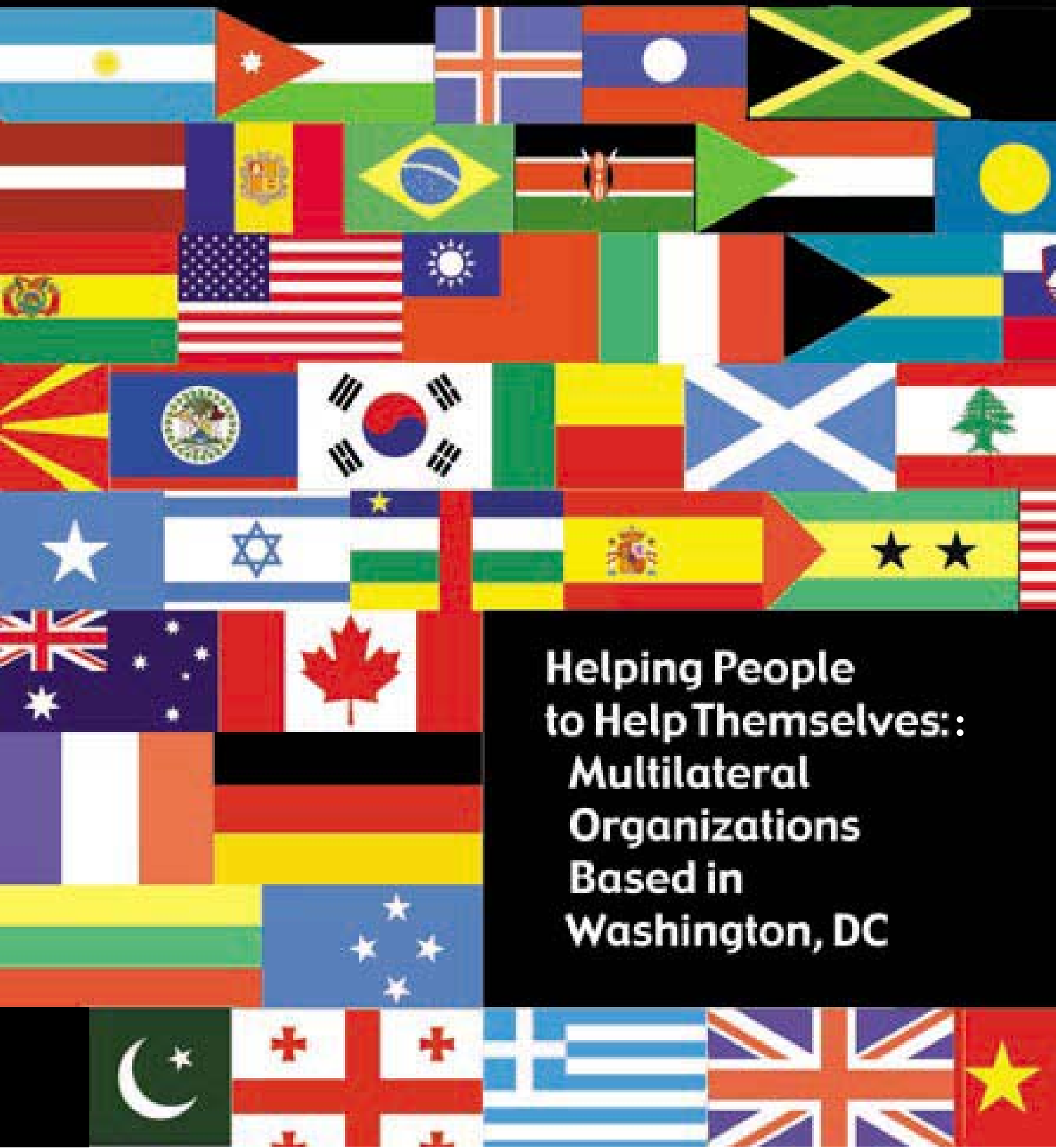


THE PORTAL

VOLUME XXXVII The Journal of the Household Goods Forwarders Association of America, Inc.

JULY/AUGUST 2005



**Helping People
to Help Themselves:
Multilateral
Organizations
Based in
Washington, DC**

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About our cover: *This issue focuses on multilateral development entities headquartered in Washington, DC. Coverage begins on page 5. Cover designed by Stephanie Sutherland, Glennan Graphics.*

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THE PORTAL

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By Terry R. Head
HHGFAA President

Helping People to Help Themselves

Many pressing global problems, such as the spread of infectious disease, financial crises, and climate change, are too large for any one country to tackle on its own. They affect the well-being, security and prosperity of all countries, and dealing with them calls for the joint resources and commitment of the world community. A number of international organizations have been established to help meet these challenges. They are termed “multilateral” organizations because they are supported by many countries, and they include the following:

- humanitarian organizations such as the UN High Commission for Refugees, that deal with peacebuilding, disaster relief and assistance to refugees;
- other UN organizations such as UNICEF, focused on the plight of the children of the world;
- institutions that provide food aid, like the World Food Program;
- financial institutions such as The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and regional development banks, such as the Inter-American Development Bank;
- special groups devoted to issues like agricultural research or standardization accounting and legal systems; and
- funds like the Global Environment Facility, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, or the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

In today’s interdependent world, the multilateral approach is playing a more and more important role. Many of the multilateral organizations choose to have Washington, DC, as their home-base for global operations, and this issue of The Portal turns a spotlight on some of those DC-based organizations.

The challenges that the multilateral system is facing are fluid. First and foremost, the multilateral system is under increasing pressure to demonstrate positive results—that is, to show that their policies and programs are actually helping to change people’s lives for the better. Moreover, countries have shown a growing interest in dealing with issues such as international justice, environmental sustainability, and equitable trade relationships, which are increasingly seen as key to resolving the fundamental challenges of poverty alleviation and social development. The multilateral development organizations are being asked to play an increasing role here as well.

There are new voices in the global arena—grassroots organizations, groups working for human rights and social justice, the private sector, as well as the governments of many developing countries—that were not previously heard. Yes, admittedly there are also those who oppose the “globalization” of the world, but that’s a separate subject to be addressed at another time.

International development, foreign aid, development cooperation—to me, all these terms mean the same thing: helping people to help themselves. With involvement and assistance from multilaterals, the developing countries of the world have made real progress over the past 40 years. Life expectancy has increased from 46 years to 63 years; child mortality rates have been cut in half; average incomes have doubled, despite increased population growth; and literacy rates have risen.

But much remains to be done. More than 1 billion people still struggle to survive on less than a dollar a day. More than 800 million people go to bed hungry every night. HIV/AIDS is wiping out an entire generation in some parts of Africa. Every minute, another woman dies during pregnancy or childbirth. More than 104 million children, two-thirds of them girls, are not in school.

It is only through the strong links countries have with each other via the multilateral organizations will we enrich our culture, widen the network of friendly cooperating nations, and increase trade, travel and investment, all the while making it a better world for us all. ■

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

As the 43rd Annual Meeting approaches, HHGFAA and **The Portal** continue to focus on the entities that operate in Washington, DC, our 2005 Annual Meeting destination city. This issue turns a spotlight on a few of the many multilateral development and aid organizations that strive to make the world a better place, and aim to narrow the gap between the Earth's "haves" and "have-nots."

Indeed, most **Portal** readers are familiar with the names World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Organization of American States, and others, but the articles in the pages that follow attempt to provide greater insight into exactly what these and other organizations do, their missions, and their activities.

Considering the international scope of these institutions' reach, it follows that transportation companies are critical in helping them to realize their goals. HHGFAA members are among the firms that keep organization employee's household goods and important commodities moving smoothly from distribution facilities to those in need, whether shipments are everyday items required by overseas staff or vital aid to survivors of natural disasters or wars.

Editor's note: This year, for the first time, HHGFAA will not mail its Annual Meeting materials, except for those included with this issue of **The Portal**. Everything you need, from registration forms to meeting schedules, is available online at www.hhgfaameetings.org.

PORTAL FOCUS: MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

The World Bank

The World Bank is an international organization fighting poverty in more than 100 developing countries by providing loans and advice.

Headed by Paul Wolfowitz, the former Under Secretary of Defense who became president of the bank in March of this year, The World Bank helps governments in developing countries reduce poverty by providing them with money and technical expertise they need for a wide range of projects — such as building schools, roads or water wells — and reform of government services. The World Bank is owned by 184 countries.

Five agencies, one Group

The World Bank Group consists of five closely associated institutions, all owned by member countries that carry ultimate decision-making power.

Each institution plays a distinct role in the mission to fight poverty and improve living standards for people in the developing world. The term “World Bank Group” encompasses all five institutions.

The term “World Bank” refers specifically to two of the five, IBRD and IDA.

■ International Development Association

Fiscal 2004 commitments: \$9 billion for
158 new operations in 62 countries

Contributions to IDA enable the World Bank to provide highly concessional financing to the world’s 81 poorest countries (home to 2.5 billion people). IDA’s interest-free credits and grants help support country-led poverty reduction strategies.

■ The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency

Fiscal 2004 guarantees issued:
\$1.1 billion

MIGA helps promote foreign direct investment in developing countries by providing guarantees to investors against noncommercial risks, such as expropriation, currency inconvertibility and transfer restrictions, war and civil disturbance, and breach of contract. MIGA also serves as an objective intermediary to resolve potential disputes and provides technical assistance and advisory services to help countries attract and retain foreign investment.

