

Recommendation 4

That the Government of Canada examine the feasibility of constructing pre-clearance facilities for commercial traffic in the vicinity of heavily congested border-crossing points. As a necessary precursor to the development of these facilities for land crossings, legislation enabling pre-clearance at land borders should be introduced.

Canada and the U.S. are working together to improve the security and efficiency of the shared border based on the Smart Border Declaration. The Declaration's 30 point plan has refocused the direction for the Shared Border Accord working groups. One of these groups is assessing a number of options for clearance away from the border that will strengthen security and relieve congestion, including pre-clearance, reverse inspection, rail post-clearance and pre-processing centers.

Pre-clearance facilities at land borders that are being examined involve shared facilities and reverse inspection. There are significant legal, sovereignty and operational issues associated with pre-clearance and reverse inspection that are currently being analysed and that will have to be addressed to the mutual satisfaction of both countries.

Recommendation 5

That, following successful consultation with authorities in the U.S. and taking into account security considerations, the Government of Canada reactivate as soon as possible those programs (e.g., CSA, NEXUS, CANPASS) designed to improve border risk management and ease congestion. The NEXUS project should be expanded to all Canada-U.S. border crossings by the early part of 2002.

As part of the Smart Border Action Plan, the joint Canada-U.S. NEXUS pilot program for travellers in Sarnia, Ontario/Port Huron, Michigan was reinstated on December 21, 2001. In addition, on March 8, Deputy Prime Minister Manley and Director Ridge announced that NEXUS will be expanded to other Canada-U.S. land border crossings, beginning with three locations in southern British Columbia to be operational in June 2002.

It is the intention of both Governments that established programs like CANPASS Highway be replaced over time with the bilateral NEXUS program, and discussions are ongoing with the U.S. regarding the implementation schedule.

In addition, the Customs Self Assessment (CSA) program for commercial clients was implemented by CCRA on December 6, 2001. The program allows pre-approved, security-cleared participants to use a streamlined clearance option to move eligible goods across the border, after they have undergone a comprehensive risk assessment. By moving from a transactional system to one based on security, legitimate importers can move their goods more