached a mutual agreement to institute safety measures that should help to reduce incidents in the shipping of crude oil by rail. The agreement calls for speed reductions through major cities, more frequent inspections of equipment and rail infrastructure, and the provision of enhanced emergency response planning on rail routes over which trains with 20 or more cars of crude oil operate. The agreement is ex-



*A dark plume of smoke rises from the wreckage of a oil tanker deraileur near Casselton, ND.*



*This is a scene from the aftermath of the Lac-Mégantic train derailment that occurred on July 6, 2013 in the Eastern Township region of Quebec Province.*

pected to be fully implemented by July 1, 2014. This agreement is an important, cooperative step towards addressing the safety concerns created by extensive shale oil shipments.

In Canada, in the immediate aftermath of Lac-Mégantic rail disaster, an Emergency Directive and two Protective Directives were issued by Transport Canada with mandatory actions to enhance the safety and security of freight rail operations, classification and information-sharing. Action was also taken by Transport Canada to speed up the implementation of regulations to reflect recent amendments to the *Railway Safety Act*. Changes include new administrative penalties and monetary fines to strengthen enforcement of the *Act*. Amendments to the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations* have also been proposed, including measures to update rail tank car design and harmonize certain selection and use requirements with current United Nations model regulations. As well, to ensure that the systems in place are as rigorous as they should be, the Government of Canada

is continuing to engage communities and stakeholders to further support the work of municipal emergency preparedness officials and first responders.

Americans and Canadians depend on a rail system that can transport freight to markets reliably and quickly. Even prior to recent derailments, the U.S and Canada had been moving forward under the Regulatory Cooperation Council Action Plan to harmonize regulatory regimes in the rail sector to enhance efficiency and safety. In this highly integrated cross border network, with a shared fleet of cars, cross-border collaboration has always been strong. With continued effort and focus, the U.S and Canada are making significant progress on safety measures and emergency response, in line with the expansion in the transportation of crude oil and other flammable goods by rail.

## Phase I of Cargo Pre-inspection Pilot Concludes

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), in partnership with Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and Public Safety Canada, concluded a five month pilot test of cargo pre-inspection, and deemed the concept feasible. The truck cargo pre-inspection pilot began on June 18, 2013 at the Pacific Highway crossing adjacent to Surrey, British Columbia (BC). The project was coordinated under the U.S.—Canadian Beyond the Border Action Plan. Transport Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the BC Ministry of Transport also participated in the pilot. Phase I of the initiative was designed as a "proof of concept" to determine the feasibility of placing CBP officers on Canadian soil to pre-inspect selected southbound trucks, drivers and cargo prior to arrival into the United States. The Phase I concept was also designed to test the feasibility of using certain technologies and jointly-developed procedures in order to conduct CBP primary truck processing in Canada.



*Customs and Border Protection Agents participating in the Pre-Inspection Pilot at the Pac Highway Port of Entry in Blaine, Washington.*

Eligible participants were enrolled members of CBP's Free and Secure Trade (FAST) program. FAST-eligible trucks entering the United States had the opportunity to use a dedicated pre-inspection commercial primary booth located on the Canadian side of the border. Secondary inspections, when required, were conducted in the U.S. port of entry.

Phase II of the pilot was launched on February 24, 2014 at the Peace Bridge Crossing in Buffalo, N.Y./Fort Erie, ON and recently began on February 24, 2014. The pilot could last for up to one year. Phase II will test the ability of the pre-inspection process to reduce wait times and border congestion -- streamlining the flow of cross-border trade that is vital to both country's economies.

For more information on Beyond the Border, please visit <https://www.dhs.gov/beyond-border>.



## Certificates of Appreciation Awarded

A combination of promotions, new positions, and well deserved retirements has occurred in the past few months to some of our participants and the TBWG Co-Chairs have seen fit to award these distinguished people with the TBWG Appreciation Award in recognition for their significant contributions to TBWG.



*Former TBWG Co-Chair Ted Mackay being presented his Certificate by Daniel McGregor*

Transport Canada's Ted Mackay, who served as the TBWG Co-Chair for five years and Jonathan Sabean, the former co-chair of the Technology Subcommittee for several years, have both advanced to new positions and were unable to attend the last TBWG Meeting in Montreal, were both given their awards in separate ceremonies. Mackay has moved on to another leadership position at Transport Canada. Sabean



*Jonathan Sabean receiving his Certificate of Appreciation from Daniel McGregor.*

has left Transport Canada but is still working for the Canadian Government in the Privy Council Office. Hal Parker, a Director with the Canadian Border Services Agency, was also awarded a certificate at the last TBWG Meeting in Montreal. The TBWG Certificate of Appreciation was first awarded in 2010



*Hal Parker receiving his Certificate of Appreciation from Co-Chairs Roger Petzold and Daniel McGregor during the Fall TBWG Meeting that was held in Montreal, Quebec in November, 2013.*

during the TBWG Meeting in Boston, MA to former TBWG Co-Chair Jill Hochman, former FHWA Division Administrator Jim Steele, and the former EBTC Executive Director Walter Steeves. James Cheatham, Hochman's successor, as TBWG Co-Chair received the award in August of 2013 after he retired from FHWA.