■ The International Finance Corporation

Fiscal 2004 commitments: \$4.8 billion
for 217 projects in 65 countries

IFC promotes economic development through the private sector. Working with business partners, it invests in sustainable private enterprises in developing countries without accepting government guarantees. It provides equity, long-term loans, structured finance and risk management products, and advisory services to its clients in markets deemed too risky by commercial investors in the absence of IFC participation and adds value to the projects it finances through its corporate governance, environmental, and social expertise.

■ The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Fiscal 2004 lending: \$11 billion for
87 new operations in 33 countries

IBRD aims to reduce poverty in middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries by promoting sustainable development through loans, guarantees, and analytical and advisory services.

■ The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes

Total cases registered: 159

Fiscal 2004 cases registered: 30

ICSID helps encourage foreign investment by providing international facilities for conciliation and arbitration of investment disputes, thereby helping foster an atmosphere of mutual confidence between states and foreign investors. ICSID also issues publications on dispute settlement and foreign investment law.

Frequently asked questions

Q. What is the difference between the term “World Bank” and “World Bank Group”?

A. World Bank refers to only the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA). “World Bank Group” incorporates the IBRD, IDA and three other agencies, the International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. All five specialize in different aspects of development, but use their comparative advantages to work collaboratively toward the same overarching goal—poverty reduction.

Q. How does a country become a member of the World Bank Group?

A. To become a member of the Bank, a country must first join the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Membership in IDA, IFC, and MIGA is conditional on membership in IBRD.

Q. Who runs the Bank?

A. The World Bank’s member countries elect a representative and alternate to the Board of Governors, usually a ministerial-level government official, to serve a 5-year term. The Board meets once a year to set the overall policies of the institution, review country membership, and perform other tasks. A board of 24 Executive Directors oversees the work of the Bank on a daily basis. They meet twice a week in Washington, DC, to approve new loans, and review Bank operations and policies. Most directors represent a constituency of several countries. Governments can elect directors every 2 years. Five of these directors represent the member countries that have the largest number of shares: France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The remaining 19 Executive Directors represent constituencies; each is elected by a country or group of countries every 2 years. It is customary for election rules to ensure that a wide geographical balance is maintained on the board.

Q. How is the World Bank’s President selected?

A. The President is selected by the Bank’s Board of Executive Directors. The Articles of Agreement do not specify the nationality of the president, but by custom the United States executive director makes a nomination. By a long-standing, informal agreement, the president of the Bank is a United States national, while the managing director of the International Monetary Fund is a European. The initial term is 5 years, and a second term could be 5 years or less.

Q. How many people work for the World Bank?

A. The World Bank employs more than 9,300 people in its Washington, DC, headquarters and in its more than 100 country offices worldwide. More than half are from North, Central, and South America; the rest are from all over the world. This mixture of people promotes a strong international culture at the World Bank Group.

Q. Where Does the World Bank Group get its money?

A. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and International Finance Corporation (IFC) grant loans to developing countries and private corporations respectively. They issue bonds to finance these loans. IBRD and IFC bonds are purchased by a wide range of private and institutional investors in North America, Europe and Asia. The IBRD (known as The World Bank in capital markets) raises almost all of its funds in the world’s capital markets by issuing bonds (\$19 billion in fiscal year 2003). With an AAA credit rating — the highest possible rating — IBRD is able to do this under favorable terms and then pass on the low interest rates to its borrowers. The World Bank must maintain strict financial discipline to maintain the AAA status of its bonds, and continue to extend financing to developing countries. Shareholder support is also very important for IBRD. This is reflected in the capital backing it has received in meeting their debt service obligations to IBRD. The World Bank also has US\$178 billion in what is known as “callable capital” which could be drawn from its shareholders as backing, should it ever be needed to meet IBRD’s obligations for borrowings (bonds) or guarantees. IBRD has never had to call on this resource.

Q. Does the World Bank make a profit?

A. The World Bank does often have a surplus at the end of its fiscal year, which it earns from the interest rates it charges on some loans, and the fees it charges for some of its services. Some of the surplus goes to the International Development Association — the part of the Bank providing grants and interest free loans to the world's poorest countries. The rest is used for debt relief and for financial reserves and to help the Bank respond to unforeseen humanitarian crises.

Q. Why is there still so much poverty after 60 years of the World Bank's existence?

A. For the Bank, the bottom line is that there has been progress, but not enough. The Bank is doing all it can to make sure successful projects and approaches are shared more widely so there is a greater impact on reducing poverty. At the same time, the Bank has learnt from its past mistakes. Although poverty still exists, much progress has been made. For example:

- Over the past 40 years, life expectancy in developing countries has risen by 20 years — about as much as was achieved in all of human history prior to the mid-20th century.
- Over the past 30 years, adult illiteracy in the developing world has been nearly halved to 25%.
- Over the past 20 years, the absolute number of people living on less than one dollar a day has, for the first time, begun to fall, even as the world's population has grown by 1.6 billion people.
- Over the last decade, growth in the developing world has outpaced the developed countries, helping to provide jobs and boost revenues governments need to provide essential services.

Q. Why is there so much criticism of the World Bank, and why were there protests against it?

A. The Bank's role in development and in the wider globalization of the world's economy has often been misunderstood. Sometimes this is because the Bank hasn't done well in explaining its mission or its work. At other times, critics have tried to blame the Bank for any number of perceived problems associated with globalization. Of course the Bank isn't perfect, but it also isn't to be blamed for all the shortcomings in the world.

Website: www.worldbank.org

Indian Infrastructure Development Targeted by IFC

The International Finance Corporation, the private sector financing arm of the World Bank Group, has signed an agreement to provide US\$50 million in long-term debt financing to India's Infrastructure Development Finance Company.

IDFC is a specialised financial intermediary with a mandate to provide financing to commercially viable infrastructure projects in India, such as roadways, rail systems and ports.

In addition to funding activities, IDFC performs a policy advisory role by assisting India's central and state governments in preparing road maps for reform initiatives and to develop the regulatory framework. The company's asset growth has been significant during the past 2 years, partly reflecting improvements in the regulatory framework for infrastructure in India.

Iyad Malas, IFC director for South Asia, notes, "India's infrastructure needs are massive and estimated at over US\$150 billion over the next decade. Given the limited public funding available for infrastructure, we believe that private sector involvement in this sector is extremely critical. We expect IDFC to play a key role in financing private infrastructure over the coming years."

"As a long-term partner in IDFC, we are very keen to support its growth," says Jyrki Koskelo, IFC director for global financial markets. "IFC's loan will expand IDFC's financing capacity, thereby promoting the implementation of private infrastructure projects. Moreover, in an emerging market country such as India, development of private infrastructure is central to IFC's mission."



The international moving team at Security Storage Company in Washington, DC.

Multilateral Mover

Security Storage Company of Washington is uniquely equipped to serve the InterAmerican Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. During its 115-year history, the company has acquired a reputation as the mover of choice for clients ranging from families to multinational corporation executives to US Presidents.

With a staff of 250, state-of-the-art equipment, seven first-class facilities, and more than 600,000 square feet of warehouse space, Security is more than able to handle peak periods as well as year-round business. Its quality program is ISO 9001:2000-certified, and its newest location, still the only automated warehouse in North America, is ISO 14001-certified.

The IDB, IMF, and World Bank are different from corporate America in that they have unique requirements. Security tailors its services to meet their needs. A majority of their shipments come in and out of Washington, DC, and the company has in-house staff members who are on call around the clock.

The World Bank's relocation program is contracted out to a move management company, using two local contractors. Unlike most corporate accounts the majority of the bank's shipments are coming to and from World Bank headquarters in Washington, DC. Selection of agents and shipping carriers is left up to the contractor.

Security handles about 850 moves per year for the World Bank, whose staff members typically are assigned to the bank's field offices for 3 years. Staff members are given the option of having the WB arrange for their relocation or taking an optional shipment grant in lieu of any and all shipments, storage and insurance. Security reports that shipping volumes have remained about the same over the past several years.

To facilitate online shipment tracking, Security creates dedicated websites that provide updated information to the clients being moved. The company's multinational staff collectively are fluent in at least 15 languages.

Security recently launched its own full-service move management company, Security International, which will be represented at HHGFAA's 43rd Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, this fall. ■

IFC Invests in Egyptian Export Factoring Company

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, has signed an agreement for a 20% equity stake in Egypt Factors, thereby helping establish a factoring company in Egypt.

The IFC's investment of US\$3 million will promote factoring as an alternative trade finance product that will benefit small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the country's dynamic export sector. Export factoring, a new financial service in Egypt, enables exporters to mitigate the financial risks associated with trading on an open account basis. The operations of the new company will enhance international trade opportunities by providing SMEs more competitive financing for their exports.

Sami Haddad, IFC director's for Middle East and North Africa, noted, "Enhancement and diversification of exports is key to Egypt's future economic performance and factoring is an effective product aimed at helping export-oriented SMEs increase their business volume."

Total capitalization of Egypt Factors amounts to US\$15 million, with Commercial International Bank Egypt (CIB) and First International Merchant Bank (FIMBank) holding a 40% equity stake each.

CIB, with its strong brand name and market position, is expected to bring its local market expertise and client base into the new venture by leveraging on its existing market presence.

FIMBank will play the key role as technical partner capitalizing on its international expertise in factoring. "We are absolutely delighted to be in this project with such formidable partners and bringing this important product to the Egyptian exporters jointly. We are quite convinced that this will benefit the Egyptian economy as a whole, albeit of course in a small way," claims the bank.

