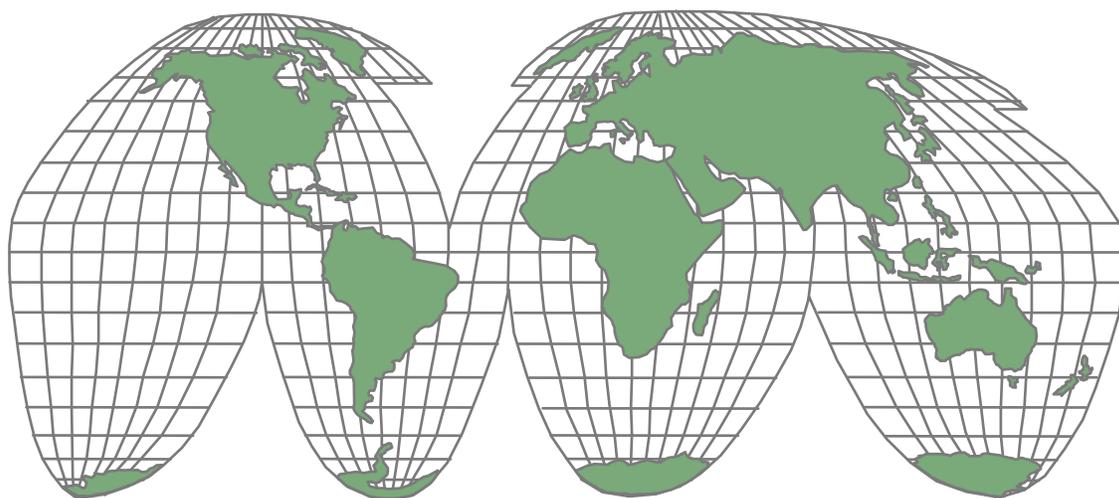


International Activities Report



2004

Prepared by the International Relations Office



January 2005

Acknowledgment

The International Relations Office (IRO) would like to express grateful appreciation to all those who helped make this report possible. Individuals from each of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) districts, divisions and offices described herein reviewed and updated their respective sections, providing invaluable data.

Many people took additional time to review other sections of the report and provided IRO with information to ensure that the descriptions of the various organizations, research projects, documents are as accurate as possible. We wish to express our appreciation for their efforts and contributions.

January 2005

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International Activities Report
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Executive Summary

The Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) international activities for the year 2004 are detailed in this report. Due to ever-increasing globalization, TxDOT's involvement in international activities continues to grow. In addition, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) accelerates and expands the range and number of TxDOT's binational and multinational connections. Texas' expansive border with Mexico, one of the United State's most significant trade partners, requires increased communication and collaborative planning with Mexico. Accordingly, much of TxDOT's business is focused on Mexico. However, TxDOT also interacts with and receives visitors from many other nations. Since 1994, approximately 1,595 transportation officials from 40 countries have visited TxDOT.

Planning for NAFTA, TxDOT created the International Relations Office (IRO). The IRO supports TxDOT's contribution to improving transportation infrastructure along the border and internationally. Information exchanges are carried out by facilitating visits from foreign professionals to TxDOT. Additionally, the Office provides support and assistance to TxDOT district offices and divisions, and to other governmental entities, such as the Governor's Office and the Office of the Secretary of State. The IRO serves as TxDOT's representative on various international committees and is responsible for compiling data and producing reports related to TxDOT's international activities. Although the IRO is the primary point of contact for international activities, many successful projects are accomplished by TxDOT divisions, offices and districts, particularly those along the border. TxDOT remains committed to supporting Texas-Mexican trade and the transportation-related needs of the state.

Given the large amount of commercial trade that enters the United States from Mexico, and the size of the common border, the roles of the Pharr, Laredo and El Paso districts are critical. These districts have long cooperated with transportation officials in neighboring Mexican states and have developed productive working relationships. The three border district engineers (DEs) and other division directors are involved in many border-related projects. For example, this year, the El Paso district, in conjunction with officials on both sides of the border, worked to enhance the movement of goods across local bridges. The Pharr district coordinated the evaluation process for the feasibility of rehabilitating the historic Roma Suspension Bridge with the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation (SCT) in Mexico. The Laredo district opened the Camino Columbia Toll road, creating the shortest driving route between the United States and Monterrey, Mexico.

Many of TxDOT's divisions and offices are also involved in international activities. For example, the Motor Carrier Division (MCD) assists in the development of administrative rules and the procedures for border port authorities to issue oversize/overweight permits. The MCD also participates in the state's Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) program. The CVISN program involves the sharing of information between motor carriers, including Mexico-based carriers, the State Comptrollers Office, the Texas Department of Public

Safety (DPS), and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The Traffic Operations Division (TRF) manages this program.

The Vehicle and Title Registration Office (VTR) works in conjunction with the International Registration Plan (IRP) to develop systems for assisting Mexican carriers with local registration.

The Construction Division (CST) provides technical support for the Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee (LTSS) Working Group 2 on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions.

The Research and Technology Implementation Office (RTI) administers the federal Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). Through this program, university professors from Texas have given transportation-engineering courses at universities in other countries.

The Transportation Planning and Programming Division (TPP) serves as the point of contact and is the lead for the Texas international bridge approval process. TPP also developed the Texas Transportation Plan which contains policies related to the Texas-Mexico border area.

The Travel Division (TRV) is involved in international communications and activities through the travel information and literature it publishes and distributes and through its litter prevention programs. In Fiscal Year 2004, Travel literature packets containing the *Texas State Travel Guide*, the *Texas Accommodations Guide*, and the *Texas Official Travel Map* were mailed to 11,417 international requestors, including 9,598 in Canada and 1,103 in Mexico.

The Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA), which is a part of VTR, works actively in collaboration with Mexico to reduce the number of vehicles that are stolen and transported across both sides of the border.

Structure of Report

This report is divided into three major sections delineating the international activities in which TxDOT participates regularly. Section one highlights activities by TxDOT entity. Section two contains more detailed descriptions of the activities of each division, district or office. The third section lists reference documents and other publications related to TxDOT's international involvement.