# Scenes from the Montreal TBWG Meeting



*Tom Oommen, Director of Surface Freight Policy, Highway, and Motor Carriers with Transport Canada presents during the Ottawa and Washington Update*



*Melissa Fanucci, Senior Planner with the Whatcom Council of Governments, presents on the U.S. Border Data Warehouse during the Trade and Data Subcommittee Session.*



*David Lettner, Senior Transportation Planning Consultant with Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation presents on Level of Service Framework for Ports of Entry*



*Private viewing of the port's scale model room - with the background provided by the Director of Security for the Port of Montreal, Mr. Félix Bergeron (far left), the diorama was the perfect tool to provide an exceptional overview of the Port's operations.*



*Ron Rienas, General Manager of the Peace Bridge, presents on behalf of the Public Borders Operators Association during the Project Update portion of the Border Infrastructure Session.*



*Hugh Conroy, Project Manager for the Whatcom Council of Governments asking a question to a speaker during the Fall Meeting.*

## Projects Reduce Traffic Congestion at South End of International Bridge, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) completed two projects assigned to reduce traffic congestion and increase throughput capacity at the United States Land Port of Entry at the International Bridge in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

In 2011, GSA completed a federally funded American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) project to reduce the occurrences of a traffic “bottleneck” as a result of southbound trucks backed up on the bridge obstructing southbound passenger vehicle access to inspection booths. This was accomplished by widening the pavement between the end of the bridge and the inspection booths to allow more space in the truck lanes for trucks awaiting inspection.

The project started in mid-April 2011 and was complete in mid-August 2011. Project construction was planned such that disruption to bridge traffic was minimized and all inspection lanes remained useable. Interference with bridge traffic due to construction activities was rare and short term.

This project improved bridge customer safety and bridge traffic efficiency by getting trucks off the bridge and onto separate queuing lanes, providing room for passenger vehicles on the upper plaza. In addition, this project was designed to align with a future project of the International Bridge Administration to add a southbound bridge deck lane approaching the United States Land Port of Entry.

A “design-build” contracting process was used to expedite the Pre-Primary Inspection Queue Widening Project. The lead contractor was Industrial Maintenance Services, Inc. from Wells, Michigan.

In February 2014, GSA completed a second improvements project to help reduce wait times during peak traffic periods. A new primary inspection booth has been installed in a previously unmanned lane initially intended for commercial buses. This fully functional lane will increase capacity of inbound automobile traffic and help decrease wait times on the International Bridge.

The project started in November 2013 and was completed in February 2014. Construction activities were conducted during evening hours such that disruption to bridge traffic was prevented and all inspection lanes remained useable. This project was funded by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and delivered by GSA, again using a “design-build” contracting process to expedite the project. The lead contractor for the new Primary Inspection Booth Project was RB Construction Company from Sterling Heights, Michigan.



The Sault Ste. Marie International Bridge spans the St. Mary's River between the twin cities of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. The international border crossing is the only fixed link crossing between Canada and the United States within almost 1000 km. The Bridge is an important international trade route, especially for the steel, paper, forest and tourism industries. Over 130,000 trucks carry about \$3.5 billion in goods across the border every year.

Known locally as just the “International Bridge”, it spans the St. Mary's River between the United States and Canada connecting the twin cities of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan and Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. It serves as the northern terminus of Interstate 75. The International Bridge began construction in 1960 and officially opened to traffic on October 31, 1962. Daily operation is carried on by the International Bridge Administration (IBA) under the supervision of the Sault Ste. Marie Bridge Authority (SSMBA). The SSMBA replaced the previous Joint International Bridge Authority (JIBA) in 2009, which in turn had succeeded the International Bridge Authority (IBA, created in 1935) in 2000. In 1954 the state of Michigan created the International Bridge Authority. Canada followed in 1955, creating the St. Mary's River Company.

The bridge is a steel truss arch bridge with suspended deck. There are two separate spans, a double arch span on the U.S. side and a single arch span on the Canadian side. The double arch spans cross the four U.S. Locks and the single arch spans the single Canadian Lock. In Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, the bridge ends at a city street, Huron Street, in the downtown core.

The total length of the bridge approaches 2.8 miles (4.5 km).