Drawing on the technical expertise among other strengths of its stakeholders, Egypt Factors will introduce industry best practices in Egypt and thereby provide a model for others to emulate.

World Bank To Take Lead In New Climate Change Plan

The World Bank wants to bring together nations split over the Kyoto Protocol to work out a new plan that would remain effective long beyond the 2012 expiration of the climate change treaty, reports Reuters. Ian Johnson, the World Bank's top environment official, said global divisions over climate change offer an opportunity for the bank to take a more prominent role on international policies.

Long a behind-the-scenes operator on such politically sensitive issues, the World Bank can assume a leading role on climate change because of how global warming will affect its biggest clients in the developing world, Johnson, vice president for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development, told the news agency in a recent interview. "It's a huge opportunity to try and be more comprehensive, more strategic and longer term in our own relationship with the issues of climate change," Johnson said. "In a way, it has the potential to transform us to much more of a global issues manager."

Less than 2 months since Paul Wolfowitz left the US Defense Department to head the World Bank, the institution has found itself at the center of rich nations' proposals to cancel the debts of 18 mainly African nations, oversee increased African aid and create a new framework for tackling climate change. A Group of Eight meeting in Scotland in July pledged to "act with resolve and urgency" to reach common goals that include reducing greenhouse gases. But the major industrial nations did not set any measurable target or timeframe. Johnson said the bank will serve as a global mediator on climate change, bridging the huge differences in approach between the developed and emerging countries, including India and China.

Johnson acknowledged that the task of getting world leaders focused on the same issues will be difficult. "You have to navigate your way through a lot of complex minefields," he said. "To make any sort of framework like this work, you have to consider it as a big tent where you'd like everyone to feel that (they're) pulling in the same direction." Over the next few months the World Bank will start consultations with governments, the private sector and other global institutions to prepare for a meeting on climate change in November headed by British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Before then, Wolfowitz and British Finance Minister Gordon Brown will likely chair a meeting on climate change at the World Bank and International Monetary Fund annual meetings in September. "We have got to try to understand the motivations of key stakeholders who are absolutely pivotal to making a difference," Johnson said. "We also have to start the dialogue with China and India and other developing countries to better understand their own perspectives." Johnson said the new plan will give experts an opportunity to better understand the costs associated with climate change and governments time to plan and implement cost-effective investment. "The longer time you have, the more prudent you can be in sequencing those costs and, I would presume, the lower they would be. You don't wait until judgment day," he said. "Climate change is a big issue and it's a long-term issue and we have to put building blocks in place," Johnson added. "People are talking too short-term in my view." ■

The International Monetary Fund

The International Monetary Fund was created in 1945 to help promote the health of the world economy. Headquartered in Washington, DC, it is governed by and accountable to the governments of the 184 countries that make up its near-global membership.

The International Monetary Fund — also known as the “IMF” or the “Fund” — was conceived at a United Nations conference convened in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in July 1944. The 45 governments represented at that conference

sought to build a framework for economic cooperation that would avoid a repetition of the disastrous economic policies that had contributed to the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The following are the IMF’s main responsibilities:

- promoting international monetary cooperation;
- facilitating the expansion and balanced growth of international trade;
- promoting exchange stability;
- assisting in the establishment of a multilateral system of payments; and
- making its resources available (under adequate safeguards) to members experiencing balance of payments difficulties.

IMF activities

More generally, the IMF is responsible for ensuring the stability of the international monetary and financial system — the system of international payments and exchange rates among national currencies that enables trade to take place between countries. The Fund seeks to promote economic stability and prevent crises; to help resolve crises when they do occur; and to promote growth and alleviate poverty. It employs three main functions — surveillance, technical assistance, and lending — to meet these objectives.

The IMF works to promote global growth and economic stability, and thereby prevent economic crisis, by encouraging countries to adopt sound economic policies.

Surveillance is the regular dialogue and policy advice that the IMF offers to each of its members. Generally once a year, the Fund conducts in-depth appraisals of each member country’s economic situation. It discusses with the country’s authorities the policies that are most conducive to stable exchange rates and a growing and prosperous economy. The IMF also combines information from individual consultations to form assessments of global and regional developments and prospects. Its views are published twice each year in the World Economic Outlook and the Global Financial Stability Report.

Technical assistance and training are offered — mostly free of charge — to help member countries strengthen their capacity to design and implement effective policies. Technical assistance is offered in several areas, including fiscal policy, monetary and exchange rate policies, banking and financial system supervision and regulation, and statistics.

In the event that member countries do experience difficulties financing their balance of payments, the IMF is also a fund that can be tapped to help in recovery.

Financial assistance is available to give member countries the breathing room they need to correct balance of payments problems. A policy program supported by IMF financing is designed by the national authorities in close cooperation with the IMF, and continued financial support is conditional on effective implementation of this program.

The IMF is also actively working to reduce poverty in countries around the globe, independently and in collaboration with the World Bank and other organizations.

The IMF provides financial support through its concessional lending facility — the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) — and through debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.

In most low-income countries, this support is underpinned by Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). These papers are prepared by country authorities, in consultation with civil society and external development partners, to describe a comprehensive economic, structural and social policy framework that is being implemented to promote growth and reduce poverty in the country.

The IMF at a Glance

Current membership: 184 countries

Staff: approximately 2,700 from 141 countries

Total quotas: \$327 billion (as of 2/28/05)

Loans outstanding: \$90 billion to 82 countries, of which \$10 billion to 59 on concessional terms (as of 2/28/05)

Technical assistance provided: 367 person years during FY2004

Surveillance consultations concluded: 115 countries during FY2004, of which 92 voluntarily published their staff reports

IMF governance and organization

The IMF is accountable to the governments of its member countries. At the apex of its organizational structure is its Board of Governors, which consists of one Governor from each of the IMF's 184 member countries. All Governors meet once each year at the IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings; 24 of the Governors sit on the International Monetary and Finance Committee (IMFC) and meet twice each year. The day-to-day work of the IMF is conducted at its Washington, DC, headquarters by its 24-member Executive Board; this work is guided by the IMFC and supported by the IMF's professional staff. The Managing Director is Head of IMF staff and Chairman of the Executive Board, and is assisted by three Deputy Managing Directors.

The IMF's resources are provided by its member countries, primarily through payment of quotas that broadly reflect each country's economic size. The total amount of quotas is the most important factor determining the IMF's lending capacity. The annual expenses of running the Fund are met mainly by the difference between interest receipts (on outstanding loans) and interest payments (on quota "deposits").

Website: www.imf.org/

InterAmerican Development Bank

A long-standing initiative of the Latin American countries, the Inter-American Development Bank was established in 1959 as a development institution with novel mandates and tools. Its lending and technical cooperation programs for economic and social development projects went far beyond the mere financing of economic projects that was customary at the time.

The IDB's programs and tools proved so effective that soon the IDB became the model on which all other regional and sub-regional multilateral development banks were created. Today, the IDB is the oldest and largest regional development bank. It is the main source of multilateral financing for economic, social and institutional development projects as well as trade and regional integration programs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The IDB's lending program is guided by strategies. It has an institutional strategy as well as sector strategies.

The Bank obtains its financial resources from its members, borrowings on the financial markets, funds it administers and loan repayments. It uses those resources to finance loans, grants, guarantees and investments for development projects in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Profit is not the IDB's main goal, but it does operate under financial principles similar to those of private banks. Its administration and asset management activities include receiving interest income from its loans and using cash management strategies to invest funds not immediately needed for disbursements.

Website: www.iadb.org

IDB's Well-Oiled Shipping Machine

With 26 member countries in Latin American and the Caribbean, as well as offices in Paris and Japan, the Inter American Development Bank needs a finely tuned shipping apparatus to ensure the efficient transfer of household goods and commodities.

At IDB, that process is overseen by seasoned executive Carol Griffith, chief of the bank's Travel Management Section. Griffith, who has been with IDB for 9 years, after having spent over 20 years working for various moving companies.

Griffith says the Shipping Unit has faced increasing challenges to effect smooth transitions in the post-9/11 era. "We have certainly felt the security measures that have been put into place," Griffith told The Portal recently. "We have had many shipments held up in port due to the additional examinations that are required. We used to feel somewhat exempt from these exams, but no longer. In addition, we have noticed an increased cost associated with those measures, both with these exams and with the delays, including increased port costs and additional rental costs for our employees."



The IDB team, from left: Senior Travel and Shipping Officer Annette Gueritot, Daniel Deandreis, and Rosa Elena Holmgren.

The Bio-Terrorism Act also has had an impact on IDB shipping operations. “For a while,” said Griffith, “people could not bring their favorite foods and wines into the United States and it was causing a lot of problems. That seems to have sorted itself out now. As for customs in other countries, they seem to change often in Latin America, so we don’t feel the effect as much when something changes there.”

The summer months see the most moves of employees, primarily because IDB Executive Board members’ terms expire on June 30 each year. This means personnel shifts that concentrate transfers into a relatively brief period.

Griffith reports that IDB moves approximately 150 to 200 people per year. “Most of our moves are to Central and South America,” she explained. “We have opted to have a representative from the moving company on-site, which has made us truly partners with them. The IDB staff members always have a moving company representative available to them, which is invaluable.”