This report represents a composite of input from each district, division or office and relevant external sources. When data is directly available from an organization (i.e., Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee) such documentation is used. The United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and the U.S. State Department also contribute information contained in this report. Additional information on most of the activities included in this report can be obtained from TxDOT's International Relations Office at (512) 374-5345 or by fax at (512) 374-5325. This report may also be found in Spanish and English at <http://www.dot.state.tx.us/iro/>

SECTION I
ACTIVITY SUMMARIES BY TxDOT ENTITY

Importance of the Border Area

Mexico is the United State's second strongest trading partner; extensive amounts of commercial traffic and goods flow between Mexico and the United States. As such, TxDOT is strongly committed to development of transportation infrastructure in the area. Reflecting this commitment, over the past ten years, the State of Texas has invested more than \$3.11 billion in the Texas border region for needed transportation improvements.

International Relations Office (IRO)

The IRO coordinates functions, operations and information relating to international activities for TxDOT. The long-term objective of these activities is to improve international coordination of:

- Texas-Mexico border transportation infrastructure planning and programming.
- International exchange of transportation information and expertise.
- Cross-border technical exchange with Mexican Border States and the Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes (SCT) to improve the safe and efficient flow of traffic across the Rio Grande.
- Commercial motor carrier laws, rules and regulations.

IRO's major responsibilities include:

- Acting as liaison for TxDOT on international relations activities with the Governor's Office, the Secretary of State's Office, legislative officials, other governmental entities (foreign, federal and state), FHWA, businesses, interest groups and the public.
- Representing and serving as liaison for TxDOT at international, national and state levels. For example, IRO staff participates in the U.S.-Mexico Binational Joint Working Committee, the U.S.-Mexico Binational Bridges and Border Crossings Group, the Border Advisory Roundtable, and Technology Transfer Center Steering Committees as well as other similar forums.
- Coordinating visits of international visitors.
- Providing information for TxDOT representatives to the Commission, the Legislature and its committees, other agencies and the public on matters regarding international relations.
- Responding to inquiries from individuals and governmental agencies from other nations, providing referral and resource information as appropriate.
- Providing protocols for international visitors and cultural briefings prior to their visits.
- Reviewing and providing recommendations to the TxDOT administration on proposed legislation, rules, policies, procedures and actions regarding international and border issues.
- Assisting TxDOT administration, districts, divisions and offices in developing, implementing, coordinating and monitoring strategic and operational plans for international and border activities.
- Facilitating contacts and programs between TxDOT and its counterparts in Mexico at the state and federal levels.
- Supporting and promoting the implementation of the Texas Transportation Plan, especially regarding border safety and efficiency.
- Promoting understanding with Mexico related to planning for the Trans Texas Corridor. More information on the corridor and plans for its development can be found at www.dot.state.tx.us/ttc/ttc_home.htm
- Administering the Border Technology Exchange Program.

- Serving on TxDOT's Research Management Committee 2 (Transportation Planning) as the lead for research studies related to NAFTA and the Texas-Mexico border.
- Assisting Districts and Divisions with studies dealing with the border.
- Providing translation services for TxDOT Divisions and Offices (English to Spanish and vice versa).
- Representing TxDOT on the Texas-Mexico Commerce and International Relations Initiative Unit. The Initiative Unit was formed to study and develop the trade relations between the state of Texas, Mexico and the U.S. states that border Texas.

In support of these responsibilities, the office publishes the following reports that provide more detail on the above activities:

- the *LTSS Quarterly Report*;
- the *Texas-Mexico International Bridges and Border Crossings: Existing and Proposed*; and,
- the *International Activities Report*.

Border Safety Inspection Stations

Texas Senate Bill 913, 76th Legislature (1999), directed TxDOT to select locations for border safety inspection facilities along major highways at or near border crossings with Mexico in Brownsville, Laredo and El Paso thereby allowing all federal, state and municipal agencies that regulate the passage of persons and vehicles crossing the border to be located in one place. Additionally, the bill established that, if the federal agencies regulating of the passage of persons or vehicles at the specific crossing agreed to the inspection facility design and committed to using the facility if built, such facilities would indeed be established and maintained.

The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and TxDOT were responsible for site selection and possible acquisition of right-of-way for the Border Safety Inspection Facilities (BSIFs) and weigh stations near the existing federal inspection stations. The specific locations were considered the eight highest commercial traffic crossings along the Texas-Mexico border.

There are currently eight permanent border safety inspection facilities under development to be located at: the Bridge of the Americas and Zaragoza-Ysleta in El Paso; World Trade Bridge and Colombia-Solidarity Bridge in Laredo; Camino Real International in Eagle Pass; Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge in Pharr; Veterans International Bridge at Los Tomates and Free Trade Bridge at Los Indios in Brownsville. Each will provide an efficient method of inspecting and weighing commercial vehicles entering the United States at the Texas-Mexico border.

A "prototype facility" was developed to adapt to all eight locations; and site selection studies and environmental assessments were completed for each location. Pending the design and construction of the permanent BSIFs, temporary border safety inspection facilities are currently operational at the eight ports of entry along the Texas-Mexico border for the purpose of inspecting and weighing trucks. As federal agencies did not agree to locate the permanent stations within the GSA facilities, these will be located outside the GSA compounds.

Border Technology Exchange Program (BTEP)

On April 29, 1994, the U.S. and Mexican Secretaries of Transportation signed a Memorandum of Understanding that recognized the desire of both countries to improve the coordination and quality of land transportation systems in the border region. As a result, the U.S.-Mexico Joint Working Committee for Transportation Planning (JWC) was created, and the Border Technology Exchange Program (BTEP), under its auspices, is one of several vehicles for the two countries to carry out their coordinating efforts. The program in Texas is funded by various sources: the Federal Highway Administration, the Texas Department of Transportation, in-kind contributions from Mexican border states, and the Mexican Ministry of Communications and Transportation (SCT).

The Texas BTEP promotes five central objectives:

- Improving safe and efficient transborder transportation systems in the border region.
- Sharing planning information, standards and specifications.
- Enhancing professional and technical capabilities.
- Increasing institutional, technical and legal compatibility and understanding.
- Institutionalizing the technology exchange process

Texas works closely with its Mexican border state counterparts to exchange infrastructure planning information, to identify each state's technical needs and to establish positive, open communications. In an effort to further the exchange of information, Technology Transfer Centers (T2) have been established in Chihuahua, Nuevo León, Tamaulipas and Coahuila. Training courses and activities such as official visits, planning meetings, technical exchanges, conferences and workshops on transportation-related topics have been implemented. This year alone, the BTEP program carried out 18 different learning exchange activities.

The entities that participate in BTEP include: TxDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, the DOTs of California, Arizona and New Mexico, the Mexican Transportation Institute, the Mexican Ministry of Communications and Transportation, the Mexican states of Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León and Tamaulipas, Mexican institutions of education, and U.S. and Mexican publicly and privately-employed engineers.

