

International Mobility & Trade Corridor Program Steering Committee Meeting Summary

June 15, 2017

Meeting packet available at: theIMTC.com/meetings

Meeting location

The meeting was held at CBSA Douglas POE, Surrey, BC.

Meeting attendance

Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA] (Daniela Evans, Tammy Rathgeber, Bernie Pitura, Dan Bubas, Brad Valentine); **Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG]** (Hugh Conroy, Melissa Fanucci, Jaymes McClain); **Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT]** (Cliff Hall, Todd Carlson) **US Customs and Border Protection [US CBP]** (Craig Hope, J. Rene Ortega); **City of Blaine** (Bill Bullock); **BC Trucking Association [BCTA]** (Lindsay Samson); **Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI]** (Laurie Trautman); **US Consulate Vancouver** (Mike Bradecamp); **British Columbia Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI]** (John Schnablegger, Abid Sivic, Simon Leung); **Transport Canada [TC]** (Chris Hoff); **Canadian Consulate Seattle** (Bryce Campbell); **Pacific Corridor Enterprise Council** (Jim Kohnke)

Current event updates

Brad Valentine reported that paving has been completed at the Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA] Pacific Highway port-of-entry [POE]. Paving at the Abbotsford-Huntingdon POE has started and will be completed before the 4th of July.

Craig Hope told the group that commercial operations are back to normal at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection [US CBP] Pacific Highway POE after work was done on the radiation portal monitors.

John Schnablegger said that British Columbia agencies are still in interregnum. B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [BC MoTI] input on policy matters will be restricted until the provincial government is sorted out following the May elections.

Bill Bullock reported that the city of Blaine has started work on its Sweet Rd/Hughes Ave project. Hughes Ave is a secondary truck route that leads to the POEs east of Pacific Highway. They plan to dovetail this project with the Exit 274 reconfiguration project.

Lindsay Samson informed the group that the B.C. Trucking Association [BCTA] recently met with CBSA Pacific Region officials to discuss concerns from BCTA members about electronic filing delays and to get updates on CBSA's information technology plans. BCTA is putting out news articles for their members and may schedule meetings to give border updates and discuss solutions.

Todd Carlson said that the Washington State Department of Transportation [WSDOT] is beginning dialogue with the Whatcom Council of Governments [WCOG] and Skagit Council of Governments [SCOG] about collecting vehicle origin-destination data in the region, including at the border. They are interested in looking at commercial trucks, particularly those crossing the border through Sumas and using SR 9. WSDOT and Washington State Patrol are monitoring the use of SR 9 by commercial trucks because of continued community feedback about high commercial traffic on the small, rural highway.

Bernie Pitura told the group that in March and April CBSA called 90+ truck carrier companies regarding the new CBSA Aldergrove commercial POE. Mr. Pitura said that only 6 carriers knew of Aldergrove's removal of permit requirements for northbound travel.

Mike Bradecamp reported that Council General Lynne Platt is finishing up her tenure in Vancouver. Katherine Dhanani, coming from Washington D.C., will be her replacement.

Laurie Trautman said that she is attending the Pacific Northwest Economic Region's [PNWER] annual summit meeting, occurring July 23-27. David MacNaughton, Canada's ambassador to the United States, will be attending. Among other topics they will discuss preclearance and the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA], Ms. Trautman said. The summit will take place in Portland, OR.

Jim Kohnke updated the group on the B.C. Chamber of Commerce's annual general meeting [AGM], which occurred in Victoria, BC in May. Mr. Kohnke said that there was discussion on the inefficiencies of the Port of Vancouver, as well as a gravel pit impeding 16 Ave from connecting eastern and western Lower Mainland. Information on the resolutions passed at the AGM are available on the B.C. Chamber of Commerce website.

Bernie Pitura told the group that the three CBSA commercial chiefs in the region (himself, Dan Bubas, and Ryan Vanderstar) recently met with brokers as part of an annual meeting. They discussed border processing, truck routing options, large scale imaging, and other topics. He said CBSA updated the brokers on policies regarding choosing POEs on entry filings and the ability to switch POEs while a truck is en route to the border.

Tammy Rathgeber explained that CBSA has been noticing a trend in activity between the ports, such as asylum seekers jumping the border. Many of them are looking to get picked up by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police [RCMP] patrolling on 0 Ave so that they can be processed and considered for refugee status. They are also noticing more Mexican arrivals, especially younger Mexicans claiming to be tourists and staying to find work. Ms. Rathgeber reminded the group that Mexicans are no longer required to have a VISA to come into Canada.