The Shipping Unit of the Travel Management Section of IDB is supervised by Senior Travel and Shipping Officer Annette Gueritot, a US citizen who succeeds Griffith, who now oversees the Travel Management Section. Gueritot began her career working for moving companies in the United States and in Spain. She came to the IDB Shipping Unit 18 years ago, and has spent the last 15 years working on the travel side of the business. She recently was promoted and now monitors the performance of the contracted moving company, in addition to her duties overseeing the official travel agency. She supervises two Travel and Shipping Officers who handle the day-to-day operations of the shipments.

Rosa Elena Holmgren, a native of Ecuador, has been at the IDB for 16 years. She recently began overseeing the outbound shipments of the IDB staff, a role she assisted with earlier in her career at the IDB. She works closely on a day-to-day basis with the on-site moving company representative to monitor and ensure quality moves.

Daniel Deandreis, from Uruguay, has held a number of positions in his 24 years at the IDB. He recently became a Travel and Shipping Officer, handling inbound and third country moves for staff relocating between IDB offices. He also works closely with the in-house shipping representative as well as with the IDB offices in Latin American and the Caribbean.

Both Holmgren and Deandreis are new to the household goods business, having taken over for Griffith after she assumed her current position. They have received specialized training.

It is important for the Shipping Unit to be flexible and responsive, as the countries generating the most traffic and employee transfers varies from year to year, based on what ongoing projects IDB has in specific areas. But overall, shipping volumes have remained fairly steady in recent years.

In choosing origin and destination service providers in foreign countries, says Griffith, “We rely very much on the contracted moving company and their relationships with the origin and destination agents in other countries. We allow them to use the agents with whom they have strong relations. Occasionally a staff member will request a particular agent, and then we ask them to notify us if it is a little-known agent. Other than that, we do not intervene.”

No matter who is contracted to provide services, however, “It is very important to us to have a tracking system available so that we can look up data to supply to our clients,” says Griffith. “We also have recently switched to an electronic invoicing system, which has helped dramatically to speed up the invoicing and the payment processing time.” Interestingly, although the moving company makes tracking technology available to transferees, few of them actually use it.

Shipments are protected through a contract IDB maintains directly with the insurance company, although the moving company actually gets the insurance information from the staff member on behalf of the IDB. IDB deals directly with the insurer in handling coverage and claims. ■

A Commitment to International Cooperation

By Rodrigo de Rato, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund

In the wake of the South Asian tsunami disaster, the world has witnessed an outpouring of humanitarian assistance. In an extraordinary demonstration of international cooperation, governments, international agencies, voluntary groups and private citizens have come together to help victims get back on their feet and begin to rebuild their lives. But this achievement also underlines a broader challenge facing the international community after the tsunami: Can we maintain our commitment to an important agenda of issues grounded in international cooperation? And can we produce results?

The spirit of cooperation truly represents the best of our globalized community. It shows that the nations of the world gain strength by acting together to deal with adversity and strive toward common goals. This commitment has been evident during many past crises; it underlies the work of the Bretton Woods Institutions — the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Indeed, the founding of the Fund and Bank in the 1940s was a direct result of the Great Depression and World War II, when deep divisions within the international community brought about man-made catastrophes.

Cooperation must be a mainstay of the global economy in an era in which huge sums of money flow across national borders in an instant, holding the potential for both prosperity and instability. In a world where great wealth coexists alongside deep poverty, the real hope for widening the benefits of globalization must come from nations working together.

The work undertaken since the mid-1990s to confront the dangers of economic and financial crisis must be maintained. At the same time, it is essential that donor countries continue to confront the needs of developing nations facing the daily ravages of poverty, hunger and disease. As the IMF has evolved over the past 60 years, the international community has called upon the organization to play a role in both of these key areas.

The transformation of the scale and nature of capital flows has required the Fund to take on a sharper focus in the area of crisis prevention, and has demanded new thinking on how to resolve crises when they occur. Many lessons have been learned from the emerging markets crises of the 1990s, and many reforms have been implemented that have strengthened the international community's defenses. More work remains to be done, but we have been helped by the current strength of the global economy — which despite the recent surge of oil prices still is likely to show solid growth and subdued inflation in 2005.

This relatively benign global outlook provides an important window of opportunity for further progress in addressing global imbalances and reinforcing the basis for more balanced and sustainable global growth. This requires active efforts by the United States to reduce its fiscal and external deficits, and by the European Union and Japan to promote more vigorous growth through structural reforms. In middle income countries, continuing efforts are needed to deepen progress in reducing vulnerabilities and to set the stage for sustained growth in output, job creation, and poverty reduction. And in low-income countries, all of us — the international community and the countries themselves — should work for faster progress to put in place economic policies that produce growth and poverty reduction.

The IMF has a central role to play in this work. The Fund needs to ensure its advice is focused on candid discussions of exchange rate policies and a strong focus on financial sector vulnerabilities, as well as balance of payments and fiscal sustainability. We are actively monitoring capital market developments and are continuing to sharpen our tools for assessing vulnerabilities, including through an increasingly systematic assessment of debt sustainability and a strengthened focus on national balance sheets and sound debt management. And we are undertaking, in collaboration with the World Bank and other international bodies, more rigorous assessments of the health of financial systems.

The low-income countries present the international community with an ongoing challenge. Over a billion people live on less than a dollar a day, and hundreds of millions are affected by malaria, HIV/AIDS and other diseases. The international community has made a commitment to help the poorest countries achieve real breakthroughs against poverty in the decade through the UN's Millennium Development Goals. The 2002 Monterrey conference agreed on a way to reach this goal: The rich countries will provide aid and trade opportunities; the multilateral institutions will offer policy advice, technical help and financing; and the poor countries themselves are committed to improving their governance and focusing on more effective poverty reduction programs. Now is the time for the rich countries to fulfill their commitments on aid and trade.

The world community has demonstrated its tremendous capacity for caring in the wake of the tsunami disaster. Now is the time to also open our hearts and wallets to those suffering the burden of everyday life in so many other countries. International cooperation is the only road to achieving a globalization that benefits all people. ■

This commentary was originally published in El Pais Yearbook 2005.

Cooperation with Multinationals

The interests of the United States are being increasingly affected by the actions of multinational organizations. It seems more likely than not that the United States will conduct future military operations within a multinational framework or as part of a multilateral coalition. In addition, there are a range of activities undertaken by multinational bodies — from peacekeeping operations to enforcing internationally imposed sanctions to dealing with humanitarian crises — that either involve US military or civilian personnel directly, or where the United States has a strong interest in seeing the activity succeed. To the extent that the United States has information important to the success of these activities, it is in the national interest to find a way to share it.

Historically, the United States has been able to share intelligence or information derived from intelligence successfully in a coalition environment. For example, intelligence has been shared with NATO member countries for many years on a classified basis, albeit within established limits. Moreover, when multinational coalitions have been formed to achieve specific military objectives, the United States out of necessity developed arrangements for sharing pertinent intelligence with coalition forces.

Sharing information with the United Nations has been more tentative due to the nature of the organization itself (some countries have interests perceived as inimical to those of the United States) and to the lack of any effective system at the UN to control information provided by member nations. Still, the UN must rely entirely on information provided by member nations to support its operations. It has no capability of its own to collect or to analyze information. While the United States presently provides most of the information that the UN receives in support of its operations, this support remains relatively limited. Other nations reportedly contribute very little.

In general, the United States should use its broad experience in intelligence matters to arrange for appropriate information support to multinational bodies as well as international coalitions, where important interests of the United States are at stake. This can be done without jeopardizing the security of US intelligence activities. It may require “sanitizing” intelligence to ensure protection of sources or methods and/or limiting such information to particular topics or operational activities.

These actions do place extra burdens on US intelligence agencies to assess the particular needs of foreign recipients, to create “sanitized” versions of their reports, and to set up separate dissemination channels or communication systems for the foreign recipients. Good information support is ordinarily critical to the success of any multilateral or coalition operation in which the United States is involved and, as a practical matter, the United States may be best positioned to take a leadership role.

In providing such support, US intelligence agencies generally should not deal directly with multinational organizations or coalitions, but rather should work through other elements of the US Government (e.g., the Department of State for diplomatic actions, appropriate Department of Defense or other military channels for military coalitions). The US agency charged with overall responsibility for the relationship with the multinational organization or coalition being supported will usually be in the best position to understand the needs of the recipients and balance risk versus gain. ■

The Organization of American States And the Inter-American System

The Organization of American States (OAS) brings together the countries of the Western Hemisphere to strengthen cooperation and advance common interests. It is the region's premier forum for multilateral dialogue and concerted action.

At the core of the OAS mission is an unequivocal commitment to democracy, as expressed in the Inter-American Democratic Charter: "The peoples of the Americas have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it." Building on this foundation, the OAS works to promote good governance, strengthen human rights, foster peace and security, expand trade, and address the complex problems caused by poverty, drugs and corruption. Through decisions made by its political bodies and programs carried out by its General Secretariat, the OAS promotes greater inter-American cooperation and understanding.

The OAS member states have intensified their cooperation since the end of the Cold War, taking on new and important challenges. In 1994 the region's 34 democratically elected presidents and prime ministers met in Miami for the First Summit of the Americas, where they established broad political, economic and social development goals. They have continued to meet periodically since then to examine common interests and priorities. Through the ongoing Summits of the Americas process, the region's leaders have entrusted the OAS with a growing number of responsibilities to help advance the countries' shared vision.

Here are some of the ways in which the OAS is making a difference:

Defending democracy. The Inter-American Democratic Charter defines the essential elements of democracy and establishes guidelines for responding effectively and collectively when it is at risk. The OAS plays a key role in strengthening democratic institutions and practices in the countries of the Americas. The OAS has observed elections in a majority of its member states, helping to ensure transparency and integrity in the voting process. The OAS also supports efforts to decentralize governments, modernize political parties, strengthen national legislatures, and consolidate democratic values and culture.

