



Texas Department of Transportation

Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee Quarterly Report



July 2002

International Relations Office

Introduction

The Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee (LTSS) was created under the auspices of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The primary goal of the LTSS is to examine the land transportation regulatory regimes of Mexico, Canada and the United States, and work toward their harmonization.

As directed by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 78, adopted by the 74th Legislature of the State of Texas, the following is the quarterly report on the progress of the LTSS and its related groups. This report has been prepared by the International Relations Office of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and covers the quarter ending June 30, 2002.

This report begins with a summary of general LTSS and related activities. The sections that follow include activities of each of the LTSS Working Groups and Transportation Consultative Group Working Groups (TCGs). The report concludes with a list of planned LTSS activities. Please note that some groups have completed their mandates and are therefore not listed in this report.

The information in this report was provided by the U.S. Working Group chairs and other U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) officials, as well as published reports and information obtained from Mexican officials. The initial report, issued in September 1995, contains background material that will not be repeated here. To obtain a copy of that report or others, please contact the Texas legislative library or the TxDOT International Relations Office (IRO) at (512) 374-5326. Additional information on previous LTSS-related work group activities is available at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Summary of General LTSS and Related Activities

The major activity during this quarter was the trilateral NAFTA conference in San Antonio on May 29-31. The purpose of the conference was to provide practical operating information to those who will be operating in the new trilateral, crossborder environment. Presenters from a variety of federal agencies from all three countries and some state representatives (including TxDOT) provided information on numerous subjects, including operating requirements, safety requirements, hazardous materials information, weight and dimension limits, medical requirements, customs and agricultural issues and more. Unfortunately, several of the scheduled presenters from Mexico did not arrive at the conference, but nonetheless, a great deal of information from the three nations was exchanged.

Two other related meetings took place during the quarter: a meeting of U.S. and Mexican customs agencies to discuss implementation of elements of the Bush-Fox twenty-two point "Smart Border" plan and a meeting of the environmental secretaries from the three countries, to discuss implementation of the NAFTA environmental protection clauses and a pilot program for electronic tracking of hazardous waste.

No firm date has yet been established for the implementation of NAFTA's crossborder trucking provisions. However, as part of preparation for the opening, TxDOT is in process of developing eight temporary safety inspection facilities along the border. To help construct the permanent facilities at the eight locations, the federal government recently provided Texas with \$40.8 million, out of \$54 million designated for such facilities along the entire Texas-Mexico border.

Summary of LTSS Working Group Activities

Working Group 1: Driver and Vehicle Standards and Supervision of Motor Carrier Compliance

U.S. Chair: Tom Kozlowski, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.

Working Group 2: Vehicle Weights and Dimensions

U.S. Chair: Jim March, Federal Highway Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.

Working Group 5: Hazardous Materials Standards

U.S. Chair: Robert Richard, Research and Special Programs Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.

Summary of Transportation Consultative Group Activities

TCG Working Group 1: Cross Border Operations and Facilitation

U.S. Chair: Maria C. Lameiro, U.S. Department of Transportation

No new information was reported for the quarter.

Transportation Consultative Group 3: Automated Data Exchange

U.S. Chair: Angie Sebastian, Federal Highway Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.

TCG Working Group 4: Science and Technology

U.S. Chair: Tim Klein, U.S. Department of Transportation

No new information was reported for the quarter.

TCG Working Group 5: Maritime and Port Policy

U.S. Chair: Gregory Hall, Maritime Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.

Planned LTSS Activities

- LTSS Plenary, 2002, probably in October.