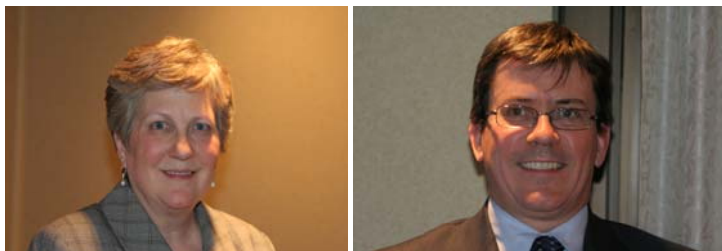


# CANADA—U.S. TRANSPORTATION BORDER WORKING GROUP NEWSLETTER

Issue 1—Spring 2009

## Welcome from Co-Chairs Jill Hochman & Ted Mackay



Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Canada-U.S. Transportation Border Working Group (TBWG) Newsletter. The last six months have brought many changes to the U.S. and Canada. Each country held a federal election and, as we know, Barack Obama was elected as the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States and Stephen Harper was re-elected as Canada's 22<sup>nd</sup> Prime Minister. Each country also has a new top transportation official -- Ray LaHood as the U.S. Transportation Secretary and John Baird as Canada's Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities.

Current economic challenges have also acted as catalysts for new activities, especially from an infrastructure perspective. Indeed, border-related infrastructure items were included in both the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* that was signed into law by President Obama on February 17 and also in Canada's Budget 2009, delivered on January 27.

Under the theme of "Change", we will explore these new developments at our next TBWG meeting scheduled for April 28 and 29, 2009, in Chicago, Illinois at the downtown Ritz-Carlton Hotel. The City of Chicago, a historic transportation centre, was selected because of its central geographic location that is readily accessible to most of our Canadian and U.S. border transportation partners. Chicago's two airports are also major hubs for many airlines and its great transit system can make your trip to downtown Chicago quick and inexpensive.

Most importantly, this newsletter is also a significant change. Following some excellent suggestions from our membership, we have designed the TBWG Newsletter as a vehicle to help keep our members informed about TBWG plenaries and workshops, subcommittee meetings and projects, and to serve as a resource for anyone interested in finding out more about the Canada-U.S. land border.

As we begin, your input is vital to making our TBWG Newsletter a success. Please feel free to contact David Franklin at [david.franklin@dot.gov](mailto:david.franklin@dot.gov) (or 708-283-3540) or Marc Aubin at [marc.aubin@tc.gc.ca](mailto:marc.aubin@tc.gc.ca) (or 613-949-7283) with your comments and suggestions. Thanks for your continued participation in TBWG!

## What is the TBWG?



The Mission of the Transportation Border Working Group is to facilitate the safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally responsible movement of people and goods across the Canada-U.S. border. The TBWG brings together multiple transportation and border agencies, and other organizations transportation planning; project development, policy implementation, and the deployment of technology to enhance border infrastructure and operations. The TBWG provides a forum to foster on-going communication, information sharing, and the exchange of best practices to improve the transportation and the safety and security systems that connect our two countries.

## TBWG Steering Committee



Steering Committee members Walter Steeves at the TBWG Meeting in Toronto

The Steering Committee helps to fulfill the TBWG's Mission for inclusive, productive, and efficient coordination and communication of TBWG activities. The scope of the Steering Committee's responsibilities include planning for the biannual plenary meetings in Canada and the United States, management of the TBWG website, consultation and communication with the TBWG subcommittees, coordination and communication of information between TBWG and other organizations or regions.

The Steering Committee membership consists of permanent Canadian and U.S. Co-Chairs. (Presently, Ted Mackay of Transport Canada and Jill Hochman of the Federal Highway Administration). The Committee also has permanent representation from the Canadian Border Services Agency and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The Committee has rotational state and provincial representatives from both eastern and western regions.

For further information on Steering Committee activities, contact David Franklin ([david.franklin@dot.gov](mailto:david.franklin@dot.gov)) or Allan Wilson ([allan.wilson@tc.gc.ca](mailto:allan.wilson@tc.gc.ca)).

## TBWG Subcommittees & Activities

### Technology Subcommittee

The Technology Subcommittee facilitates discussion of the role of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and other technology in improving the efficiency of goods and people movement across the U.S./Canada border. The subcommittee, working with border stakeholders, promotes the use of the Border Information Flow Architecture (BIFA) <http://www.ronice.com/bifa/intro.htm> as a tool for ensuring institutional agreement and technical integration for ITS and other technology projects at major land border crossings. The work plan for the subcommittee centers on encouraging border infrastructure planners to consider technology and operations solutions for common border problems (e.g. congestion). The group engages border stakeholders to identify opportunities for coordination and information sharing, sponsors technology projects and engages in activities that demonstrate how the BIFA can be used in planning along the border, in programming/budgeting/identifying border projects, and for project implementation.

