

Mexico borders, the Government believes that a bilateral approach to problem-solving remains in Canada's best interest.

Recommendation 9

The Government should produce an annual report to Parliament reviewing in detail the status of the "Smart Borders" process. The ministers responsible for the implementation of border security measures should also appear before the relevant committees of both houses of Parliament on the substance of the report.

The Smart Border process has been a very successful, open bi-national border management initiative. Since the December 12, 2001 signing of the Smart Border Declaration, Deputy Prime Minister John Manley and Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge have met and spoken regularly to review progress on Action Plan deliverables and have regularly shared progress reports with the public.

When Prime Minister Chrétien and President Bush met on September 9, 2002, they asked that Deputy Prime Minister Manley and Secretary Ridge continue overseeing implementation of the Smart Border Action Plan, and continue providing them with periodic progress reports. The first update report, following the September meeting, was released to the public on December 6, 2002.

Government departments involved in the Smart Border process continue to publicly report the status of many Action Plan items. For example, Canada and US Customs and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the US Immigration and Naturalization Service maintain websites and issue news releases on the progress of the Free and Secure Trade (FAST) and NEXUS programs. The DFAIT and White House websites maintain comprehensive and up-to-date coverage on the Smart Borders process. Canadian and US transportation and law enforcement agencies also update their progress on Smart Border initiatives through their websites and news releases.

The Parliament of Canada enjoys access to not only the substantial reporting discussed above, but also to regular appearances by senior Government officials before parliamentary committees responsible for these issues, as well as numerous informal briefing sessions for Parliamentarians. The Government will continue to keep Parliament informed as to the progress and challenges related to the Smart Border process through these existing and extensive reporting mechanisms. It should be noted that the provinces and territories, as well as industry stakeholders, are also regularly briefed on border and other related issues.

Ministers involved in the Smart Border process include those of the CCRA, CIC,

