



FEDERAL HIGHWAY
ADMINISTRATION
TEXAS DIVISION

State of Texas Border Partnership E-Newsletter

Volume II, Issue 4 State of Texas Border Partnership Newsletter July 9, 2009

In this Month's Issue:

- Texas Transportation Institute Releases its 2009 Urban Mobility Report—p.1
- Surface transportation trade among NAFTA partners plunges in April 2009—p.2
- Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) Fell 0.6 Percent in May from April—p.2
- Port says its air pollution is not so bad—p.3
- BTS Releases Transportation Statistics Annual Report (TSAR) 2009—p.3
- BTS Releases Report on "America's Container Ports: Freight Hubs That Connect Our Nation to Global Markets" (June 2009)—p.4
- Government Should Adopt Intermodal Freight Strategy to Save Billions, Congressional Panel Says—p.5
- West Coast Ports Seek Piece of Highway Bill—p.6
- North American Freight Flows Conference: Understanding Changes and Improving Data Sources—p.7
- Next FHWA HQ's Talking Freight Web Seminar on "Credit Crunch—Impact on Freight" (Wednesday, July 15 2009)—p.7

Texas Transportation Institute Releases 2009 Urban Mobility Report

On July 8th the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) released its 2009 Urban Mobility Report. The report has been made available on the TTI Mobility website at: <http://mobility.tamu.edu>. The report was funded in part by a grant by the U.S. Department of Transportation University Transportation Centers Program to the University Transportation Center for Mobility (DTRT06-G-0044). The major findings of this report show important congestion-related travel times for 439 U.S. urbanized areas.

Congestion is shown worsening in regions of all sizes, in 2007 for example congestion caused urban Americans to travel 4.2 billion hours more and to purchase an additional 2.8 billion gallons of fuel for a congestion cost of \$87.2 billion- an increase of more than 50 percent over the previous decade. Small traffic volume declines brought on by increases in fuel prices over the last half of 2007 caused a small reduction in congestion from 2006 to 2007.

The average delay per peak traveler (in hours) between 2006 and 2007, for example decreased from 37 hours per year to 36 hours. However, the travel time index between 2006 and 2007 maintained the same at 1.25 with wasted fuel per peak traveler in gallons shown as 25 gallons in 2006 vs. 24 gallons in 2007. The value for delay and wasted fuel was almost \$760 per traveler in 2007 compared to an inflation-adjusted \$290 in 1982.

According to the 2009 Urban Mobility Report there are many congestion problems in the U.S., but there are also many different solutions including mass transit, operational improvements, HOV lanes, etc. The most effective strategies according to the TTI researchers (Tim Lomax and David Schrank) are ones where agency actions are complemented by combined efforts of businesses, manufacturers, commuters and travelers.



The best approaches according to TTI are those areas that review and select congestion mitigation strategies to identify projects, programs and policies that solve problems or capitalize on opportunities. The TTI Urban Mobility report references a Texas study which estimated that solving the congestion problems in the state's urban regions would generate more than \$6.50 in economic benefits for every \$1.00 spent.

To purchase any of the Urban Mobility Study research reports, please contact: TTI Publication Services at: pubquest@ttimail.tamu.edu. For more information on the TTI's Urban Mobility Study, please contact: Mr. David Schrank (979) 845-7323 or you may e-mail him at: d-schrank@tamu.edu or Mr. Tim Lomax (979) 845-9960 at: t-lomax@tamu.edu.

Surface transportation trade among NAFTA partners plunges in April 2009

In April 2009, the value of trade moved by surface transportation modes between the United States and Canada and Mexico totaled \$49.7 billion, down 33.1 percent compared with April 2008's figure — the fourth-straight month the year-over-year decline exceeded 27 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation's [Bureau of Transportation Statistics](#).

The modes involve rail, truck and pipelines. In April 2009, the value of railed imports and exports plunged 43.6 percent (to \$8 billion) and 36.7 percent (to \$4.4 billion), respectively. The value of trucked imports plummeted 27.6 percent to \$24.9 billion and trucked exports dipped 26.7 percent to \$24.5 billion compared with April 2008 figures. U.S.–Canada surface transportation

trade value in April plummeted 38.2 percent to \$30.2 billion. The value of railed imports and exports plunged 47.9 percent (to \$5.8 billion) and 31.3 percent (to \$2.4 billion), respectively.