Many TxDOT divisions and districts make valuable contributions to the BTEP program. This year, every TxDOT division, office and border district collectively presented a workshop about TxDOT for Mexican transportation officials. Additionally, the Transportation Planning and Programming Division, Bridge, Maintenance, Design and Construction Divisions, and the Laredo, El Paso and Pharr districts regularly exchange technological information through the BTEP program.

To coordinate the BTEP related work of TxDOT districts, divisions and offices, the International Relations Office develops an annual statewide plan compatible with the BTEP border-wide binational strategic plan. In addition to the BTEP statewide plan, each border district generates a local BTEP plan, (coordinated with the IRO plan and their respective Mexican border state counterparts), highlighting exchange opportunities.

Continuing to work closely with Mexico and share transportation priorities will ensure the best use of funds in the border region and contribute to the safe and efficient transport of people and goods throughout the area.

International Visitors/Inquiries

TxDOT continues to host visitors interested in various aspects of the transportation industry. During the past year, six large delegations, from China, Mexico, Jordan and Spain visited TxDOT. A total of 145 individuals visited TxDOT in 2004, bringing the total visitors TxDOT has hosted since 1994 to 1,595. These visitors hail from all over the world: Algeria, Australia, Belarus, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Egypt, England, Finland, France, Ghana, Hungary, Jordan, India, Italy, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Mongolia, the Netherlands, New Guinea, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Viet Nam and Venezuela.

The IRO is responsible, as the first point of contact, for coordinating and welcoming TxDOT's international visitors, arranging meetings and presentations, and assuring that protocols are followed. In addition, in preparation for receiving the visitors, the IRO provides briefings to TxDOT personnel, highlighting relevant information and cultural considerations related to the visiting country. Visitors hail from both private and public sectors, and visits generally last one to two days.

The department also occasionally receives international visitors, often engineers or students of engineering, for more extended periods. For example, this year, the El Paso District hosted two engineers to study Traffic Management for two weeks in the district.

The opportunity to share transportation related techniques and methods, whether through short visits, longer visits or the simple exchange of transportation information, is invaluable. Visits afford TxDOT and other countries the chance to exchange first hand information and technology. Additionally, this exchange is important to the ongoing planning, problem-solving and development of infrastructure along the Mexico-Texas border.

Finally, the IRO office receives and responds to numerous inquiries from groups and individuals seeking information about commerce, international protocols, licensing, insurance, titling and research issues.

Other Districts/Divisions/Offices Activities

The Pharr, Laredo and El Paso districts have histories of cooperation with transportation officials in the neighboring Mexican states. All three districts have made extensive efforts to develop close productive working relationships with their Mexican neighbors. Their goal is to continue to develop a planning and programming process that enhances collaborative planning along the border.

El Paso (ELP)

The El Paso district continues to work to enhance the flow of traffic in this important border area. To manage traffic more efficiently, traffic counters at all international crossings are being constructed. Additionally cameras are being installed along LP 375 (Cesar Chavez Highway) that will link to the city of El Paso's Traffic Management Center. The City of El Paso is coordinating with U.S. General Services Administration (USGSA) regarding access issues into Paso del Norte Bridge, with the intention of bettering the flow of traffic across the border.

The district has worked this year on the development of Border Safety Inspection Facilities (BSIF) that allow for speedy inspection of trucks crossing local international bridges. The Zaragoza Port of Entry temporary BSIF is operational while the construction of the permanent facilities at the Bridge of the Americas (BOTA) and at the Zaragoza Port of Entry is under development.

El Paso area Ports of Entry were selected as Texas sites to test innovative Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). These systems are intended to make border crossings more efficient. The first phase of the implementation plan for the coordinated ports of entry was completed by the Texas Transportation Institute by the end of 2004. The second phase of implementation will take place in 2005.

The El Paso District is also involved in various transportation related task forces and research studies dealing with issues such as traffic control, communication and environmental impacts on the border. Additionally, the district is actively involved with the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Office (MPO) in planning for transportation improvements in the area. The Camino Real Corridor-Border Improvement Plan Study (BIP) is underway. This project is being carried out by the El Paso MPO and will assist in determining feasibility of new international ports of entry and their effect on air quality. The El Paso MPO will also utilize the Border Wizard software to evaluate and propose improvements to POE operations.

The county of El Paso and TxDOT actively coordinated with the U.S. State Department for the approval of the Presidential Permit at Tornillo-Guadalupe POE, and this approval was issued in the latter part of 2004.

In addition, the district exchanges information and technology by means of the Technology

Transfer Center (T²) located in the neighboring border state of Chihuahua. The district received two visiting engineers from the Dirección de Tránsito y Transporte de Chihuahua (Office of Transit and Transportation). These engineers studied and learned about traffic and transportation over the course of two weeks. District staff also traveled to Chihuahua to coordinate transportation planning and projects with the Secretaria de Comunicaciones y Obras Públicas (Secretariat of Communication and Public Works). The district also hosted the Chihuahua T2 Center Comité Directivo meeting in Oct. 2004.

Laredo (LRD)

The district is currently working on a permanent BSIF at the World Trade Bridge. When completed, the BSIF will allow for trucks to be inspected by various DPS staff to insure compliance with state regulations. Transponder tags will additionally ease the tracking and mobility of trucks through this station.

The Laredo district staff provides updates to officials from the Mexican states of Tamaulipas, Nuevo León, and Coahuila on projects in the Laredo District. District staff also has attended several planning meetings held between Tamaulipas, Coahuila and Nuevo León in an effort to share information on planning operations.

As part of the technology exchange process between Texas and its Mexican counterparts, the Laredo District continues to provide workshops, tours and visits with Nuevo León, Coahuila and Tamaulipas.

Future opportunities for technology exchange have been developed at the World Trade Bridge. As presented in the district-wide BTEP plan, these include binational study opportunities on work related to hydraulic pavement, bridge and lighting construction, landscaping, signage, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), earthwork and drainage structures.

Pharr (PHR)

The Pharr District has been actively involved in the Border Technology Exchange Program. The district continues to sponsor workshops, tours and visits of Mexican counterparts from Nuevo León and Tamaulipas, covering all areas of district operations. In the past, district staff members have traveled to Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas, to meet with officials from the Secretaría de Desarrollo Industrial, Comercial y Turístico (SEDICOT-Ministry of Industrial, Commercial and Tourist Development) to continue with binational technology exchange and coordination of projects along the Texas-Mexico border.