Throughout calendar year 2009, the subcommittee will primarily focus on projects that utilize technology to measure and disseminate border wait times and delays. The subcommittee will report on all projects during TBWG meetings and routinely engage subcommittee members to solicit input and inform stakeholders on project progress. The BIFA will be used and updated as part of these projects. In addition to the border wait time and delay measurement activities, in 2009 the subcommittee plans to actively engage subcommittee members and the entire TBWG membership on operations and technology solutions to border issues. Traditionally facility modernization and infrastructure improvements have been the primary mechanism for improving border operations. ITS/technology and other transportation operations solutions are often a very cost effective way to improve the movement of goods and people across the border. The subcommittee is contemplating the conduct of a workshop on Planning for Border Operations.

For additional information, visit the [Technology Subcommittee](#) or contact Jonathan Sabeau ([jonathan.sabeau@tc.gc.ca](mailto:jonathan.sabeau@tc.gc.ca)) or Crystal Jones ([crystal.jones@dot.gov](mailto:crystal.jones@dot.gov)).

### Border Infrastructure Coordination Subcommittee

The Border Infrastructure Coordination Subcommittee (BICSC) currently serves as the stewards for the TBWG's Online Border Infrastructure Compendium (OBIC) -- a searchable database of all Canada-U.S. land border crossings -- and promotes improved communication on border-related infrastructure projects through activities such as Regional Workshops.

### OBIC

The first version of OBIC was in a database format that was made available in 2003 with members receiving a copy via CD. Following the hard work of many TBWG members, the compendium was moved to the TBWG's website so that the information could be updated and used in a more dynamic way. Since its online launch in 2005, the compendium has grown to encompass all 119 Canada-U.S. land border crossings, including basic physical data as well as information on related approach highway and plaza construction projects. Since some of the project-related information is sensitive, the OBIC is only available for TBWG members. The compilation of OBIC data and project information is achieved through the ongoing support of various TBWG members.

In addition, BICSC members are exploring potential ways to improve the OBIC's functionality and supported a project to make improvements to the TBWG's existing Online Border Map. These latter improvements involve making the map's border-crossings "live" (i.e., when you pass your cursor over a specific crossing, a text box will appear that contains additional information about that border crossing). As always, ongoing coordination with the TBWG member agencies remains critical to make these improvements a success.

For more information for TBWG member access to the OBIC, please contact Marc Aubin ([marc.aubin@tc.gc.ca](mailto:marc.aubin@tc.gc.ca)).

### Regional Workshops

While the TBWG's two annual plenary sessions provide great exposure to border-related activities on a national basis, members also participate in additional project-specific and more regionally focused discussions. These Regional Workshops help

The first Regional Workshop was hosted by the *Ministère des transports du Québec* (MTQ) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) in August 2007. This event provided an opportunity for the participants to discuss smaller border crossings located between the two jurisdictions. The one-day event included discussions on various transportation and operational-related challenges at each of the crossings, potential solutions and proposals, and helped to facilitate the exchange of information on various inspection system improvements. We are now targeting another regional workshop for eastern British Columbia and the adjacent U.S. states in Spokane, Washington on March 26, 2009. Consideration is also being given to expanding the invitation list to include Alberta and western Montana.

If you would like to get involved with the BICSC, or would like additional information about the upcoming Regional Workshop, please feel free to visit the [subcommittee website](#) or contact one of the BICSC Co-Chairs: Alicia Nolan ([Alicia.Nolan@fhwa.dot.gov](mailto:Alicia.Nolan@fhwa.dot.gov)) or Allan Wilson ([allan.wilson@tc.gc.ca](mailto:allan.wilson@tc.gc.ca)).

### Policy and Research Subcommittee



*Policy and Research Co-Chair Hugh Conroy at the Toronto TBWG meeting.*

The Policy Objective was added to the TBWG Action Plan in June 2005; a decision that also established the subcommittee. Because U.S. and Canadian federal agencies have, as a matter of policy, set up the TBWG to advance a vision for border management, and operations and planning in support of that vision, it is important to dedicate attention to how the laws of our two countries and regulations of multiple agencies fit, or don't fit, with this broad goal and with the specific products of the TBWG.

The Policy and Research Subcommittee is a platform for the TBWG to assess and discuss the fit between adopted or proposed policies and existing legal and regulatory parameters. While TBWG does not make policy, this work, supported by research, assesses the bi-national context and avails that information to decision makers in our respective governments. The subcommittee maintains an [Issues & Status List](#).