Table 6. U.S. Merchandise Trade with Mexico by Surface Modes of Transportation (millions of dollars)

Mode		April 2008	March 2009	April 2009	Percent Change March 2009 - April 2009	Percent Change April 2008-2009
All	Imports	14,590	11,230	11,147	-0.7	-23.6
Surface	Exports	10,868	8,778	8,365	-4.7	-23.0
Modes	Total	25,458	20,007	19,512	-2.5	-23.4
Truck	Imports	12,001	9,383	9,356	-0.3	-22.0
	Exports	8,298	7,216	6,803	-5.7	-18.0
Rail	Imports	2,272	1,593	1,532	-3.8	-32.5
	Exports	2,054	1,137	1,170	3.0	-43.0
Pipeline	Imports	15	7	9	26.9	-37.8
	Exports	71	39	44	13.3	-38.0

Source: BTS TransBorder Freight Data, <http://www.bts.gov/transborder/>

U.S.–Mexico surface transportation trade value in April fell 23.4 percent to \$19.5 billion. The value of railed imports plunged 32.5 percent to \$2.3 billion and railed exports plummeted 43 percent to \$2 billion compared with April 2008 data (See Table 6— center of page).

Please see the following BTS website for additional information: http://www.bts.gov/press_releases/2009/bts032_09/html/bts032_09.html

Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) Fell 0.6 Percent in May '09 from April

The Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) fell 0.6 percent in May 2009 from its April level, declining for the third consecutive month to the lowest level in 12 years, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) recently reported. The May 2009 decline was the smallest of the three consecutive decreases.

BTS reported that the May decrease was the ninth decline in the Freight TSI in the last 10 months. The index has declined 14.8 percent in that 10-month period. For additional historical data, go to <http://www.bts.gov/xml/tsi/src/index.xml>.

The May Freight TSI of 94.0 is the lowest level since June 1997 when it was 92.4. The Freight TSI is down 16.7 percent from its historic peak of 112.9 reached in May 2006. The 6.3 percent decline in the first five months of 2009 was the largest in the last decade, exceeding the 5.3 percent decline for the first five months of 2000.

The Freight TSI measures the month-to-month changes in the output of services provided by the for-hire freight transportation industries. The index consists of data from for-hire trucking, rail, inland waterways, pipelines and air freight.

The 14.8 percent decline in the Freight TSI from May 2008 to May 2009 was the largest May-to-May decline in the 20 years for which the TSI is calculated. The freight index is also down 14.6 percent in the five years from May 2004, the sixth consecutive month in which the index declined for a five-year period. The index is down 8.4 percent in 10 years for the fifth-ever and the largest 10-year decline in the 20- year history of TSI data. All these five 10-year declines took place in first five months of 2009.

For additional information, please see the following BTS website: http://www.bts.gov/press_releases/2009/bts033_09/html/bts033_09.html

Port says its air pollution is not so bad

The Port of Tacoma has posted some tangible results in the first year of its regional effort to reduce port-related diesel and greenhouse gas emissions.

The ports of Tacoma, Seattle and Vancouver, B.C., adopted Northwest Ports Clear Air Strategy last year. The plan included short- and long-term goals for cutting down air pollution generated by port activity.

In a news release sent out Tuesday, the Tacoma port reports the results from the program's first year. According to the port:

- Fifty-seven percent of the ships that call frequently at the port use what's called distillate fuel – basically a distilled fuel that burns cleaner than traditional bunker fuel. The port would like all ships to be using distillate fuel by 2010. Forty-seven percent of the cargo-handling equipment meets cleaner burning engine standards. The port

would like all the cargo handling equipment to meet these standards by 2010. All the cargo handling equipment already uses ultra low sulfur diesel or a biodiesel blend.

- All of the switching locomotives at the port use ultra low-sulfur diesel, and the port supported the participation of its rail operators in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's SmartWay program.

- Eighty-six percent of the drayage – or short haul – trucks serving the port meet emissions levels that equal 1994 emission standards. The port would like all the drayage trucks to meet the 1994 emission standard by 2010.

