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Testing Delays Transportation Worker ID Card Roll-Out

The Transportation Workers Identification Credential (TWIC) missed its July 1 rollout partly because its systems are undergoing extra testing according to officials with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

"We have an additional complexity," Maurine Fanguy, TWIC manager for TSA, told the House Subcommittee on the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, in describing the new testing. TSA, an agency housed within the Department of Homeland Security, is conducting additional tests to align the card with its threat assessment and screening data.

While the missed deadline was acknowledged weeks ago, it was the first time the agency has publicly provided a detailed description of the testing that is currently occurring.

The TWIC networks will be connected to the TSA Screening Gateway, which aggregates security threat assessment data, working with the FBI, Citizenship and Immigration Services, and TSA's Colorado Springs Operations Center, according to agency officials.

"It is important to note that the Screening Gateway is used across all of TSA's vetting programs. Not only must the internal components of the TWIC card work together, they must work in combination with a larger Screening Gate-

way. Rigorous performance testing is the only way to know for sure that TWIC is ready to go live. That is where we are in the process, and what remains is the testing," Fanguy said.

Under the SAFE Port Act, TWIC was to begin enrollment at ten major ports on July 1. It is now projected to begin enrolling port workers in the fall in Wilmington, Delaware.

Other obstacles also have delayed TWIC in the recent months, including the decision last year to align the TWIC credential with Federal Information Processing Standard 201, activities to close potential data privacy gaps in the card technology and modifications in the program to incorporate comments from the rulemaking process.

"TWIC is an advanced, sophisticated credentialing system. The greatest technological challenge that we are addressing is not the card itself as much as it is the network behind the card. Breaking new ground in technology has obvious advantages but it always brings schedule risk, and TWIC is no different," Fanguy said.

Electronic Heavy Vehicle Use Tax Filing Hits Snag

The IRS says the system it was hoping to have ready so that truckers could file their Heavy Vehicle Use Tax form electronically this year isn't ready. That means that even though the government was going to require that carriers with 25 or more taxable trucks file electronically, those carriers will have to stick with paper in filing Form 2290. The HVUT is due Aug. 31.

New \$300 M Container Cargo Terminal (Port of Tacoma)

A new \$300 million container cargo terminal at the Port of Tacoma, WA, will be built in a way that will minimize truck traffic. According to a recent press release, railroad tracks will be positioned on the docks so that intermodal containers can be placed directly on trains – with each trainload eliminating about 250 truck trips.

Port of Savannah fourth-busiest, fastest-growing in the U.S.

The Port of Savannah had a record year in fiscal 2007, becoming the fourth-busiest and fastest-growing container terminal in the United States, the Georgia Ports Authority said Monday. The Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) handled than 2.3 million Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit containers (TEUs) during fiscal 2007 -- a 14.5 percent increase and a new record for containers handled at the Port of Savannah.

In the past five years, the number of TEU containers handled has jumped 55 percent from 1.5 million handled in fiscal 2003 to 2.3 million fiscal 2007. The GPA's total tonnage for all terminal facilities, including Bainbridge, Brunswick, Columbus and Savannah, surpassed 21 million tons -- an 8.7 percent increase and a another GPA record.

Georgia's deepwater ports and inland barge terminals support more than 286,476 jobs throughout the state annually and contribute \$14.9 billion in income, \$55.8 billion in revenue and \$2.8 billion in state and local taxes to Georgia's economy.

"In addition to handling more containers than ever before, we also experienced a 9.4 percent increase in intermodal lifts, or 235,448 lifts for the year, another example of how critical the Port of Savannah has become as a transportation hub for the nation..."

Doug J. Marchand
GPA Executive
Director

Groups Call for 'New Thinking' In Report On Future of U.S. Transportation

Addressing the future of nation's transportation systems will require "new thinking" on issues including global economic competition, metropolitan congestion, and global climate change, according to a joint transportation industry report presented to the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission on July 26.

The report, *A New Vision for the 21st Century*, documents the findings of an effort by a range of transportation industry groups – led by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) – to create a vision for U.S. transportation system over the next 30 or more years. The vision is intended to assist the commission in its deliberations over the future of the nation's transportation programs.

The report offered a range of recommendations based on a series of research reports, panel discussions, white papers, and a three-day summit of transportation experts held in May. According to the report, the effort included participation from a broad segment of the public and private sector that "represented every aspect of America's surface transportation system." The report's chapter discussing a "vision to benefit America's way of life" adopts the findings on sustainable transportation from the May summit.

The findings endorse the "triple bottom line" approach in which sustainability of transportation policies and performance should be measured based on economic growth, environmental health, and improved quality of life for all citizens. Applying this approach to assess projects, programs, and policies "sends a message that financial, cost-benefit, and economic considerations are not the sole drivers of transportation projects. Under this approach, economic, social, and environmental factors are to be given equal consideration," the report said.

"At the same time we must grapple with dynamics that were unimagined when we built the Interstate system. We have to apply new thinking and new solutions if we want to remain a world leader," Horsley added.

Funding, Preservation Top Recommendations

The report's recommendations included following actions to address future transportation needs:

- Increase core program funding for highways and transit, recognizing the need for strategic national investments outside the Highway Trust Fund and making the transition, when necessary, from fuel taxes to a more diversified, reliable funding base. The federal commitment to this longstanding federal/state partnership must be sustained.

"The next 50 years will bring monumental changes to transportation demands in the U.S. in terms of population, demographics, freight movement, and the benefits of advanced technology..."

John Horsley,
executive
director of
AASHTO

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Groups Call for 'New Thinking' In Report On Future of U.S. Transportation Systems (continued from pg 3)

- Preserve and modernize the transportation system already in place.
- Improve that system's performance through excellent management and applied technology.
- Invest in public transportation with the goal of making it an attractive choice nationwide.
- Have a high-quality, high-capacity public transportation system working in every metro area of the United States within 15 years.
- Double ridership by the year 2015, and again by 2030.

The groups participating in the report include AASHTO, the American Automobile Association, the American Council of Engineering Companies, the American Highway Users Alliance, the American Public Transportation Association, the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, the American Trucking Associations, the Association of American Railroads, and the Associated General Contractors of America. The report may be accessed online at <http://www.transportationl.org/tif5report/>.

New FHWA Publication on Regional Transportation Operations

A Regional Concept for Transportation Operations (RCTO) is a management tool to assist in planning and implementing management and operations strategies in a collaborative and sustained manner. Developing an RCTO helps partnering agencies think through and reach consensus on what they want to achieve in the next 3 to 5 years and how they are going to get there. The purpose of this document is to explain what an RCTO is, the development of its elements, and its applicability. (Publication Number: FHWA-HOP-07-122)
URL: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/>

Next FHWA Talking Freight Web Seminar (August 15, 2007)

The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Office of Freight Management and Operations and Office of Planning is sponsoring a net-conference entitled "Virtual Weigh Stations" on August 15, 2007 from 1:00 - 2:30 PM (EDT). This session is part of the "Talking Freight" Seminar Series, which was designed to provide a convenient, no-cost way for transportation practitioners in all sectors to broaden their freight knowledge base and develop/strengthen their skills. Space is still available for this session. To register for this session, as well as future sessions, please go to <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/>