



IMTC Steering Committee Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

9:00am – 12:00pm

**U.S. Customs & Border Protection,
Peace Arch Port-of-Entry, Blaine, WA**

Remote Access

<https://www.gotomeet.me/wco/g/imtc-steering-committee-meeting-6>

United States: 571-317-3129

Canada: 647-497-9391

Access Code: **572-372-109**

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1. Introductions & current event updates
 2. Canada Border Services Agency planning for redevelopment of their inspection facility at Pacific Highway
 - a. Update on efforts to date
 - b. Discussion with stakeholders (e.g. adjacent jurisdictions, trucking industry, passenger bus operators, duty free stores)
 3. Recap of October 29-30 TBWG meeting in Niagara, ON.
 4. 2020 meeting schedule
 5. Preliminary discussions of agenda items for early 2020
 - a. Technology deployments expected in the region (weigh-in-motion, facial recognition, non-intrusive inspection, advanced passenger manifests, etc.)
 - b. Northbound anti-idling system – design, development plan

Improving Border Crossing Planning and Decision-Making in Whatcom County, Washington, and British Columbia, Canada

Noteworthy Practice | November 2019

Overview

Implementation of border wait time systems in Whatcom County, Washington, and in British Columbia, Canada, demonstrates how data-sharing across borders can improve transportation coordination, planning, and decision-making, including for freight. The Whatcom Council of Governments (WCOG) plays a critical role helping to compile and share wait time information across the U.S./Canada border. Whatcom County, located in northwestern Washington State, borders the Canadian province of British Columbia (BC). WCOG's members include seven cities in Whatcom County, the Port of Bellingham, and other regional entities.

WCOG is the metropolitan planning organization for Whatcom County and the lead agency for the International Mobility and Trade Corridor Program (IMTC), a binational coalition of public agencies supporting border crossing systems in the region. IMTC leads most border crossing technology implementation and management, although WCOG supports IMTC through coordination and outreach.

In 2018, there were over 1.1 million commercial vehicles crossing the border between Whatcom County and the BC lower mainland. Freight movement is essential for economic development and to ensure high levels of trade across international borders. However, when there are heavy volumes of trucks and cars moving

Key Accomplishments

- Deployment of border wait time technologies in the northwestern Washington State/southern BC region has improved transportation coordination and management across international borders.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that the deployment of border wait time systems in the region has helped to redirect trucks to ports with shorter wait times, benefitting overall transportation mobility.
- Agencies in the region are using information captured from the border wait time deployments to support improved analyses, reporting, and transportation system operations/management.

through these border crossings, there can be high levels of congestion. WCOG, along with State, regional, and Canadian provincial partners, identified a need to improve the collection and reporting of border wait times to inform travelers' decision-making, ease congestion, and support the region in more effective transportation planning and management. As these initiatives evolved, there have been ongoing opportunities to assess the impacts of border congestion on freight mobility.

Implementation Approach

In 2000, the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) deployed the region's first border wait time system, designed to address large inconsistencies in wait time between the Peace Arch/Douglas and Pacific Highway Ports-of-Entry, less than one mile apart. The system used loop detector sensors to develop an estimate of vehicle wait time and display the estimates on variable message signs (VMS) located on public roadways near the ports. The purpose of the system was to help distribute passenger traffic across the two ports to maximize available capacity. This effort was initially installed on northbound lanes on I-5 and WA State Route 543 from the U.S. into Canada. Later, the system was expanded to include a southbound system (funded jointly by the Province of British Columbia, Transport Canada, and the Federal Highway Administration's [FHWA] Coordinated Border Infrastructure [CBI] funds), as well as all four regional ports-of-entry, and to capture commercial vehicle border wait times.



Image courtesy of Whatcom Council of Governments

Currently, only passenger vehicle wait times are displayed on the roadway VMS; commercial wait time estimates are available from the Canadian Border Services Agency, BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (BCMOTI), and WSDOT for access by freight brokerages and dispatchers. Wait time estimates are updated every five minutes.

In 2005, WCOG began to develop a border wait time data archive to compile all data in a “one-stop shop.” The first archive was deployed in 2007; a revised version was initially developed in 2011 and completed in 2012. The initial deployment and later revisions were funded by Transport Canada (\$355,000), with additional funding support from FHWA (\$100,000); WSDOT (\$200,000); and BCMOTI (\$55,000). The archive provides a portal to assist stakeholders, including the public, in accessing border wait time data. Using the archive, WCOG produces reports for passenger and freight traffic for IMTC partner agencies and the public via the IMTC website. WCOG and its partners have also used the archive for trends analysis and performance measurement.

WCOG received funding from FHWA and BCMOTI to update and expand the archive beginning in 2020. WCOG aims to incorporate more information on commercial vehicle traffic into the archive to improve border wait time reporting accuracy.

There is an ongoing need to ensure that the information captured in the border wait time systems helps address the specific needs of freight operations. For example, WCOG has found some apparent limitations in how freight stakeholders are using the information for dynamic freight routing. WCOG is actively working with freight industry partners through forums such as IMTC to improve how border wait time data can be more effectively distributed to and consumed by commercial vehicle operators.

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Outcomes and Results

Deployment of the border wait time systems and data archive have improved regional transportation coordination, as well as infrastructure and operations planning and decision-making. For example, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and CBSA use border wait time data for analysis, reporting, and planning for inspections staffing.

The archive also provides a tool for measuring the impact of infrastructure investments on average border wait times, including for freight operations. Using wait time data in conjunction with other data sets, WCOG has conducted simulation modeling to analyze potential border crossing operational or infrastructure changes.

Lessons Learned

- Unique characteristics of freight movement present challenges and opportunities for border wait time systems deployment. For example, IMTC and WCOG are trying to better understand how border wait time data could inform dynamic freight routing through ports-of-entry.
- Technology deployments require a clear traceability framework to show how deliverables achieve desired outcomes. WCOG developed a traceability matrix that incorporates a concise list of outcomes for all of its software deliverables, including the border wait time data archive. This matrix helped to ensure that the vision of the final product aligned with the developer’s, decreasing the frequency of cost overruns and other challenges.
- Fostering buy-in from multiple partners is critical to deploying border wait time systems. Messaging should be highly tailored to show the expected benefits for each stakeholder. Private sector freight stakeholders have needs, goals, and missions distinct from the public sector; public agencies need to understand these unique concerns and how they can be effectively addressed through technology deployments.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

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INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY & TRADE CORRIDOR PROGRAM

2020 MEETING SCHEDULE

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

Note: The proposed calendar for 2020 includes fewer meetings, on the third Wednesday of the month, to better accommodate the schedules of key participants.

All meetings are from **9:00am – 12:00pm**.

DAY	MONTH	DAY	TYPE	COUNTRY
Wednesday	January	15	Steering	U.S.A.
Wednesday	March	18	Steering	Canada
Wednesday	May	20	Core	U.S.A.
Wednesday	July	15	Steering	Canada
Wednesday	September	16	Steering	U.S.A.
Wednesday	November	18	Core	Canada