

- 7.14 Educational and training services are among the products most crucial to the corridor region. Colleges and universities in Manitoba have begun to identify workforce requirements in transportation and logistics across the region, and are considering the development of more courses and the marketing effort needed to satisfy the growing demand. Manitoba's educational system appears to be an often underutilized competitive advantage, and its institutions are beginning to focus their attention on the human resources related to the corridor. The export of training services and educational courses from Manitoba would illustrate the value we place on knowledge-based industries and the importance of establishing pan-corridor institutional links.

Recommendation

Encourage linkages along the corridor for educational and training programs in transportation, distribution, logistics and international trade among a group of educational organizations along the corridor, to encourage closer working relationships leading to business development opportunities.

- 7.15 A further issue involves the training and mandate given to customs and immigration officials in Canada, the United States and Mexico. There seems to be a perception, in some cases, of a lack of balance between the conduct of their regulatory functions and their consideration of the interests of travellers, carriers and shippers. This Task Force was told that the effect of this situation for business travellers and tourists has been to discourage business linkages and allow an atmosphere in which foreign investors and visitors felt unwelcome. Instances of particular difficulties and misunderstandings about aboriginal rights at borders were brought to the Task Force's attention. The use of the advanced employee training by Revenue Canada and its US and Mexican counterparts continues to be crucial.

Recommendation

Promote tri-national training for customs and immigration officials in all three countries to balance their functions involving the regulation of products, vehicles and people with their functions involving the encouragement of international commerce and the movement of people across the Canadian, US and Mexican borders.

Innovation

- 7.16 At the same time as the US Government is considering its allocations of funding related to corridor development, the Government of Canada is looking at its options related to highway development. In Transport Canada, a proposal is being drafted on the transportation aspects of border highway improvements. In this process, the Minister of Transport recently stated that the government was examining the renewal of the National Highway System programs. With that in mind, it seems reasonable that a Canadian initiative could be pursued in a coordinated effort with the US Government to help ensure that the highway and other transportation infrastructure of both countries