

The development of joint facilities has revealed a number of operational challenges along the way. Canadian and US Customs officials are drawing from their experiences in working together to identify solutions to enhance the feasibility of joint facilities. Solutions are being sought to streamline the design and construction of new facilities and to place them in locations that maximize their efficiency, should placement on the border line itself not prove feasible. Both governments recognize the importance of resolving these issues as the construction of more joint facilities is an important element of adjusting border management practices to the new reality.

Recommendation 9

That, in light of the evidence received, the Government of Canada assess the effectiveness of its internal mechanisms to coordinate the border management and security policies of Canada and take appropriate remedial action.

Following the events of September 11, the Government of Canada moved quickly to establish a new, more effective mechanism to coordinate border management issues. Deputy Prime Minister Manley was given responsibility for the coordination of the Government's response to border security concerns, which resulted in the signing of the Smart Border Declaration with Tom Ridge, the Director of Homeland Security for the U.S. on December 12, 2001.

Although responsibility for various aspects of border policy generally lies with individual departments and agencies, the Government of Canada's quick and deliberate actions to ensure centralized coordination of the border management file, such as the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Public Security and Anti-Terrorism, demonstrates the ability of the Government to provide effective direction and policy coordination to its officials. Indeed, the Smart Border process has demonstrated that the Government's capacity for horizontal coordination provides Canada with a significant advantage in discussions with the U.S.