

MTSNAC Intermodal Committee Meeting
May 5, 2008
Office of the World Shipping Council
1156 15th St. NW
Suite 300
Washington, D.C.

MEETING SUMMARY

Working Group

In Person:

Anne Kappel (WSC) – Chair
Paul Bea (Coastwise Coalition)
Peter Friedmann (AgTC)
Curtis Whalen (NMCC/ATA)
Richard Lolich (MARAD)

By Phone:

Ted Prince (IANA/ITI) – Vice Chair
Sam Crane (US Chamber) – MTSNAC Chair
Bob Dockendorff (PMA)
Sheila Bracken (AgTC)
Brian McGuire (AgTC)
Carol Lambos (USMX) – Education Committee Co-Chair
Matt Paxton (SCA) – Shipbuilding Committee Chair
Leo Penne (AASHTO)
Vicki Streukens (AAM)

Summary

The team reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting and generally agreed that the proposed recommendations had merit and should be pursued. Some new information was added during this meeting and assignments were made to further build out certain recommendations in preparation for the presentation to the full MTSNAC scheduled in June.

Recommendations Discussion

Two possible actions previously listed are substantive enough to list as separate and specific recommendations to support the objective of advancing intermodal transportation as a national priority.

Draft Recommendation 1: Re-establish the Office of Intermodalism within the Office of the DOT Secretary.

Next steps: Paul Bea and Anne Kappel to develop further and consult with Rich Biter (formally of Office of Intermodalism) to provide appropriate background and context. It was noted that we need to clearly define the role and what constituents will benefit. A follow-up meeting revealed that the Office as originally defined is likely consistent with what we believe the role should be but that the role has been undermined since the Office moved into RITA, in part because there is no accountability for RITA to deliver against the Office of Intermodalism's original role. Further, the role could be further expanded to help in expediting permits and project approvals for intermodal projects involving multiple modes and jurisdictions, since some new accountability for this was assigned to the Transportation Secretary in SAFETEA-LU (Sec. 6002).

Draft Recommendation 2: Re-energize and complete the National Freight Policy framework. This recommendation is very specific and actionable as written. The final report should summarize the history that lead to its creation and highlight why it is compatible with other DOT initiatives like congestion relief.

Draft Recommendation 3: Protect system reliability by preserving freight infrastructure. Jean Godwin and Anne Kappel will develop further. The group noted that all of the issues raised in the previous report, remain unresolved so required actions may simply be a reiteration, with appropriate updates, to the recommendations of the last report.

Draft Recommendation 4: Enable timely, consistent and accurate measurement of capacity and productivity. Actions related to this recommendation are currently underway in DOT/MARAD. Richard Lolich will provide and update on that and Ted Prince will provide update on efforts underway at IANA. With that information, the next steps can be outlined for the final report.

Draft Recommendation 5: Encourage private sector investment by retaining and advancing programs that work well and eliminating those that do not. Anne Kappel will consolidate input from members, who will review with their existing organizations. The objective is to provide specific examples of programs that do work for the private sector (so that they will be retained and their use encouraged) as well as to identify programs that do not work well for the private sector (so that they can potentially be eliminated and their funds used for other programs.) Programs currently being reviewed for possible inclusion in the report include: Short-line rail tax incentive (which has expired); TIFIA; RRIF; use of CMAQ funds for retrofit trucks to meet new Air Quality standards. Members should provide any additional items to Anne Kappel.

Draft Recommendation 6: Continue to recognize and support regional freight solutions. Group cited this as important because so many projects are multi-jurisdictional and multi-modal. Further, that there is no cookie-cutter approach to optimal solutions. What works in one location/region may not work in

another. It was noted that this could be part of the role of the new Office of Intermodalism. Anne Kappel and Paul Bea will develop this further.

Draft Recommendation 7: Assert jurisdiction of the federal government over interstate commerce and provide transportation service providers with single, national standards and regulations. Group noted that providers need predictability to sustain the flow of commerce and that in the absence of federal regulations, states could look to create their own. DOT needs to provide roadability regulations – now 18 months past due and resolve the issues related to Hours of Service regulation. DOT needs to advocate for national environmental standards for transportation equipment used to handle and transport interstate commerce and pre-empt the states from taking individual action. The implementation of TWIC was cited another possible example. The group is to provide Anne Kappel will additional examples or specific areas where we need the federal government to take more assertive action.

Draft Recommendation 8: Support the continued development of a marine highway system as it will be needed to accommodate future growth. Paul Bea and Matt Paxton to develop further.

Draft Recommendation 9: Recruit, train and retain sufficient personnel. It was noted that there is a world-wide shortage of mariners and the problem is expected to worsen. We will ask MARAD to outline programs planned or underway to attract mariners. Inland waterways operators are also facing shortages and we need the status of efforts to modify USCG requirements for licensing. Trucking is facing a driver shortage and there is currently legislation pending to make it easier for licensed military truck drivers to receive a commercial driver's license, which DOT should endorse. The implementation of TWIC could have a negative effect on available workers.

Draft Recommendation 10: Support the efforts of the private sector to improve the efficiency of the system. This recommendation does not actually ask the Secretary to do anything but rather provides the opportunity to inform on actions taken – a number since they appeared in the last report – and to inform on planned actions so the government is better informed about private sector initiatives. Since much of the MTS is operated by private companies, it is important that the government understand what the private sector is doing.

Next steps: Anne Kappel to prepare presentation for June 3 meeting and needs input by all those who are assigned above no later than May 23. The item does not have to be fully developed as it will be for the final paper but we need to have enough information to develop a slide for each recommendation that will be used to explain to the full MTSNAC why we believe it is an appropriate recommendation.

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