The district continues to coordinate the process of evaluating the feasibility of rehabilitating and

preserving the historic Roma Suspension Bridge with the SEDICOT and the SCT.

The Pharr District has elaborated a district-wide BTEP plan stressing exchange opportunities resulting from the entity's daily activities. As a direct result of this plan, the district has participated in several technology exchange workshops with Mexican Border States on topics such as Value Engineering, Asphaltic Concrete Design, Bridge Scour and many other topics.

The Pharr District, in coordination with the Design Division, performed several Value Engineering workshops in Ciudad Victoria to aid the State Department in evaluating the largest project in Tamaulipas. One of the value engineering evaluations took place at the schematic level, evaluating the potential for tunneling through the mountains. A second value engineering effort was geared more toward the acceleration of construction time and studying various segments for these purposes.

The Pharr District, the Design Division and the other border Districts participated in a nationwide training in Value Engineering via teleconferencing. The district provided an engineer to assist in instructing the nationwide teleconference via satellite. The teleconference was received simultaneously in all state SCT centers in Mexico. Various subjects were taught, preparing Mexican engineers to teach the Value Engineering concepts in the future.

The Pharr District continues to coordinate with IRO and the Design Division to provide additional value engineering training courses to the Mexican states through the BTEP. The district also participates in the Border Liaison Mechanism (BLM) in Brownsville, Texas. The BLM is co-chaired by the Mexican Consuls in McAllen and Brownsville and the U.S. Consul in Matamoros. The organization, which is comprised of governmental entities from both sides of the border, meets approximately every four months to hear concerns regarding the border region.

Construction (CST)

The Construction Division (CST) impacts the international transportation industry in a number of ways. The Division shares expertise and facilitates information exchange by hosting international visitors from the public and private sectors interested in materials and construction matters, pavement design, pavement management, pavement data equipment development and accelerated pavement testing. The Construction Division also furthers technology exchange by providing information on research and design criteria and processes.

In addition, CST participates in International conferences, committees and workshops held in the United States. For example, TxDOT is one of the sponsors of the 'International Conference on Accelerated Pavement Testing'. This conference provides an opportunity for TxDOT personnel to share information with experts including U.S. state DOT and university counterparts as well

as representatives from European, Asian and African countries. The CST also offers technical expertise on panels at the annual Transportation Research Board meeting, which hosts over 9,000 attendees from the U.S. and many other countries.

Other international committees or conferences, in which the Construction division participates, include:

- American Society for Testing and Materials.
- NASA Wallops Island Runway Friction Workshop.
- Road Profilers Users Group.
- Concrete Pavement Surface Characteristics Research Workgroup.

Construction Division personnel additionally provide important technical support to NAFTA's Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee Working Group 2 on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions.

Design (DES)

The Design Division contributes to TxDOT's international exchanges by sharing design criteria with international visitors or information seekers. Such exchanges take the form of personal interviews, group presentations, and sometimes conjoint presentations with transportation research centers such as the Center for Transportation Research (CTR) and the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI). This division also provides staff support to the Border Technology Exchange Program on an as-needed basis.

Environmental Affairs (ENV)

The Environmental Affairs Division's involvement in the international arena includes:

- Involvement in special study requirements for archaeological investigations where foreign laboratories must be used.
- Cooperation and exchange of information between archaeological laboratories.
- Excavation of archaeological sites of international importance.

The ENV division continues to work toward restoration of the historic International Roma Suspension Bridge, a joint project of the TxDOT/FHWA Enhancement Program and the government of Mexico. The recent designation of this bridge as a "National Artistic Monument" by the Mexican government has provided a funding source that, along with the already allocated Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds from the U.S., provides the resources necessary to move the project forward. Details on how the project is to proceed are pending agreement between the

U.S. and Mexican governments.

TxDOT has been involved with the clean-up of the Tex Tin Superfund, remediating soil contaminated with arsenic. The ENV division subsequently hosted international visitors to the site to research the rehabilitation of heavily polluted soils using Superfund regulations and methods.

Motor Carrier (MCD)

Motor Carrier Division staff members participate in informational seminars and transportation fairs related to cross border trucking, briefings for international visitors, and NAFTA-related issues. MCD is a voting member of the Western Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (WASHTO) Committee on Highway Transport, a committee that promotes uniform laws, regulations, and practices among jurisdictions for the efficient and safe movement of goods and services. These laws also impact Canadian and Mexican truck uniformity. The committee meets twice a year.

The Motor Carrier Division, along with the Traffic Operations Division (TRF), managed the development of the Texas Intelligent Transportation System/Commercial Vehicle Operations (ITS/CVO) Business Plan, completed in January 2001. The plan was developed through a multi-discipline steering committee, including other divisions, state and federal agencies, and industry associations. Although the ITS/CVO Business Plan is a state plan, it encompasses activities that will benefit cross-border traffic. MCD staff members continue to be involved in the plan's implementation.

In 2004, the MCD participated in the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Customs Trade Partnership against Terrorism (C-TPAT) meeting in El Paso, Texas. The C-TPAT meeting provides information and channels of communication between state/federal government agencies and El Paso/Ciudad Juarez based motor carriers. MCD made a presentation about Single State Registration.

MCD oversees rules for commercial motor carrier registration and insurance requirements under Texas Transportation Code, Chapter 643, and single state registration under the Texas Transportation Code, Chapter 645, which applies to international motor carriers operating in Texas. MCD provides public assistance (including assistance in Spanish), conducts field audits, and administers complaint resolutions with regard to motor carriers operating in Texas. The administration of these responsibilities by MCD affects international motor carriers operating in Texas.

MCD is also responsible for administering Texas' oversize/overweight permit program under the Texas Transportation Code, Chapter 623. These requirements impact Mexican-based carriers transporting oversized or overweight loads into Texas.

In addition, the division has a web site that includes a Mexican-based Commercial Motor Carriers Vehicle Checklist and a link to the department's International Motor Carriers Frequently Asked Questions list. The web site address is:

<http://www.dot.state.tx.us/med/onestop/foreign.htm>

Research and Technology Implementation (RTI)

The Research and Technology Implementation Office administers the federal Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). TxDOT contracts with the Texas A&M University System's Engineering Extension Service for the program. LTAP program administrators are available to meet with counterparts in Mexico to advise and coordinate activities. Additionally, international requests for research reports and engineering expertise are received and filled. Contact information for obtaining research reports can be found at the following website:

<http://library.ctr.utexas.edu/index.htm> .