## Policy Work

After beginning with assessments of specific mechanisms formed to support past bi-national efforts, the subcommittee has published and continues to update a [Cross-Border Arrangements Toolkit](#). This document lists existing interagency arrangements with enough detail on each to serve as guidance for managers of future projects. Through teleconference calls and biannual meetings, the subcommittee has also given significant attention to the evolution of enhanced drivers license (EDL) programs, U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Canadian Issues Study, and U.S. legislative initiatives to promote pre-clearance for cross-border passenger rail. Ongoing interests include cross-border intermodal policy.

## Research

The second emphasis of the subcommittee is research. The subcommittee brings relevant, independent research to the attention of the full TBWG and it works with other institutions to promote research on specific border issues. Last year, the committee benefited from an intern from the Canada-U.S. Law Institute, a collaborative program of the law schools at Case Western Reserve University and the University of Western Ontario. This research focused on sub-national agreements between U.S. states and Canadian provinces. TBWG has also collaborated with the Border Policy Research Institute at Western Washington University and the University of Buffalo. Also on the research front, the subcommittee is serving as an advisory committee to a study on the regional economic impact of border-delay being advanced by the U.S. FHWA and conducted by Cambridge Systematics, Inc.

For additional information, please visit the [subcommittee website](#) or contact Hugh Conroy ([hugh@wcog.org](mailto:hugh@wcog.org)).

## Trade and Traffic Data Subcommittee



*Trade and Traffic Data Co-Chair Bob Leore speaking at the Toronto TBWG.*

The Trade and Traffic Data Subcommittee was formed in Spring 2003 to take a multi-jurisdictional approach to the identification of various data needs, and explore opportunities to work collaboratively for data collection activities. The first major activity that the subcommittee conducted was a workshop in fall of 2003 (held in Port Huron Michigan). This workshop discussed the current state of data collection and identified four core areas that the Subcommittee wanted to focus additional data gathering activities: (1) traffic Counts and classification; (2) Origin/Destination; (3) Border Delay; and (4) assessing the use of enhanced trade data.

From the time of the workshop, the Subcommittee has been supporting the work of several TBWG member agencies in four core data collection areas. The biggest effort was collectively working together in the discussion on the

development of the National Roadside Survey (NRS) led by Transport Canada. There was interest by the member agencies of participating in a border component of the NRS to collect data at major border crossings. The subcommittee fostered several discussions building bi-national support for this effort.

Member agencies continue to advance various initiatives and share information through the Subcommittee. We have had several presentations during our working sessions of the TBWG plenary meetings on a range of data related topics.

The Subcommittee also convened a June 2008 workshop in Michigan to assess progress on several core areas. Participants at the workshop developed a framework to assist the subcommittee in focusing future data collection activities (either jointly or by individual member agencies). The participants also re-affirmed the four core areas of focus. To assist in development of the framework, the TBWG engaged a consultant to gather information on existing data sources and to identify needs. The Data Subcommittee will use the consultant's work in its discussions of critical priorities and in its decision on how best to advance items included in the framework. This effort will also provide the basis for new working tasks for calendar year 2009. Copies of the workshop presentations are on the TBWG website.

For additional information please visit the [Subcommittee website](#) or email Alicia Nolan ([alicia.nolan@fhwa.dot.gov](mailto:alicia.nolan@fhwa.dot.gov)) or Bob Leore ([bob.leore@tc.gc.ca](mailto:bob.leore@tc.gc.ca)).

## Next TBWG Meeting: Chicago

The next TBWG meeting has been scheduled for April 28 & 29, 2009 in Chicago, Illinois. The photo to the left shows the Water Tower Place Mall and



*The John Hancock Building*

the John Hancock Building. The Mall also houses the Ritz-Carlton Hotel where the meeting will be held. A block of rooms have been reserved for TBWG members to reserve at a special conference rate of \$157 dollars per night. Almost all of the rooms have recently been renovated and have new LCD televisions, DVD players, and free wireless internet. The hotel is in the heart of the Water Tower District of Chicago on Michigan Avenue. Known by many as the "Miracle Mile" this area of Chicago has many restaurants and shopping malls within walking distance of the hotel. The John Hancock building, above, towers over the Ritz-Carlton Hotel and has an observation deck that allows you to view Chicago's landscape from the 94th floor. The building also has an excellent restaurant on the 95th floor to dine while looking over Lake Michigan. Registration forms are available on the TBWG website to sign up for the meeting and have also been emailed out to members.

## TBWG Website

We also encourage you to visit the [TBWG website](#). Here you will be able to view our online library, border glossary, review presentations given at previous TBWG events and read the TBWG's founding Memorandum of Cooperation. Please contact Marc Aubin ([marc.aubin@tc.gc.ca](mailto:marc.aubin@tc.gc.ca)) for additional website information.