Protecting human rights. Despite the prevalence of freely elected governments in the Americas, the region continues to see such problems as police abuse, violations of due process of law, and lack of independence in the administration of justice. The OAS human rights system provides recourse to people in the Americas who have suffered violations of their rights by the state and who have been unable to find justice in their own country. The pillars of the system are the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, based in Washington, D.C., and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, located in San José, Costa Rica. These institutions apply the regional law on human rights.

The Commission examines petitions filed by individuals who claim the violation of a protected right and may recommend measures to be carried out by the state to remedy the violation. If the country involved has accepted the Inter-American Court's jurisdiction, the Commission may submit the case to the Court for a binding decision.

The Commission also conducts on-site visits to member countries, at their invitation, to analyze and report on the status of human rights. It promotes human rights throughout the hemisphere, focusing attention on specific issues such as freedom of expression, the rights of indigenous peoples and women's rights.

Strengthening security. The OAS is working on a number of fronts to make the region safer. The Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (known as CICTE) seeks to prevent the financing of terrorism, strengthen border controls, and increase cooperation among law enforcement authorities in different countries. The peaceful resolution of territorial disputes is another concern, and the OAS has created a Fund for Peace to provide support in this area.

The OAS also coordinates comprehensive international efforts to remove buried landmines that pose a threat to civilians in previous zones of conflict, including parts of Central America and along the border between Ecuador and Peru. The OAS also supports mine awareness and victim rehabilitation programs, and has helped several member states destroy stockpiled mines.

In 2003, the member states reviewed the hemisphere's overall security structure in light of new threats and priorities, and reaffirmed their commitment to help preserve peace through close cooperation.

Fostering free trade. A central goal has been the creation of a hemisphere-wide trading zone, the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Working in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the OAS Trade Unit has provided extensive technical support to the FTAA negotiations, with particular emphasis on ensuring that the concerns of smaller economies are taken into account.

Combating illegal drugs. Through the OAS Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), the OAS nations are strengthening anti-drug laws, enhancing prevention programs, and taking other steps to stem the trafficking of illegal narcotics, related chemicals, and firearms. The Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM), which monitors progress against drugs in each country and the region as a whole, has significantly increased cooperation on this issue. By sharing knowledge on accomplishments, obstacles and strategies, the countries develop a clearer picture of needs and weaknesses and identify areas that warrant closer coordination, better legislation, more research or additional resources.

Fighting corruption. In 1996 the OAS member countries adopted the Inter-American Convention against Corruption, the first treaty of its kind in the world. A monitoring process evaluates how countries that have ratified the treaty are complying with its key provisions. The goal is to strengthen cooperation among the countries to address shared problems.

The OAS also plays a leading role in other areas of inter-American cooperation. Government ministers in such areas as education, justice, labor, defense, culture and sustainable development meet regularly under its auspices to promote gender equity and equality and to help the countries coordinate strategies on specific issues and ensure that policies established through the Summits of the Americas reach the national level and that mandates are implemented.

The OAS General Secretariat also carries out an array of programs in the member countries. For example, the OAS implements sustainable development programs in biodiversity conservation, planning for global climate change, natural disaster mitigation and river basin management.

An Inter-American partnership

With four official languages — English, Spanish, Portuguese and French — the OAS reflects the rich diversity of peoples and cultures across the Americas. The OAS has 35 member states, the independent nations of North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean. (Cuba has been barred from participation since 1962.) Countries from all around the world are permanent observers, closely following the issues that are critical to the Americas and often providing key financial support for OAS programs.

The member states set major policies and goals through the General Assembly, which gathers the hemisphere's foreign ministers once a year in regular session. The Permanent Council, made up of ambassadors appointed by the member states, meets regularly at OAS headquarters in Washington to guide ongoing policies and actions.

Another political body, the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI), focuses on promoting economic development and combating poverty. The Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) was established in 2000 to promote new and more effective forms of cooperation to fight poverty and promote social and economic development.

The OAS Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General are elected by the member states to 5-year terms. Specialized units in the General Secretariat focus on such areas as democracy, trade, tourism, social development and education. At OAS headquarters, the Columbus Memorial Library and Art Museum of the Americas are valuable resources for research and cultural enrichment.

Also under the OAS umbrella are several specialized agencies that have considerable autonomy, including the Washington-based Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN), based in Montevideo, Uruguay; the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), in San José, Costa Rica; and the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) and the Inter-American Indian Institute (III), both headquartered in Mexico City.

OAS Member States

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba (excluded from participation in the OAS since 1962), Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela. ■

Inter-American Bar Association (IABA)

Founded on May 16, 1940, by a group of distinguished lawyers and jurists representing 44 professional organizations and 17 nations of the Western Hemisphere, the Inter-American Bar Association (IABA), headquartered in Washington, DC, represents a permanent forum for the exchange of professional views and information for lawyers to promote the Rule of Law and protect the democratic institutions in the Americas.

Approximately every 12 months, the IABA holds an international conference in one of the countries of the Americas during which time special seminars on legal topics are presented and IABA Committees and Sections meet. These meetings serve as a forum for the presentation of papers and the consideration of issues and resolutions related to them. They facilitate networking and discussion of current issues of interest to lawyers of the Americas, their respective governments, and various international organizations.

In addition, social events are held which emphasize local culture and cuisine. The IABA also offers regional seminars, has an active Young Lawyers Section, and participates in international conferences and meetings sponsored by other international and national legal organizations.

Website: www.iaba.org

Pan American Health Organization

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is an international public health agency with 100 years of experience working to improve health and living standards of the people of the Americas. It enjoys international recognition as part of the United Nations system, serving as the Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization, and as the health organization of the Inter-American System.

PAHO is based in Washington, DC, and has scientific and technical experts at its headquarters, in its 27 country offices, and its nine scientific centers, all working with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in dealing with priority health issues. The health authorities of PAHO's Member States set PAHO's technical and administrative policies through its governing bodies. PAHO Member States include all 35 countries in the Americas; Puerto Rico is an Associate Member. France, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland are Participating States, and Portugal and Spain are Observer States.

The Organization's essential mission is to strengthen national and local health systems and improve the health of the peoples of the Americas, in collaboration with Ministries of Health, other government and international agencies, nongovernmental organizations, universities, social security agencies, community groups, and many others.

PAHO promotes primary health care strategies that reach people in their communities, to extend health services to all and to increase efficiency in the use of scarce resources. It assists countries in fighting old diseases that have re-emerged, such as cholera, dengue, and tuberculosis, and newer diseases such as AIDS, providing technical cooperation including education and social communications support, promoting work with non-governmental organizations, and support for programs to prevent transmission of communicable diseases. The Organization is also involved in prevention of chronic diseases such as diabetes and cancer, which are increasingly affecting the populations of developing countries in the Americas.

In its efforts to improve health, PAHO targets the most vulnerable groups, including mothers and children, workers, the poor, the elderly, and refugees and displaced persons. It focuses on issues related to equity for those who lack access to health, and on a Pan-American approach encouraging countries to work together on common issues.

PAHO and its Member Countries are committed to improving the safety of blood in the Americas, launching a blood safety initiative designed to ensure that all blood for transfusion is free of disease and to increase the number of volunteer blood donors.

A major priority for the Americas is cutting infant mortality. Primary health care workers are taught a complete process to evaluate the health of children brought to a health post or clinic. They learn to recognize signs of disease and evaluate and treat them. They learn to give parents information on how to prevent disease in the home. If they see danger signs indicating the infant could die, they are taught to treat the child immediately or take him or her to a hospital.

PAHO has moved aggressively in the fight to reduce the use of tobacco, emphasizing the health aspects and the high cost to the countries of tobacco use. In addition, improving drinking water supplies, ensuring adequate sanitation, and increasing access to health care for the poor are still top priorities for PAHO, with a focus on equity. PAHO is intensifying its efforts to ensure countries know the true state of health of their populations and where the inequalities lie. Program efforts focus on decentralization and change of state functions, on showing that health has a role to play in the success of other sectors, and how attention to health affects positively other aspects of human

development. Advocacy in this area is also directed to reducing gender inequity, which is reflected in some health problems of women.

The spirit of Pan-Americanism continues to stimulate technical cooperation among countries in health. PAHO has helped countries work together toward common goals, and to initiate multi-country health ventures in Central America, the Caribbean, the Andean Region, and the Southern Cone. Experience has shown practical benefits, such as the solidarity that helped Central America after Hurricane Mitch, and there are numerous other examples. Health collaboration found expression at the highest political level when American heads of state in their Summit in Santiago accepted a health initiative called “Health Technology Linking the Americas.”

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean joined together over 20 years ago to buy vaccines through a revolving fund, bringing them tangible benefits and helping advance PAHO’s efforts to eliminate or control vaccine-preventable diseases. These are among the Organization’s most notable successes, starting with the eradication of smallpox from the Americas in 1973 — a triumph followed 5 years later by global eradication of the dreaded disease.

PAHO assists the countries in mobilizing the necessary resources to provide immunization and treatment services for all vaccine-preventable diseases. PAHO is working to eliminate measles from this hemisphere and introducing new vaccines, such as Haemophilus influenza B, to reduce meningitis and respiratory infections. PAHO works to reduce the toll of death and illness from diarrheal diseases, including cholera, through case management and oral rehydration therapy to prevent deaths from dehydration, and to provide adequate diagnosis and treatment of acute respiratory infections, thus saving the lives of hundreds of thousands of children each year.