Traffic Operations (TRF)

The Traffic Operations Division continues to be involved in a number of international activities; participating in groups, organizations and committees with substantial international memberships such as AASHTO, the Intelligent Transportation Society of America, the Transportation Research Board, and the Institute of Transportation Engineers. The division also developed Intelligent Transportation Systems related deployment and planning projects in El Paso, Del Rio, Laredo, and the Lower Rio Grande Valley. TRF managed the implementation of the ITS system through a multi-discipline steering committee, including the MCD and other divisions, state and federal agencies, and industry associations.

Additionally, the division researched and deployed various signage initiatives for the Texas-Mexico border region including warning signs and bilingual signs.

Lastly, the division worked with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Highway Administration to provide schematic drawings of typical traffic control plans for border patrol inspection stations and data related to current traffic challenges.

Transportation Planning and Programming (TPP)

TPP has the lead responsibility for the state international bridge application process as enacted by the 74th Texas Legislature in 1995 (Senate Bill 1633) and amended by 78th Texas Legislature in 2003 (House Bill 1563). These bills require that a political subdivision or private entity “obtain approval from the Texas Transportation Commission and from the United States for the construction of a bridge”. Factors that are considered by the commission related to approval include:

- The facility’s potential impacts on the economy of the region, the environment, traffic congestion and free trade.
- Whether the bridge construction is consistent with the state and regional transportation plans.
- Whether the future transportation infrastructure on both sides of the border, at the time the bridge becomes operational, will be of sufficient capacity to support the new structure.
- Whether the revenue generated by the bridge will be sufficient to finance the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of the bridge.
- Whether there is support on the Mexican side for the necessary transportation infrastructure.

In making its determination, the commission consults with the following agencies/offices:

- Texas Department of Public Safety
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- Texas Historical Commission
- Texas Department of Agriculture
- Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission
- Office of the Governor

TPP participates as TxDOT’s representative for the Latin American Trade and Transportation Study (LATTS). LATTS is supported by 14 states and Puerto Rico. Its purpose is to evaluate opportunities for trade with Latin America, and to determine transportation infrastructure investment needs for the alliance to capitalize on such trade.

Travel (TRV)

The Travel Division continues to be involved in international communications and activities by virtue of the travel and litter prevention information and literature it publishes and distributes.

In August 2004, the Travel Division updated, redesigned, and reprinted the Los Caminos del Rio brochure, which is distributed heavily along the Texas-Mexican border, primarily between Brownsville/Matamoros and Laredo/Nuevo Laredo. The brochure contains photographs, historical and travel information. Additionally, it contains a map covering the Los Caminos area on both sides of the border from the Gulf of Mexico including Bagdad, Tamaulipas, and Boca Chica, Texas, to an area upstream from Laredo/Nuevo Laredo, including Colombia, Nuevo León, and Mission San Bernardo, Guerrero, Coahuila. This brochure highlights museums and events in the Mexican communities of Matamoros, Valle Hermoso, Nuevo Progreso, Reynosa, Ciudad Díaz Ordaz, Santa Gertrudis, Camargo, Ciudad Miguel Alemán, Ciudad Mier, Nuevo Guerrero, Guerrero Viejo, Nuevo Laredo, and Guerrero.

The division publishes monthly editions of *Texas Highways*, the official travel magazine of Texas. The publication encourages recreational travel to and within the state and tells Texas stories to readers around the world. Currently, the magazine has 1,975 international paid subscribers among its readership with magazines going to 81 countries. *Texas Highways* magazine is not only mailed throughout the world but can also be found at the website address <http://www.texashighways.com>.

In 2004, *Texas Highways* magazine featured stories based on border areas, with locations of interest both on the Mexican and the U.S. sides of the border. Towns covered in the course of the year included: Del Rio, El Paso, Harlingen, Lajitas, Terlingua, McAllen, and Mission. The magazine also covered cultural aspects of Latin America with pieces on the Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Latin American Art in San Antonio; Tejano singer Lydia Mendoza; and conjunto music and festivals. The magazine hosted its annual “Where in Texas Contest?”, and included sightseeing and shopping tour of Matamoros for the winner. *Texas Highways*’ 30th Anniversary issue included top lists for Texas travelers. Among the sites listed were spots all along the border, from Brownsville/Matamoros to El Paso/Ciudad Juárez.

Through *Texas Highways*, TxDOT has been an active member of the International Regional Magazine Association (IRMA) since 1977. IRMA membership consists of regional magazines similar to *Texas Highways* from all over the United States, Ireland, Canada, Bermuda and other countries.

TxDOT's litter prevention programs, which are managed by the TRV division, have received international attention. People from around the world inquire about the department's famous “Don't Mess with Texas” public awareness campaign and the “Adopt-a-Highway” program. The “Adopt-a-Highway” program allows companies and organizations to participate in removing litter from state highways. Since the introduction of the programs in the 1980s, visitors from the United Kingdom, Japan, Mexico, Switzerland and South Africa have come to the TRV division to learn about litter prevention and starting similar programs in their countries. Organizations seeking more information can access the following websites: <http://www.dontmesswithtexas.org> or <http://www.texasadoptahighway.org> The division additionally produced a new Spanish-language “Don't Mess with Texas” public service announcement and has established the “Don't Mess with Texas” website in Spanish as well.

Vehicle Titles and Registration (VTR)

The VTR continues to work actively on border affairs. VTR Managers located along the border and across the state frequently meet with local and state law enforcement and U.S. Custom's officials to address problem solving at the border. Many organizations rely on the VTR to provide assistance regarding motor vehicle issues with or from Mexico.

VTR representatives attend monthly meetings, sponsored by U.S. Customs, with foreign carriers to discuss foreign motor carrier movements within the commercial zone. Additionally, this year, the VTR held a NAFTA registration training session with DPS Commercial Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) related to the same issue.

The Auto Theft Prevention Authority, which is part of the VTR, was created in 1991 by the Texas Legislature to reduce motor vehicle theft statewide. The Authority's Board of Directors consists of six governor appointees, representing law enforcement, consumers, and insurance companies, and the Executive Director of DPS, who serves ex-officio.

The Authority distributes funds through a grant process. Eligible organizations and agencies make applications for funding for activities such as enforcement/apprehension, prosecution/adjudication, and prevention of the sale of stolen auto parts. The ATPA creates a forum for operational oversight of the anti-theft program and administration of funding to reduce vehicle theft in Texas. The program is working effectively; the motor vehicle theft rate (number of stolen vehicles per 100,000 registered vehicles) has been reduced by over 54% since 1991.

