



Memorandum

**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

Office of Inspector General

Subject: INFORMATION: Notification of Audit of the
Implementation of the North American Free Trade
Agreement's (NAFTA) Cross-Border Trucking Provisions
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
Project Number: 02M3004M000

Date: January 28, 2002

From: Thomas J. Howard
Deputy Assistant Inspector General for
Maritime and Highway Safety Programs

Reply To
Attn Of: JA-40

To: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administrator

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is initiating an audit of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Implementation of NAFTA's cross-border trucking provisions. This work is being performed in response to Public Law 107-87, Section 350, of the Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002, which requires an OIG report by June 16, 2002.

Our overall objective is to perform a comprehensive review of cross-border operations and report on eight areas specified by Congress in Section 350 relating to the safety of cross-border trucking between the United States and Mexico. In addition to the 180-day reporting requirement, we want to establish a baseline for status briefings. Specifically, we will determine whether:

- All new inspector positions funded by the law are filled and inspection personnel are fully trained.
- Each inspector conducting compliance reviews of Mexican motor carriers is fully trained as a safety specialist.
- The requirement for safety specialists to conduct compliance reviews of Mexican carriers was met by transferring experienced inspectors from other parts of the United States.

- FMCSA implemented policy to ensure that Mexican carriers seeking operating authority beyond commercial zones comply with hours-of-service rules.
- The information infrastructure of the Mexican government is sufficiently accurate, accessible, and integrated with the information infrastructure of the U. S. law enforcement authorities to allow U. S. authorities to verify status and validity of licenses, vehicle registrations, operating authority, and insurance of Mexican carriers while operating in the United States. In addition, we will determine whether adequate telecommunication links exist at all U. S. border crossings and in all mobile units operating adjacent to the border to ensure easy and quick verification.
- Adequate capacity exists at each U.S.-Mexico border crossing to conduct a sufficient number of commercial vehicle safety inspections and to accommodate vehicles placed out-of-service.
- An accessible database exists containing sufficiently comprehensive data to allow safety monitoring of all Mexican motor carriers applying for authority to operate commercial vehicles beyond the U.S.-Mexico border commercial zones and drivers of those vehicles.
- Measures are in place to enable U.S. law enforcement authorities to ensure the effective enforcement and monitoring of procedures for licensing commercial drivers and for revoking licenses of commercial drivers employed by Mexican motor carriers and operating in the United States.

The audit will be conducted primarily at FMCSA headquarters; at the southern border States of Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas; at Mexican government offices and motor carriers; and at other selected field locations. We plan to start the audit immediately.

If I can answer any questions or be of further assistance, please contact me at (202) 366-5630 or the Program Director, Barbara Cobble at (202) 493-0327.

cc: The Secretary
The Deputy Secretary

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