PAHO disseminates scientific and technical information through its publications program, its Internet site, and a network of academic libraries, documentation centers, and local health care libraries.

The Organization provides technical collaboration in a variety of specialized public health fields, and organizes emergency preparedness and disaster relief coordination. It supports efforts to control malaria and other diseases that affect the people of the Americas and to address major nutritional problems including protein-energy malnutrition and iodine and vitamin A deficiencies.

It expedites health promotion to help countries deal with health problems typical of development and urbanization, such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, accidents, smoking, addiction to drugs and alcohol, and others.

The Organization also executes projects for other United Nations agencies, for international organizations such as the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, for official development cooperation agencies of various governments, and for philanthropic foundations.

PAHO trains health workers at all levels, through fellowships, courses and seminars, and the strengthening of national training institutions. It leads in the use of advanced communications technologies for information, health promotion, and education, working with journalists in many countries.

The Organization recognizes the role of the private sector in the delivery of services, and fosters dialogue and partnerships with the Ministries of Health. In addition to its core budget financed by quota contributions from its Member Governments, PAHO also seeks outside funding to help implement special programs and initiatives in response to vital health needs.

Website: www.paho.org/

New Flu Pandemic? Experts Discuss Communicating the Risk

For influenza experts, the question is not whether the world is going to have a new flu pandemic, but when. This isn't easy to communicate to the public. Bird flu and the potential for a human flu pandemic have been making headlines in recent weeks, but the subject presents more uncertainties than certainties.

In "Bird Flu: Communicating the Risk," an article in the latest issue of *Perspectives in Health*, the magazine of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), risk communication experts Peter Sandman and Jody Lanard address the questions: How do you inform the public about a risk that is serious but latent? How loudly do you sound the alarm? What is the best way to involve the public in preparations for a pandemic?

Bird flu has already killed millions of birds and dozens of people in Asia. But there is growing fear that the H5N1 virus could spark a human pandemic that would likely claim millions of human lives around the world.

Yet infectious diseases are unpredictable, and this presents a serious problem for risk communication. Health authorities know that if they sound the alarm too softly, it won't be heard; it's not easy to overcome people's apathy and add another problem to their already long list of daily concerns. At the same time, too loud a warning can provoke excessive and premature fears, economic damage, and even an every-man-for-himself attitude that can result in chaos. And if no pandemic materializes, members of the public are less likely to take future warnings seriously.

A happy medium, say the authors, is to build mutual trust, "involving the public early, arousing an appropriate level of public fear, and helping people bear it."

Sandman and Lanard provide a list of key recommendations to help authorities meet the risk communication challenges posed by bird flu and similar issues. Among their suggestions: engage in responsible speculation, acknowledge uncertainties about what will happen, share dilemmas about what to do, and do not try to eliminate fear altogether.

A special problem for risk communication about bird flu is that influenza is just not taken very seriously. It's not exotic like SARS or West Nile virus. It happens every year, and it is usually a serious problem only for older adults. Moreover, the last severe pandemic was in 1918.

But a mutation or reassortment of the H5N1 virus could produce a strain that transmits easily between humans and thereby provoke a human pandemic that could, experts say, claim from 2 million to as many as 100 million lives or more (if, in a worst-case scenario, 30% of the population fell ill and 5% of those died).

The *Perspectives in Health* article appears as concerns about the pandemic threat are growing in the international public health community. At the recent World Health Assembly, Lee Jong-wook, Director-General of the World Health Organization, warned health ministers on what he called the "most serious known health threat the world is facing today, which is avian influenza."

He said, "The timing cannot be predicted, but rapid international spread is certain once the susceptible virus appears. This is a grave danger for all people in all countries. We can get some idea of its magnitude from the Spanish influenza pandemic in 1918, which killed between 20 and 50 million people."

Though scientists in 1918 "had very little idea of what was happening until it was too late," Lee said, today, "by good fortune we have had time — and still have time - to prepare for the next global pandemic, because the conditions for it have appeared before the outbreak itself. We must do everything in our power to maximize that preparedness. When this event occurs, our response has got to be immediate, comprehensive and effective."

Sandman and Lanard argue that motivating people to take the pandemic threat seriously should be a top priority for governments around the world. Authorities need to know how to involve the public in a positive way in preparations for a world crisis that almost certainly will happen...even if no one knows when. ■

Reconciling International Cooperation and National Security

Without question, the United States has the most capable intelligence and information-gathering apparatus of any country in the world. The information produced by this apparatus gives the United States a substantial advantage when it comes to understanding world events, predicting and preparing for unsettled times, fielding military forces, and making a host of other political and economic decisions. Inasmuch as this information is also useful to other countries and international organizations, it is not surprising that intelligence constitutes a substantial factor, and often a very positive one, in US international cooperation.

Information and Intelligence is especially important to US bilateral relationships. Because few other countries possess technical capabilities on the scale of the United States and the costs of creating them are prohibitive for most, there are clear incentives for others to enter into cooperative relationships. Historically, the United States has been willing to reciprocate where it shares common interests and concerns. Even where the interests of the United States and another country do not entirely converge, intelligence has often supplied the “quid” for the other’s “quo.” For the most part, these relationships have proven mutually beneficial.

Information derived from intelligence also forms an important element of US participation in international organizations, such as the United Nations, The World Bank, IMF, OAS, etc. The United States frequently uses such information to alert organizations to impending crises or to motivate action in appropriate circumstances. When international bodies do act, for example by sending in peacekeeping forces or by imposing sanctions on a “rogue” state, the United States often provides information derived from intelligence to protect the forces or detect violations of sanctions.

Despite the importance of these bilateral and multilateral relationships, questions are frequently raised about the security and reciprocity of these arrangements. Will other governments and international organizations protect information provided by the United States? Are foreign partners pulling their share of the load and is the United States benefiting sufficiently in return? ■

Two Months and Counting

By R. G. Edmonson

On Sept. 16, the United States, Canada, and Mexico will begin enforcing an international standard requiring heat treatment or fumigation of wood pallets and other packing material to prevent the spread of wood pests and diseases. The problem seems to be that not enough importers have received the message.

Customs and Border Protection and the Agriculture Department's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service have started to educate shippers about the International Standards for Phyto-sanitary Measures Publication No. 15: Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging Material in International Trade, or ISPM 15. APHIS is preparing educational materials to raise awareness, said William Aley, senior import specialist. On July 1, Customs inspectors began checking compliance at ports, said Cathy Saucedo, director of special enforcement.

"We are doing it as part of our regular trade-compliance exams. The inspector will note whether there is wood packing material, and whether or not it is in compliance," Saucedo told The Journal of Commerce. Inspectors are handing out ISPM 15 flyers as part of the informed-compliance effort. "It's possible that we already have a lot of compliance. We need to know right now where we stand, so that we know how much work we have and where to direct our energy between now and September."

Wood packing material that has been treated to the ISPM 15 standard bears a unique certification stamp. European Union countries started enforcing the standard in March, as did Australia and New Zealand. Others, including South Africa, Argentina, and China, have indicated they will put the standard in force.

If Customs finds that an importer's cargo is packed in noncompliant wood materials, the importer has two choices: The goods are returned to the country of origin, or the shipment moves to a Customs-bonded warehouse, where it can be removed from its packing, and repacked with certified materials. The original packing material is returned to the exporting country.

Aley said ISPM 15 allows such separation when it's important that cargo reach its destination. In the real world, that costly decision is likely to fall to the importer.

Saucedo said Customs inspectors will determine if separation is feasible. For example, if noncompliant wood packing is protecting imported sheets of glass, the cargo is likely to be returned.

Aley said he is fielding calls from importers, but not as many as he expected. "I get about 15 to 20 calls a day. I thought I'd be a lot more swamped." One of the most common questions is: Can importers get an exemption? In short, no. Aley said the United States has an agreement with Canada governing wood packing. ISPM allows countries to negotiate agreements on a country-by-country basis, but Aley gave no indication it's something the United States intends to do.

The new standard will replace USDA rules that targeted wood packing from China, India, and Pakistan. "When this rule kicks in, we're throwing out all that criteria. We're saying the whole world needs to comply with ISPM," Aley said. Each country sets its own criteria for certifying wood treatment. For material made in the United States, the USDA has designated the American Lumber Association and the Wood Pallet Manufacturers Association as certifying agents.

ISPM 15 says that wood packing must be heated to 56 degrees Celsius for 30 minutes, or receive equivalent chemical fumigation treatment. "That temperature kills a majority of wood timber pests associated," Aley said. "There are always exceptions; that's the hard part when you're dealing with nature." A fungus that's buried deep in the wood might survive, or a country could inadvertently ship wood material with a new pest or disease no one has seen before.

ISPM 15 does not apply to imported lumber. "Pallets and crates are made from a lower grade of wood. It could be scraps," Aley said. "What we've seen from China is that somebody is chopping down the tree in his back yard. It's not high-quality wood." ■

SOURCE: The Journal of Commerce

Portugal Joins CSI

The Container Security Initiative added Portugal to its participating countries. That means US-bound cargo moving through the Lisbon port will be pre-screened and targeted for inspection if deemed suspicious. CSI, a Customs and Border Protection program, stations US personnel in foreign ports. While US agents cannot inspect cargo in non-US ports, they can ask foreign inspectors to do so. Portugal is the 24th country to join CSI, and Lisbon is the 37th port in the program.