ATPA staff, through the Border Solutions Committee, coordinates meetings and conferences with Mexican officials from the border area to address issues and share information about dealing with the prevention of stolen vehicles.

Offering support in the disposition of abandoned/stolen/stored U.S. vehicles located in Ciudad Juarez, VTR staff met with Mexican officials and DPS. Many such vehicles are from Texas and VTR assists in determining the appropriate action to cancel the vehicle record.

Division staff twice attended the NAFTA Border State working group meetings that were coordinated with the International Fuel Tax Association (IFTA) and the International Registration Plan (IRP). These annual meetings focus on planning for the integration of Mexican registrants into international agreements. Additionally, the division provided title and registration training to U.S. Customs regarding the Texas procedure on handling Mexican vehicles being imported into Texas.

VTR staff met with Mexican officials in Ciudad Juarez to give a presentation on the impact of "Texas Vehicles Being Imported into Mexico". The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Agency is assisting Mexican officials in proposing new federal changes regarding the importation of used vehicles into Mexico and a perspective of how salvaged vehicles are handled in Texas.

The division is also committed to providing publications in Spanish to meet the needs of the Mexican transportation industry. The following forms are provided, those marked with an asterisk (*) are posted on the VTR's fax-on-demand system and web site.

- ◆ * Form VTR-29, Texas NAFTA Annual Permit Application
- ◆ * Form VTR-901, Buyer's Certification of Export-Only Sale
- ◆ * Form VTR-901-A, Annual Buyer's Certification of Export-Only Sale
- ◆ Form VTR-930-1, Certification of Texas Title Information
- ◆ Form VTR-930-2, Certification of Title in Process
- ◆ Book 81, General Information on NAFTA and Cross Border Traffic
- ◆ Summary of Informal Paired City Agreements with the Mexican States of Coahuila and Chihuahua and the Bilateral Understanding with the Mexican State of Tamaulipas.

SECTION II
COMMITTEES, CONFERENCES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee (LTSS)

Description: The North American Free Trade Agreement established a Committee on Standards-Related Measures to help the United States, Canada and Mexico monitor and implement the agreement. Four subcommittees, including the Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee, were established to address specific issues.

Trilateral Working Groups were established to concentrate on specific issues. Additionally, Transportation Consultative Group (TCG) Working Groups were established to address non-standards issues that affect cross border movements among the three countries. They operate in conjunction with the LTSS, but these groups were not specified in NAFTA and are not officially a part of the LTSS. The groups' configuration has changed as they have completed their stated missions. Still functioning are:

- LTSS Working Group 1: Driver and Vehicle Standards and Supervision of Motor Carrier Compliance (will be merged with TCG Group 1)
- LTSS Working Group 2: Vehicle Weights and Dimensions
- LTSS Working Group 5: Hazardous Materials Standards

- TCG Working Group 1: Cross Border Operations and Facilitation
(composed of TCGs 1 and 2)
- TCG Working Group 2: Rail Standards
- TCG Working Group 3: Automated Data Exchange
- TCG Working Group 4: Science and Technology
- TCG Working Group 5: Maritime and Port Policy

Participants: This trinational subcommittee is composed of representatives from the United States, Canada and Mexico. The IRO Director, who coordinates closely with the Texas Governor's Office, the Secretary of State's Office and TxDOT administration, has represented the state of Texas on the committee. The DES division provides technical support for Working Group 2. MCD and VTR also provide significant support for the working groups.

Purpose: To develop recommendations for harmonization of standards for bus, rail and truck operations and transportation of hazardous materials among Canada, Mexico and the United States.

Initiatives: The LTSS established working groups pursuant to Article 913 of NAFTA. The LTSS and TCG working groups meet as often as necessary to accomplish NAFTA goals.

Highlights of previous year's accomplishments include:

- Creation of a side by side comparison of vehicle weight and dimension limits for the United States, Mexico and Canada.
- Drafting safety performance criteria for carriers.
- The inauguration of a motor carrier safety data exchange program.
- The signature of a United States-Mexico MOU regarding commercial driver programs.
- The publication of an updated North American Emergency Response Guide regarding hazardous materials in English, Spanish and French.
- The signature of a United States-Mexico Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on drug and alcohol testing for motor vehicle drivers.
- The adoption of a uniform minimum age for commercial vehicle drivers.
- An agreement to develop a North American model rule and standards document related to the transport of hazardous materials.
- An analysis and comparison of traffic signage in the three countries.
- An analysis of regulations affecting rail safety in the three countries.
- A five-year plan for increased cooperation in the field of North American transportation technologies.

Meetings: The LTSS met for the first time in Mexico on July 11-12, 1994. The group meets once a year in plenary session. The last plenary session was held in Mexico City on June 3-4, 2004, along with LTSS groups 1, 2 and 5 respectively.

Benefits: Participation in this committee, when meetings occur, affords TxDOT the opportunity to closely monitor and provide input to the negotiations among the three NAFTA nations, as they discuss the compatibility of transportation standards. Significant efforts have been put forth to reduce barriers to Mexican carriers being allowed to operate within the United States.

ATPA Border Solutions Committee

Description: The Border Solutions Committee (BSC) was established in 1993 by the Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA) to study and recommend auto theft initiatives and trends along the 1,250 miles of the Texas and Mexico border. The BSC is a bi-national committee composed of local, state, and federal representatives from the U.S. and Mexico.

Participants: The committee is composed of representatives from both Texas and Mexico.

Purpose: The Border Solutions Committee advises the ATPA on issues affecting the auto theft rate along the Texas-Mexico border, including ways to facilitate the location, recovery and return of vehicles from both sides of the border. The committee also recommends to the ATPA Board, for possible funding, bi-national mutually beneficial projects to combat motor vehicle theft along the border.

Initiatives:

- Met with Texas Department of Insurance regarding Cross Border Liability Issues
- Learned New Technology Trends from the Oficina Coordinadora de Riesgos Asegurados (Mexico)
- Updated information from Border Auto Theft Information Center & Border Partners Program
- Received report from Border Tax Assessor Task Forces regarding fraudulent titles and vehicle registrations
- Incorporated License Plate Reader Program Information

Meetings: Meetings occur once or twice yearly. During meetings, committee members provide updates of auto theft trends affecting their areas in Texas and Mexico. Representatives discuss the relationship with U.S. law enforcement and special operations to combat auto theft.