Source: Kelly Kearsley, The News Tribune
<http://www.thenewstribune.com/business/story/803962.html>

URL:

BTS Releases Transportation Statistics Annual Report (TSAR) 2009

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) is a part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, has released its annual statistical report on the U.S. transportation system. The report includes information on the system's physical components, safety record, economic performance, energy use, and environmental impacts.

Compiled and published by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), National Transportation Statistics presents information on the U.S. transportation system, including its physical components, safety record, economic performance, energy use, and environmental impacts.

National Transportation Statistics is a companion document to the Transportation Statistics Annual Report, which analyzes some of the data presented here, and State Transportation Statistics, which presents state-level data on many of the same topics presented here. The report has four chapters: Chapter 1 provides data on the extent, condition, use, and performance of the physical-

transportation network. Chapter 2 details transportation's safety record, giving data on accidents, crashes, fatalities, and injuries for each transportation mode and hazardous materials.

Chapter 3 focuses on the relationship between transportation and the economy, presenting data on transportation's contribution to the gross domestic product, employment by industry and occupation, and transportation-related consumer and government expenditures. Chapter 4 presents data on transportation energy use and transportation-related environmental impacts.

BTS obtained the data in this report from many sources, including federal government agencies, private industry, and associations. The report is updated quarterly at www.bts.gov. For additional information, please see: http://www.bts.gov/publications/national_transportation_statistics/#front_matter



BTS Releases Report on “America's Container Ports: Freight Hubs That Connect Our Nation to Global Markets” (June 2009)

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) recently released a report on container port shipments. The U.S. marine transportation system continues to handle large volumes of domestic and international freight in support of the nation's economic activities. The demand for freight transportation responds to trends in global economic activity and merchandise trade. When U.S. businesses produce more goods, the demand for freight transportation services to move raw materials and finished products to markets and customers around the country and world will increase. When economic conditions result in less production, the demand for transportation services will decrease.

This BTS report provides an overview of the movement of maritime freight handled by the nation's container seaports in 2008 and summarizes trends in maritime freight movement since 1995. It covers the impact of the recent U.S. and global economic downturn on U.S. port container traffic, trends in container throughput, concentration of containerized cargo at the top U.S. ports, regional shifts in cargo handled, vessel calls and capacity in ports, the rankings of U.S. ports among the world's top ports, and the number of maritime container entries into the United States relative to truck and rail containers.

The report also presents snapshots of landside access to container ports, port security initiatives, and ongoing maritime environmental issues. The principal findings of the BTS report include the following:

- Maritime freight handled by U.S. container ports fell sharply towards the end of 2008, and the decline continued into the first quarter of 2009.
- Total U.S. containerized cargo for December 2008 was down 18 percent compared with December 2007. The decline was severe at the nation's two leading container ports, Los Angeles and Long Beach.

- Overall in 2008, U.S. container ports handled 28.2 million loaded TEUs (20-foot equivalent units—a measure for counting containers), a 3 percent drop from the 29 million TEUs handled in 2007.
- In 2008, containerized freight throughput fell for each of the leading ports in the Pacific west coast, Atlantic/east coast, and gulf coast regions. West coast ports had a 5 percent decline, east coast ports a less than 1 percent decline, and gulf coast ports a 3 percent decline.
- The consequences of the 2008 decline in container throughput at the nation's seaports reached beyond the marine ports and terminals, affecting container-ship fleet capacity, the railroads and commercial trucks that service the seaports, and the inland warehouses and distribution centers that provide logistical support for the entire multimodal freight supply chain.
- In 2008, the decline in maritime containerized cargo impacted international intermodal containers handled by the nation's Class I railroads, which fell 7 percent from 2007. It also affected overall trucking activity, which saw record declines in the second half of 2008.
- Despite the 2007 to 2008 declines, today one container in every 10 that is engaged in global trade is either bound for or originates in the United States, accounting for 10 percent of worldwide container traffic.
- On a typical day in 2008, U.S. container ports handled an average of 77,000 TEUs, up from 37,000 TEUs per day in 1995.
- In 2008, the top 10 U.S. container ports accounted for 86 percent of containerized TEU imports and exports, up from 78 percent in 1995.