Lisbon handles nearly 13 million tons of cargo per year. Cargo includes cars, containers, breakbulk and grain.

SOURCE: Traffic World

Gala Events Usher in New Era of Commerce between Mainland and Hawai'i

In a gracefully orchestrated ceremony held on March 21 in San Diego, Calif., the MV *Jean Anne* was christened with the warmth and dignity that personifies The Pasha Group and the Pasha family. Blessed with a weather-perfect day, over 550 invited guests were present to witness this historic event. As guests arrived, they were escorted onto the vessel to tour the cargo space and invited to ascend the multiple flights of stairs (or in seagoing terms, the “ladders”) to the bridge and top deck. Customer vehicles lined the dock in front of the vessel, flanked on either side by 12 Pasha vehicle transporters, fully loaded with vehicles ready to board the *Jean Anne*. An American flag dramatically graced the side of the ship from her top deck to the dock over 100 feet below.

A stirring presentation of colors by the Port of San Diego honor guard started the ceremony, followed by guest Victoria Agardi's a cappella rendition of the “Star Spangled Banner.” George Pasha IV welcomed guests and dignitaries. Honored speakers, George Pasha III and Nickel van Reesema, Vice President and COO of Pasha Hawaii Transport Lines, joined National City Mayor Nick Inzunza and National City Port Commissioner Robert “Dukie” Valerama in recognizing the importance of the day. Nickel van Reesema also presented George Pasha III with a saluting cannon, with which he fired a rather impressive gun salute.

Christening of Jean Anne a family affair

Father Michael Ryan, pastor of Seattle's St. James Cathedral and brother of Janet Pasha, led the blessing of the ship with a poignant prayer. In the modern tradition of christening, a bottle of champagne is struck on the bow or side of the vessel. Janet Pasha, wife of George Pasha III, performed the honors as Sponsor of the Jean Anne. Official attendants at her side were Elyse Pasha, wife of George Pasha IV; Donna Pasha Perasso, daughter of founder George Pasha, Jr.; and Jean Anne Pasha, after whom the ship is named; and Augusta van Reesema, wife of Nickel van Reesema. It took several swings before the champagne bottle burst, “an ironic reminder of the difficulties overcome to finalize the construction of the vessel,” noted George Pasha IV. At that moment, eighty white doves were released as a symbol of good fortune. A timely display of ceremonial spray by the Harbor Police added to the pageantry. The ceremony was followed by a sumptuous buffet lunch on the port where each guest was presented with a commemorative bronze medallion.

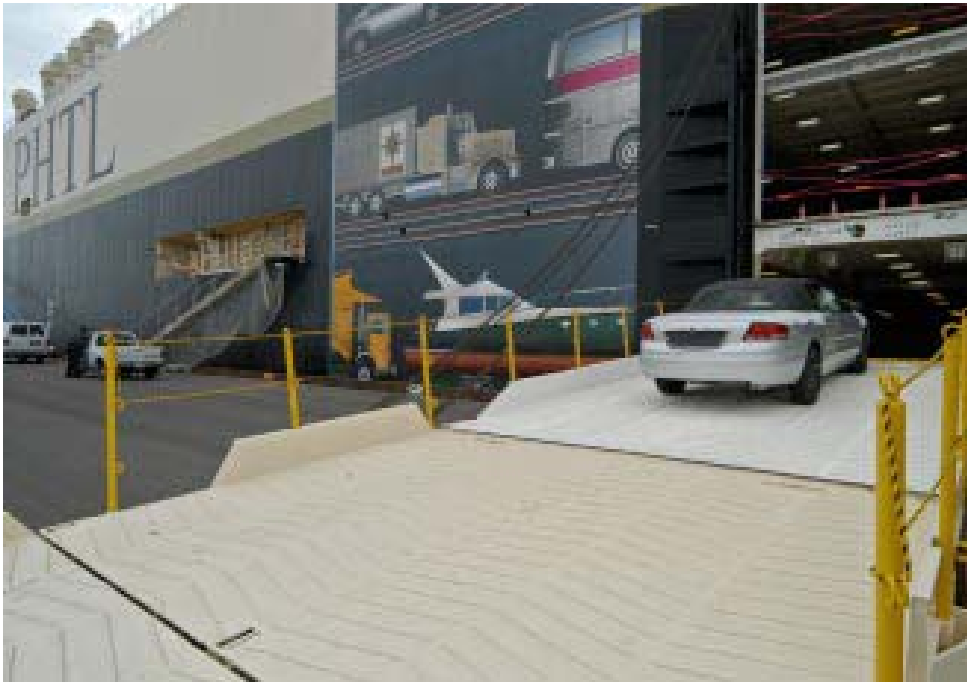
By all accounts it was a magical day — a proud day for the Pasha family and employees — a celebration of determination and teamwork by all concerned.

Hawai'i welcomes Jean Anne on her maiden voyage

Just hours after the christening in San Diego, the Jean Anne embarked on her maiden voyage, loaded with cargo for the Hawaiian Islands. She had over 2,200 vehicles, along with some trucks, household goods, boats and other



Eighty white doves are released at the christening ceremony for the Jean Anne.



New vessel “wrap” provides inside view of Pasha Operations. For the first time, a large graphic wrap has been created for the side of the MV Jean Anne. This innovative graphic technology provides a visual demonstration of the ship’s interior.

commercial cargo. Celebrations were held in Hilo, Kahului and Honolulu, which are the Jean Anne’s direct ports of call.

In Honolulu, Jean Anne received a traditional Hawaiian Blessing by Kumu Lake (by sheer coincidence a former classmate of George Pasha III at San Francisco State University), attended by the Pasha family, the ship’s officers and a few Pasha employees. The blessing was performed on the ship at Piers 31-34, where Jean Anne will regularly call. A cocktail reception followed at Pier 19 in the new Super Ferry Terminal Building. Over 300 guests attended the gala, including Senator Daniel K. Akaka, Mayor Mufi Hanneman and Linda Smith, Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Lingle. Guests enjoyed Hawaiian music by Poi Boyz and videos of the Jean Anne’s arrival at the Port of San Diego.

In Hilo and Kahului, local community leaders and customers were invited to meet the Pasha Hawaii team over breakfast and lunch, respectively. In Maui, the team was joined by Mayor Alan Arakawa and the entire city council.



Household goods containers ready for transit on the Jean Anne.

PierPass Scores Early

Less than a month after registration began, more than 1,000 port users signed up for OffPeak, a new container processing system at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

The program will be operated by PierPass, a non-profit company created by marine terminal operators to reduce congestion and improve air quality at Los Angeles-area ports by shifting cargo movement to nights and weekends.

“In order for port users to ensure that their cargo continues to flow freely, we strongly urge them to go to our website, learn about the program and register,” said Bruce Wargo, president and CEO of PierPass.

Beginning July 23, all international container terminals at the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports will start OffPeak shifts on nights and weekends.

From that date, a \$40 per TEU fee will be required for cargo movement through the ports during peak hours (Monday through Friday, 3:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.).

The fee will help fund five new OffPeak shifts per week (Monday through Thursday from 6:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.)

BNSF Railway, the largest intermodal rail carrier, sees the program potentially making a significant improvement in freight congestion at the ports.

“Our intermodal network has been operating 24/7 for some time, and other parts of the supply chain need to do same,” said Steve Branscum, group vice president for consumer products at BNSF.

Although PierPass isn’t an around-the-clock operation, “it’s a big improvement,” he said.

Cargo owners, brokers, truckers and logistics companies can register free on the PierPass website, www.pierpass.org.

Looking Ahead to 2006: Cargo Shifts West to East

With few ships available to charter, ocean carriers have been in a holding pattern on all-water services from Asia to the U.S. East Coast. Now, with a wave of new ships about to hit the market, carriers are planning several new services during the next year or two.

The question: Can East Coast ports handle the added volume?

Shippers began seeking East Coast alternatives three years ago, after their supply chains were tangled by the closing of West Coast ports during a lockout of longshoremen. The shippers’ interest intensified last year when West Coast ports and railroads couldn’t keep up with the unexpectedly strong peak season.

This year’s peak season is already under way. Prudent logistics managers are already thinking about next year. As Peter Leach points out in this week’s cover story, planned all-water services through the Panama and Suez canals will provide them with additional alternatives during 2006.

Many large shippers have already made long-term commitments to all-water routes by building or leasing large import-distribution centers near ports such as Savannah, Norfolk and New York-New Jersey. Still more are on the drawing board. Last month, South Carolina officials proposed state incentives for distribution centers using the Port of Charleston.

Shippers’ East Coast strategies, however, will depend on the capacity of receiving ports and intermodal networks.

On the plus side, ports have been expanding facilities — the Port of New York and New Jersey has completed most of a rebuilding and expansion of terminals at the Newark-Elizabeth container complex. Houston is scheduled to open the first phase of its Bayport terminal in mid-2006, relieving a space crunch that is forcing CMA CGM’s new Panama Canal service to call at the port within a limited time window. Operational changes, such as the portwide chassis pool at Hampton Roads, also can squeeze more capacity from existing terminals.

And unlike the West Coast, traffic at East Coast ports is scattered among several ports. A 10% increase in traffic at Los Angeles–Long Beach is more than 1 million TEUs. Except for New York, that percentage translates to less than 200,000 TEUs at East Coast ports. Most ports, even those already near their design capacity, can usually find ways to squeeze in that kind of added volume.