Benefits: The committee provides an outstanding vehicle for maintaining communication, cooperation and positive working relationships between authorities from Mexico and the United States. The committee also allows for dissemination of information and sharing of ideas on how to deal with stolen vehicles.

Joint Working Committee (JWC)

Description: This Committee was created by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on April 29, 1994, by U.S. Transportation Secretary Federico Peña and Mexican Transportation Secretary Emilio Gamboa. The JWC oversaw the funding, logistics, and research of a border wide binational study, which was completed in 1998. A new MOU was signed in 2000 to continue the work of the Committee.

Participants: The JWC members include:

- Four representatives from the Ministry of Communications and Transportation (Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transportes-SCT) and four from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
 - The senior person of these groups is the chief of delegation for the respective U.S. and Mexico delegations.
 - One member from each of these delegations is a border-wide coordinator for the respective delegation.
- A chief delegate and a co-delegate as required represent each U.S. and Mexican border state.
 - TxDOT's Assistant Executive Director for Engineering Operations and IRO Director are the Texas delegates.
- One representative from the U.S. State Department and the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE - Ministry of Foreign Relations) respectively.

Purpose: The JWC serves as a forum for the coordination of border transportation planning and programming activities along the Texas-Mexico border. The JWC is also used as a medium for discussing other binational border area transportation issues.

Goals: The JWC Memo of Understanding for 2000 cites the following goals:

- Maintain frequent and effective communication among the parties and their respective border states from both countries concerning transportation planning.
- Closely coordinate between the entities involved in the US-Mexico Joint Working Committee to support the planning processes at the federal, state, regional, and local levels.
- Coordinate with the U.S.-Mexico Binational Bridges and Border Crossings Group and other federal and state organizations involved in activities related to border crossings.
- Stimulate and promote the application of innovative methods to improve the safe, efficient, and economical cross border movement of people and goods.
- Pursue additional goals as agreed upon by the participants.

Initiatives: The Memo of Understanding for 2000 included the nine lines of work listed below:

- Border Infrastructure Needs Assessment
- Geographic Information System /Live Data Bank
- Transborder Corridor Planning
- Coordination System for the Operation of Border Ports of Entry
- Intelligent Transportation Systems
- Innovative Financing Mechanisms for Border Related Improvements
- Border Technology Exchange Program
- Air Quality
- Intermodal Transportation

The 2003 – 2005 JWC Work Plan includes the following projects:

- Port of Entry Coordination Pilot
- Intelligent Transportation Systems at Otay Mesa
- Innovative Financing Mechanisms
- Geographic Information Systems
- Identification of Bottlenecks at the Border

Meetings: The JWC met for the first time on August 1-2, 1994, in San Antonio, Texas. The JWC meets twice a year alternating meeting locations between the U.S. and Mexico.

Benefits: The JWC is the only U.S.-Mexico border-wide planning work group.

United States-Mexico Binational Bridges and Border Crossings Group

Description: There are a total of 26 international bridges and border crossings connecting Texas and Mexico, which share 1,254.7 miles of common border. Hence this group focuses on proposed international bridges and border crossings, the status/needs of current border crossing facilities and transportation access.

Participants: Formed in 1981, the group is composed of delegations from the governments of the United States and Mexico. The U.S. Department of State's Coordinator for U.S.-Mexico Border Affairs chairs the U.S. delegation, while the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores' (SRE) Director General for North American Affairs chairs the Mexican delegation. U.S. and Mexico border state representatives have been included in the sessions since 1994. The Assistant Executive Director for Engineering Operations and the IRO represent TxDOT on the group.

Purpose: To discuss proposed bridges and border crossings and their related infrastructure and to exchange technical information so that those projects, which both federal governments deem beneficial, may complete the approval process of the two respective governments. Related issues such as toll roads and other infrastructure projects are discussed, as well as operational matters involving existing and future crossings.

Meetings: The group meets twice yearly. Meetings include participation of the U.S. and Mexican delegations composed of representatives from federal agencies that have an interest in/or responsibility for bilateral relations and permitting of new crossings (international ports of entry). Issues discussed include:

- Inspections
- Highway/rail access
- Construction of facilities
- Environment
- Monitoring of the international boundary
- Border Security Facilities

The meetings include a U.S.-only and a Mexico-only meeting followed by three binational sessions over a three-day period. During the public sessions sponsors of the proposed bridges and border crossings (and related infrastructure projects) make presentations. These interactive sessions, in which the U.S. and Mexican delegations can query the presenters. During the technical sessions, the delegations meet to discuss specific border crossings and exchange views and technical information. Reports of binational committees' activities and major programs that directly impact the U.S. - Mexico border area are made. Each U.S. and Mexican border state representative offers a presentation on the development of current transportation infrastructure projects. The final session is a plenary at which positions are summarized by the two delegations. In addition, the group conducts periodic "border walks", alternating between the U.S. and Mexico.

Benefits: This group allows state participation in all sessions of the U.S. delegation, the value of which is twofold. Firstly, state DOT representatives can provide input to which the government delegation members might not be privy. Such project-specific information should be considered in advancing proposed bridge and crossing projects through approval processes. In addition, the information that state DOTs glean from the closed technical session assists those agencies in transportation infrastructure development planning. Texas plays a key role in this forum as it is the only border state that requires a state border crossings permit in conjunction with the issuing of a U.S. Presidential Permit.

Working groups were formed for the first time during the October 2002 session, in response to the section of the U.S.-Mexico 22-Point Partnership Plan dealing with infrastructure. The four working groups (Long-term Planning, Harmonization of Procedures for Approving Border Crossings, Relief of Bottlenecks and Financing of Ports) develop recommendations to be submitted to the Binational Committee for consideration.

Note: Details regarding the border crossings are available in the TxDOT publication *Texas-Mexico International Bridges and Border Crossings: Existing and Proposed*, available from the International Relations Office or on the web at www.dot.state.tx.us/iro/.

Border Governors' Conference

Description: Governors of the ten U.S.-Mexican border states meet once a year to discuss topics of mutual interest and concern. Work groups at the conference include: Agriculture, Border Crossing, Economic Development, Education, Environment, Energy, Health, Tourism, North American Development Bank, Water for Sustainable Development and Border Security. The members of the various work tables meet during the year to develop recommendations and follow up on action plans. From this input, a joint declaration is developed and delivered to federal and state governmental entities and presidents of both countries.

Participants: Include border governors, representatives from each of the border governors' offices, and state delegates for each of the work tables. Federal government representatives are invited as observers. TxDOT's IRO Director coordinates department input on border transportation issues.