For additional information, please see the following BTS website: http://www.bts.gov/publications/americas_container_ports/2009/

Government Should Adopt Intermodal Freight Strategy to Save Billions, Congressional Panel Says

Unless the federal government implements policies that would decrease congestion of freight transportation through encouraging greater connectivity between U.S. highways and other modes of transportation, the U.S. economy will lose billions of dollars yearly, a panel of transportation coordinators told a Senate panel on June 18, 2009.

Inefficiencies caused by congestion and by the lack of an efficient federal freight transportation strategy cost the United States \$60 billion to \$80 billion annually, Matthew Rose, chairman, president and chief executive officer of BNSF Railway and commissioner of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study, told the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security.

The capacity of U.S. freight transportation infrastructure is being increasingly strained by improvements in the manufacturing process and enhanced logistics systems that make it easier to produce goods more quickly, and by increases in trade as a percentage of the U.S. gross domestic product, according to Larry Brown, executive director of the Mississippi Department of Transportation, who also spoke on behalf of the Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors.

With the coming expiration on Sept. 30 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, the federal law governing surface transportation spending by Congress, a policy that provides more funding to surface infrastructure improvements, especially those for highways, bridges, rail, port, and intermodal connectors where freight is transported, should be put into place, Brown said.

"We must focus on the system as a whole, rather than viewing the nation's transportation infrastructure as several different systems that occasionally interact," Brown said. "We must think in terms of the entire network, interconnected and interdependent. Only then can we begin to discuss real solutions to the supply chain infrastructure issues this nation faces." Trade has risen from 13 percent of U.S. GDP in the 1990s to

its current level of 30 percent, and it is expected to grow to 35 percent of GDP in 2020 and to as much as 60 percent by 2035, according to Brown. Increased demand from projected growth in the U.S. population, which is expected to rise to 364 million by 2030, will also stress U.S. freight infrastructure capacity if substantial improvements to that infrastructure are not made, Rose said. The U.S. Department of Transportation found in 2008 that the tons of freight transported in the United States would double by 2035, according to the Federal Highway Administration's report, Freight Facts and Figures 2008.

Proposals From Panel

The Transportation Department should either re-establish its Office of Intermodalism or create a new office dealing principally with multimodal freight to help promote interstate and regional multimodal infrastructure investments, said Brown, John P. Clancy, chairman of Maersk, Inc., and Rick Gabrielson, director of international transportation for Target Corporation.

The multimodal freight office would be able to draw upon expertise in multimodal freight issues when allocating funding for freight infrastructure projects, they said. The office would be able to help expand freight transportation capacity by coordinating the implementation of policies that promote international trade and increase the flow of goods moving between different modes of transportation.

Congress should create a freight data collection program that would enable it to better measure the results of its investments in freight infrastructure and which could assist in analyzing which potential freight investment projects would be most cost-effective, said Richard W. Roper, director of the Planning Department for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Annual federal funding for freight infrastructure improvement through a discretionary spending program should amount to a minimum of \$7 to \$10 billion, Brown said, as this is a level around which many organizations "will coalesce as the realities of freight's importance in this authorization is realized." For additional information, please see BNA Newsletter: http://environment.transportation.org/etap_newsletter/

West Coast Ports Seek Piece of Highway Bill

Port leaders back intermodal reforms at DOT, seek bigger focus on freight, supply chains as debate over transportation bill heats up...

West Coast ports want Congress and the Obama administration to look beyond highways and bridges and include more funding for seaports in the next surface transportation act. Top executives from major West Coast ports came to Washington June 23 and 24 to lobby for a more port-friendly, intermodal and freight-oriented surface transportation bill and for more access to federal funding for port-related infrastructure projects.

"We've been a casualty of past highway bills," said Richard D. Steinke, executive director of the Port of Long Beach in Southern California. This time, however, "we will work with other freight stakeholders to make sure freight doesn't take a back seat."

"Our West Coast ports are in need of dedicated infrastructure funds, and we have a perfect opportunity in the surface transportation bill," said Steinke. It's an unprecedented step by six West Coast ports — Los Angeles, Long Beach and Oakland, Calif., Seattle and Tacoma, Wash., and Portland, Ore. — to win a bigger share of federal infrastructure spending. It's also a harbinger of greater cooperation among ports feeling the heat of competition.