Daniela Evans said that CBSA is gearing up for Canada Day. There will be a high number of visitors, but they are seeing fewer Canadian crossers in general because of the value of the Canadian dollar. She said the past weekend was busy at the border with the Toronto Blue Jays playing in Seattle on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The Hands Across the Border scouting event also occurred Sunday at Peace Arch park, causing some congestion. CBSA said many buses crossed at the CBSA Abbotsford-Huntingdon POE (as many as 9 in one

hour) following the Blue Jays game. Ms. Evans said that the CBSA website usually displays any activities like these that could affect border congestion.

IMTC funding update

Possible funds from FHWA's SHRP2 implementation program

Hugh Conroy delivered a spreadsheet on-screen of near- and long term strategies for scenarios developing for IMTC program funding.

Vancouver International Airport [YVR] is in the final stages of considering three annual installments of \$10k. Mr. Conroy also noted that FHWA, through the second Strategic Highway Research Program [SHRP2] is likely to contribute fund to IMTC activities – perhaps \$80k. Once the new government in B.C. is set, discussions can continue regarding a multi-year contribution through BC MoTI.

In the long term, Mr. Conroy said that the strategy is to continue articulating the need for reestablishing a federal role in funding regional border planning, such as bringing back the FHWA Coordinated Border Infrastructure program [CBI].

Border Master Planning Performance measures

Further development of a wait time metric

Attached in the meeting packet is an IMTC performance measures example document that Hugh Conroy drafted. Mr. Conroy calculated sample metrics for monthly average delay and volume by hour, a monthly wait-time index (volume divided by median delay) by hour, and monthly cumulative wait-times (total hours of delay experienced by all cars) by hour. These metrics are broken up by type of day (weekend versus weekday), direction of traffic, and type of traffic (standard versus NEXUS).

Hugh Conroy suggested that baseline wait-time indexes could be established, and IMTC projects could be rated by how they would be forecast to affect this metric. Simulation modeling could be used in completing this analysis.

John Schnablegger suggested that with this kind of metric, they could look into environmental calculations as well such as fuel consumption and emissions.

IMTC Projects

Dynamic Border Management

Evaluation of using upstream traffic sensors to predict changes in arrival rates at ports-of-entry (Summer project with WWU)

Hugh Conroy explained that since work started on the IMTC Dynamic Border Management project, especially scenario modeling for the RFID pilot, he and Jaymes McClain have been interested in acquiring better border arrival rate data from upstream highway loop detectors. Mr. Conroy was recently notified by

Laurie Trautman of the Border Policy Research Institute [BPRI] that a senior honors math student at Western Washington University [WWU] was looking for ideas for a senior project dealing with system efficiencies. Mr. Conroy and Mr. McClain met with the student and discussed a possible collaborative project between he and the Whatcom Council of Governments.

Mr. McClain explained that in the project's current perceived form, the student will evaluate loop detector data from highways leading to Cascade Gateway ports of entry and, in conjunction with near-border loop detector data from the Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse, determine if the data could be used in real-time for advanced warning of sizable changes in traffic volumes approaching the border. Customs agencies could then theoretically optimize inspection booth openings and closures based on real-time upstream traffic information.

The project scope is still being finalized between the student and his faculty advisor at WWU. Work on the project would most likely carry through summer and possibly into the fall.

Communications protocol - updates

Review of last Friday's crash incident

Bill Bullock recounted that on Friday afternoon (June 9th), a three-vehicle collision occurred in a northbound lane of SR 543 between H St and D St in Blaine. A semi-truck rear-ended another semi-truck, which then was pushed into a third semi-truck. There were no fatalities.

Daniela Evans explained that access to the CBSA Pacific Highway POE was temporarily limited, but some traffic still trickled through following the accident. U.S. agencies notified CBSA of the accident, and additional capacity at the Douglas POE was immediately opened. The Aldergrove and Abbotsford-Huntingdon CBSA POEs also prepared for rerouted traffic.

Mr. Bullock said that there were concerns of oil from the damaged vehicles entering the city's storm-water system. Efforts were made to redirect the spills from the vehicles.

Bernie Pitura explained that a paving project was occurring at the Abbotsford-Huntingdon POE at the time, though they did not see much additional traffic following the accident. There was a small spike in traffic at Aldergrove, he recounted. Mr. Pitura suggested that the Advanced Traveler Information System [ATIS] dynamic messaging signs could be used in the future to announce incidents like this that impede border access to specific POEs.

Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse 3.0

Melissa Fanucci informed the group that she is working on a scope for an update to the Cascade Gateway Border Data Warehouse. She will be emailing out a survey to IMTC members regarding their use of the border data archive website and how the website could better meet the data needs of members. Ms. Fanucci asked that members comment on the survey data that they would like to access that currently is not available on the website.