Purpose: To provide a forum that enables the ten border governors and interested entities to develop personal relationships, address issues and opportunities of the border region, and to promote initiatives for improving the quality of life of the people in the region.

Objectives of the conference are:

- 1) To foment and strengthen personal relationships between the border states.
- 2) To promote unified action along the U.S.-Mexico border and on national issues.
- 3) To address border problems and opportunities.
- 4) To jointly promote development throughout the border region.

Meetings: The conference is held annually and this year was held in Santa Fe, New Mexico in August, 2004. The Border Crossings Worktable, in which TxDOT participates, met two times during the year to develop recommendations and action plans.

Benefits: This forum provides TxDOT with an opportunity to work closely with the Governor's Office and the Secretary of State's Office in establishing coordinated positions on transportation border issues. The conference also promotes coordination with neighboring states in making recommendations regarding the border area.

Motor Carrier NAFTA Task Force

Description: The Motor Carrier NAFTA task force operates under the aegis of the Base State Working Group as provided for under Title IV, Motor Carrier Act, Section 4008, Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991.

Participants: The task force consists of representatives from Arizona, California, Maine, Montana, New Mexico, Texas and Utah. There are also representatives from the Federal Highway Administration, the National Conference on State Legislatures, the International Registration Plan, HELP, Inc., the American Trucking Associations, the National Governors' Association and the International Fuel Tax Agreement. The Director of TxDOT's Vehicle Titles and Registration Division represents Texas on the task force.

Purpose: According to Section 4008 of ISTEA, the task force was established for the purpose of: "Proposing procedures for resolving disputes among states participating in the International Registration Plan and among states participating in the International Fuel Tax Agreement, including designation of the Department of Transportation, or any other person for resolving such disputes;" and, "Providing technical assistance to states participating or seeking to participate in the plan or in the agreement."

Meetings: Yearly

Benefits: This task force is an effective forum for addressing the fundamental differences in motor carrier operations among U.S. and Mexican states and Canadian provinces.

At the current time, a three step approach is being considered to enable Mexico to participate in the IRP program: 1) the immediate issuance of NAFTA permits 2) later, the four border states (Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas) would serve as base jurisdictions for Mexican carriers, and ultimately 3) Mexico would formally join the IRP and IFTA.

Secretary of State's Border Advisory Roundtable

Description: The Secretary of State is designated as the chief liaison to Mexico and the border region of Texas. The Texas Border and Mexican Affairs Division of the Secretary of State's Office established a State Agency Advisory Roundtable on Border/Mexican Affairs ("Advisory Roundtable") for the purpose of identifying common inter-agency border concerns.

Participants: Representatives from 26 different state agencies that have dealings with the border area and/or Mexico.

Purpose: The Roundtable's common purpose is to:

- a. Establish an ongoing dialogue relating to news and information of border and cross-border affairs.
- b. Discuss, focus and monitor major issues and concerns.
- c. Identify interagency coordination and collaboration activities to facilitate common policy and project objectives.
- d. Develop a profile of border and cross-border activities, initiatives and policies.

Meetings: The Advisory Roundtable meets on a quarterly basis. The meeting is usually held from 10 a.m. to noon at the Rudder Building across from the Capitol.

Benefits: The Advisory Roundtable has served to keep the agencies advised of the initiatives and programs of all of the other agencies relating to Mexico and the border. In addition, it organized a series of high-quality short courses designed to address the challenges of the border area and significantly improve the State's ability to work with our Mexican counterparts and achieve positive results that benefit our respective countries. These short courses are open to all state employees.

**SECTION III
PUBLICATIONS**

In addition to the *International Activities Report*, (available in English and Spanish), the following TxDOT publications deal with TxDOT's international endeavors.

Texas-Mexico International Bridges and Border Crossings: Existing and Proposed

(International Relations Office) This report, which is updated annually, is a comprehensive guide to all of the existing and proposed border crossings connecting Texas and the Mexican states of Tamaulipas, Nuevo León, Coahuila and Chihuahua. The report gives descriptive information such as maps of the area, planned improvements with estimated costs, connecting roadway and general traffic information for each bridge. For the proposed bridges, information is given regarding the costs of bridges and supporting facilities, as well as permit status. The 2003 edition of the report, also available in Spanish, can be found on the Web at: www.dot.state.tx.us/iro/

Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee (LTSS) Quarterly Report

(International Relations Office) In 1995, the Texas Legislature passed a bill requiring TxDOT to publish this report for the Legislature, the Governor's Office and the Attorney General's office. It provides a quarterly summary of activities related to the LTSS and its associated groups. The report is available on the Web at www.dot.state.tx.us/iro/

Oversize, Overweight Permit Rule Booklet (English and Spanish Versions)

(Motor Carrier Division) This publication provides administrative rules adopted under 43 TAC, Chapter 28 to implement provisions of Texas Transportation Code, Chapter 623. This publication includes information regarding the process for obtaining oversize and overweight permits.

Motor Carrier Rules Booklet

(Motor Carrier Division) This publication provides administrative rules adopted under 43 TAC, Chapter 18 to implement provisions of Texas Transportation Code, Chapters 643 and 645. This publication includes information regarding motor carrier registration and insurance requirements, including requirements for Mexico-based carriers.

Motor Carrier Handbook

(Motor Carrier Division) This publication provides information for motor carriers operating in Texas, including Mexico-based carriers. The Handbook includes practical information needed to meet Texas' motor carrier registration, insurance, size and weight, and oversize/overweight permit requirements.

Truck Tips Brochure

(Motor Carrier Division) This brochure outlines basic requirements for operating as a motor carrier in Texas, and includes a comprehensive list of state agencies whose requirements apply to motor carriers.

General Information on NAFTA and Cross Border Traffic (English and Spanish versions)

(Vehicle Titles and Registration Division and Motor Carrier Division) This publication provides general information and responds to frequently asked questions (FAQs) on NAFTA and the international movement of commercial motor vehicles. The publication includes sections on the NAFTA Annual Permit complete with the application (the permit application is available in English and Spanish); general information on the 72 and 144-Hour Permits; International Motor Carrier information; Motor Carrier Division applications; Oversize/Overweight Permits (available in English and Spanish); additional telephone numbers and addresses for VTR Regional offices and the Border County Tax Offices (in English Only); and the MCD One-Stop-Shop Telephone Menu. The general information and FAQs are available on the Internet at www.dot.state.tx.us by selecting “Automobiles”. This publication was revised on September, 2003 and is now available in English and Spanish.