Traditionally, the bulk of that multi-year bill's funding — perhaps as much as \$450 billion this year — goes to federal-aid highways, bridges and transit authorities. The ports are calling for a dedicated freight movement program in the bill and funding that they could dip into as well as discretionary grants for port infrastructure projects.

Existing programs don't meet port needs, said the port executives, claiming ports receive little assistance even from those programs under which they are eligible for funding. "In this reauthorization we have to keep the pressure on," said Steinke. Pressure is mounting from all sides on

Congress, which must pass a surface transportation bill by Sept. 30 or extend the current law. Transportation leaders in the House want to press ahead with a bill they are working on, while the Obama administration wants to extend the current law by 18 months. Whichever route Congress and the White House take, "We want to make sure it's a good bill and has the elements the West Coast ports want in it," said Steinke. The port leaders also want to knock down modal barriers at the Department of Transportation and give DOT a more intermodal focus.

"We don't want to get lost in the discussion" of intermodal priorities, said Omar R. Benjamin, executive director of the Port of Oakland, Calif. Benjamin favors creating an intermodal office at DOT with an intermodal under secretary, as mandated by the House bill. "That person would give us more prominence" in the debate over funding and strategic transportation goals, he said.

The port leaders also want a more systematic approach to transportation planning, management and marketing at the federal level and stronger federal, state and regional partnerships. For an example, they reached across the U.S.'s northern border.

"Canada has a systematic approach to goods movement," Steinke said. "The federal government, the provincial governments, the railroads and the ports are all involved, and when they market the Port of Prince Rupert, they go out and do it together. "We're here to impress on our federal government that we need to do the same."

Source: The Journal of Commerce Online News

Author: William B. Cassidy

Date: Jun 24, 2009 4:02PM GMT

URL website: <http://www.joc.com/node/412060>

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION TEXAS DIVISION

CONTACT INFORMATION

Kirk D. Fauver
300 E. 8th Street, Room 826
Austin, TX 78701

Phone: 512-536-5952
Fax: 512-536-5990
E-mail: kirk.fauver@fhwa.dot.gov

We're on the web at:
www.fhwa.dot.gov

Famous Quote of the Day:

"Children should be educated and instructed in the principles of freedom."

--[John Adams](#),
2nd U.S. president

Disclaimer Notice— The information and articles contained within this newsletter do not necessarily constitute a standard, policy or position of the Federal Highway Administration. The mention of commercial products, their source or use in connection in this newsletter should not be construed as either actual or implied endorsement of such products.

Information provided is a compilation from other news and on-line media sources, any information relayed is based upon the accuracy of the information provided by other news gathering organizations and does not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Federal Highway Administration or the State of Texas Border Partnership Working Group.

Next FHWA HQ's Talking Freight Web Seminar (Wednesday, July 15, 2009)

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Office of Freight Management and Operations and the Office of Planning host the "Talking Freight" web seminars. These web seminars are part of a broader Freight Professional Development Program (FPD) aimed at providing technical assistance, training, tools, and information to help the freight and planning workforce meet the transportation challenges of tomorrow.

These FHWA web seminars are held on a monthly basis throughout the year and are open at no cost to all interested parties in both the public and private sectors. The next FHWA HQ's Talking Freight Seminar will be held on July 15, 2009 from 12-1:30 PM (CST) and will cover the topic of: **"Credit Crunch: Impact on Freight Movements"**

The next FHWA HQ's Talking Freight webinar will focus on how the current, tight credit market is impacting freight carrier operations and freight real estate development. Hear what bearing the short and long-term impacts of the credit crunch are having on the movements of freight within the U.S.

To register for this seminar, please go to <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/freightplanning/registration.htm> and click on the seminar topic. Future Talking Freight web seminars are also shown here.

North American Freight Flows Conference: Understanding Changes and Improving Data Sources

Irvine, California—

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) is sponsoring the North American Freight Flows Conference: Understanding Changes and Improving Data Sources on September 16-17, 2009, in Irvine, California.

The conference is designed to explore challenges and identify new ideas concerning the availability and application of data for program evaluation, policy formation, and business decision making associated with North American trans-border flows.

The meeting will also assess recent changes in the freight transportation environment and identify emerging research needs. The early bird registration deadline is by **July 16, 2009**.

For additional information, please see the following website: http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=9836