

### The Canada/United States Accord on Our Shared Border- A Call to Action For 1999

On February 25, 1995 Prime Minister Chretien and President Clinton announced agreement on an Accord that targeted four objectives:

- ε The promotion of international trade
- ε The facilitation of people movement
- ε The provision of enhanced protection against drugs, smuggling and illegal and irregular movement of people
- ε The reduction of costs for both government and users

The CAN/AM Border Trade Alliance has been involved with the dialogue on the implementation of the Accord from day one and has been an enthusiastic supporter of what was and still is an enlightened bi-national initiative. The early period of implementation which focussed on establishing expedited traveler programs such as CANPASS, Remote ports and the experimentation with the use of technology in commercial processing were most encouraging.

The past two years, however, has seen a real slowdown in the implementation of the Accord, which puts at risk the attainment of the stated objectives.

#### Specifically

- ε The travelers programs remain non-integrated.
- ε Travelers must still apply for each mode (remote, land crossing, airport, etc) and in each country thus dramatically reducing the take up and the efficiencies.
- ε The physical and legislative constraints at the border continue to prevent the streamlining of commercial processes and the achievement of cost savings for both traders and governments.
- ε The NATAP experiment with transponder and other components of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) is stalled at the pilot stage.
- ε The absence of Canadian legislation that would allow U.S. officials to administer U.S. laws on Canadian soil perpetuating the congestion at major land ports of Entry especially those with bridges or tunnels.
- ε The same legislative problem also prevents any significant further streamlining or even integration of the commercial processes of the two countries which in turn offsets the cost, service, and enforcement gains which could accrue from a joint facility such as Coutts/Sweetgrass.

#### What needs to be done By Canada

1. Complete passage, as soon as possible, of the legislation which clarifies the powers and authorities of U.S. officials working in the in-transit pre-clearance areas of Canadian airports so that the current pilot at Vancouver International Airport may be extended to all airports.
2. Initiate the preparation of similar legislation that would allow U.S. officials to work on Canadian soil in the clearance of people and goods *in any mode-land, marine, or rail*

#### By The United States

1. To complete the negotiation of the harmonized requirements for all expedited traveler programs-airport, private aircraft, private boat, frequent land border travelers, remote port by the end of 1999.

By both Countries- This Year

1. To agree, once the enabling Canadian legislation is in place, to the activities that may be performed by Canadian and U.S. officials on the soil of the other country and to complete the detailed design of the integrated operation at Buffalo/Fort Erie.
2. To agree upon the extent to which commercial and traveler processing activities could be integrated that would in turn drive the integrated design of the Coutts/Sweetgrass facility. A single system for U.S. and Canadian citizens travelling in either direction is envisioned.
3. To agree on a plan for the deployment of ITS technology at the Windsor/Detroit pilot site and at selected Ports of Entry with significant volumes of commercial transactions.
4. Provide adequate funding for staff, technology development, equipment, and automation for agencies involved in the border crossing process to achieve appropriate facilitation and enforcement.