One important difference between the East and West coasts is in the use of intermodal rail. Half of the import containers through Southern California ports move inland by rail. In the Pacific Northwest, it’s 70%. Geography and markets limit the use of rail at East Coast ports such as New York, which is working toward a goal of 25%.

What that suggests is that if East Coast ports have a problem handling next year’s all-water volume, it’s likely to involve port trucking. That’s something to consider if you’re a logistics manager planning for 2006.

On July 8, 2005 the HHGFAA petitioned SDDC to have the "Traffic Mitigation Fee" associated with the PierPASS, Inc.'s "OffPeak" initiative labeled as a "pass through" to the government. Though the initial feedback received from SDDC was favorable, as of yet, we have not received any official position on the issue from SDDC. Obviously programming issues with PowerTrack and CWA as well as consensus with the Military Services will be necessary before any official position from SDDC will be announced. The official start date for the collection of Traffic Mitigation Fees which are collected for doing business during peak hours is July 23, 2005. The Association continues to stress to SDDC the importance of a speedy decision with regards to this matter.

Using the Big Ditch

Shippers hankering for new ocean capacity can look forward to several new all-water alternatives to carry their cargoes from China and Southeast Asia to the US East Coast ports. Container lines are lining up to add all-water services as soon as the current wave of shipbuilding expands the supply of vessels.

Cosco Container Lines expects to add an all-water service through the Panama Canal in August. China Shipping Container Lines is set to start one from China to East Coast ports via the Suez Canal in September. And in May, CMA CGM started a third all-water service via Panama to Houston and Savannah, primarily to handle Wal-Mart imports from China.

The crunch should ease next year as dozens of large, new ships are delivered. Many of these vessels will bump older Panamax tonnage to other routes, including new all-water services through the Panama Canal.

Though the new services will ease constraints on vessel capacity, shippers could face other problems. The number of new all-water services being contemplated is raising concerns about the ability of the Panama Canal to handle the projected number of transits they would represent. Ocean carriers plan at least a half-dozen new all-water services next year and in 2007. If all of them materialize as weekly services, the canal's capacity could be further stretched.

Carriers have been eager to add all-water services to feed large retailers' import-distribution centers on the East Coast and to provide an alternative to congested Southern California ports. However, the shortage of Panamax-sized vessels and the sky-high cost of charters has limited the launch of new all-water services from Asia.

"The Panama Canal is just about at the limit of what it is capable of handling until it is expanded," said Ron Widdows, chief executive of APL Ltd. "Delays in crossing the canal are just beginning to build, and that will begin to have a fairly significant negative impact on the operation of all-water US East Coast services."

Many carriers are considering launching new all-water services from East Asia to the US East Coast through the Suez Canal in the next few years. The Suez service that China Shipping plans to launch in September will be a westbound round-the-world service that will go from China to Southeast Asia, the Mediterranean and the U.S. East Coast before returning to Asia via Panama.

Other carriers that had planned new all-water services through Suez have had to postpone them because of the lack of vessels. "We're not planning a Suez service this year, but it's definitely on our radar screen," said John van de Merwe, chief executive of CMA CGM in Marseilles. "We can't scrape the vessels together this year, but we are planning a service for the future."

The only other new all-water service via Panama that is scheduled for launch this year is the AWE5 service that Cosco Container Lines is planning to start in August in conjunction with Yang Ming, one of its partners in the CKYH alliance with "K" Line, Hanjin and Senator Lines. Yang Ming may supply four of the eight 3,000-TEU vessels needed for the new service. Cosco is also planning a new all-water service through Suez for the first or second quarter of next year.

Short Sea Shipping Study Funding:

Transport Canada, the Canadian counterpart to the US Department of Transportation, will contribute \$26,000 in funding for a study on short-sea shipping between points on North America's east coast.

The study, which will be conducted by Dalhousie University, will examine the potential for short-sea shipping activities on the East coast of Canada and the United States and the effectiveness of moving cargo and passengers via lakes or river systems. The study will also project current and future freight flows along the Atlantic Coast and also review the combination of modes by which goods are currently transported. Funding for this project comes from the Transportation Planning and Modal Integration Initiative, part of the Government of Canada's \$600 million Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program.

Inland Fuel Surcharge to be Levied by Ocean Carriers

Effective August 15, 2005, Transpacific Stabilization Agreement (TSA) ocean carrier members will assess inland fuel surcharges of \$40 per container for local and regional truck transport within California, Oregon and Washington, and for East Coast local store-door truck moves.

TSA is a group of 13 major container shipping lines offering ocean and inland transportation, logistics and supply chain services from Asia to ports and inland points in the United States. The new surcharge will be tied to fluctuations to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Diesel Price Index, using the Class 1 railroad historic baseline fuel price and tiers to trigger adjustments. The surcharge will be adjusted on a quarterly basis — on Jan. 1, April 1, July 1 and Oct. 1 — to accurately reflect fuel price trends. Since the beginning of 2005, DOE reports that the per-gallon diesel fuel price in the United States has risen about 23%, from \$1.96 to \$2.41.

EU to Decide on Port Services Deregulation

By Bruce Barnard

This summer the European Union Commission will decide the fate of its controversial plan to deregulate port services — a proposal that could radically change the way European ports operate.

The commission's determination to confront its critics across the waterfront, from longshoremen to container terminal operators, and deregulate the industry is reflected in the fact that the current proposals are almost a replica of a plan that the European Parliament narrowly rejected in November 2003. The commission now must decide whether to abandon its proposal, shunt it into the legislative slow lane, or erase its most radical features.

The commission appears to be wilting as port authorities, terminal operators, dockworkers and even shipping lines join forces to defeat or substantially weaken the proposals. The EU's top transport official, Francois Lamoureux, conceded that Brussels might withdraw its plans if it faces further flak from the European Parliament and EU transport ministers.

Yet, the commission is unlikely to abandon a key part of its deregulation program aimed at making the EU the most competitive global economy in the world by 2010.

What makes ports so special that their services are the only element of the transport sector not yet included in the EU's regulatory framework? Europe's airlines have been transformed by deregulation, and even the sluggish rail-freight industry is coming to terms with cross-border competition.

The commission's proposal will slash cargo-handling costs by as much as 30% in some ports, dismantle stevedoring monopolies and erode subsidies that distort trade flows and competition. The proposal calls for at least two stevedores to be involved in each cargo sector, sets time limits on operating concessions, compels ports to open their books, submits all projects to public bidding, and dismantles pilots' monopoly over guiding ships into port.

Yet even shipowners and private terminal operators aren't convinced and would prefer the commission to walk away from reform. The draft directive requires "fundamental" changes before carriers can support it.

The European Sea Ports Organization is also pressuring the commission to cool its liberalizing fervor, although it backed the original directive.

These apparent U-turns by the providers and users of port services reflect a shared fear that the European waterfront will be plunged into widespread labor unrest in the fall if the commission does not back down. The powerful European Transport Workers' Federation is planning mass walkouts by dockworkers in September or October if the commission does not scrap a proposal to allow shipping lines to use their own crews or hiring casual labor to work their vessels. The unions say the measure will lead to replacement of union dockworkers by casual labor, and will compromise safety.

Strikes against the so-called self-handling clause in 2003, backed by a vigorous lobbying campaign by

dockworkers, played a key role in persuading a slim majority of European parliamentarians to reject the port directive. The impact would be much greater this time, as ports, carriers and shippers brace for a repeat of the severe congestion that clogged north European ports during last year's peak shipping season.

Carriers, port authorities, terminal operators and forwarders fear prolonged strikes would also hit the bumper profits they expect from the surge in China's trade with Europe that has made double-digit growth the norm in most container terminals.

Critics say the proposal will have little impact on the majority of shipowners, who aren't going to use their own crews or hire casual workers instead of experienced container crane operators. Moreover, self-handling exists in some EU countries, including Italy, once a hotbed of waterfront militancy, and making it obligatory across the entire bloc would force unions to take action.

But dropping self-handling is equally unlikely to placate port authorities and terminal operators, the leading opponents of the commission's proposals.

Ports say the reform proposals are irrelevant. The European Transport Workers' Federation said Europe's ports are among the world's most efficient, with average handling costs of \$100 per container, compared with \$200 in the United States and \$300 in Japan. But carriers that complain that the performance of European terminals is often below par challenge these figures. One shipping executive said Hamburg, one of Europe's top ports, averages 70 container moves an hour, and Le Havre only 28, while the industry needs to hit 100 an hour.

Improvements won't come from a directive from Brussels, however, but from within the industry. The Ceres Paragon terminal in Amsterdam said it will beat the best handling rates in North Europe by 50% when it receives its first ships in the fall.

Port authorities fear the directive in its current form will increase bureaucracy, create legal uncertainty, hinder access to the market and even discourage outside investment at a time when it is urgently required to meet the challenge of double-digit cargo growth.

The reform dossier is being handled by the United Kingdom, which took over the EU's 6-month rotating presidency on July 1. And British ports, which unlike their continental European counterparts are almost all in private ownership, are solidly against the directive.

It will have even fewer friends in the fall if the commission fails to drop the self-handling clause, challenging the unions to make good their pledge to walk off the job, paralyzing the entire European waterfront as the peak shipping season gets under way.

Adapted from an article in The Journal of Commerce

AIR CARGO / AIR TRAVEL

Airport Amenities On Site

Want to know if the Athens airport has a conference room where you can meet with colleagues while waiting for your flight? Want to make an appointment for spa services during your layover? Help is at hand — or at least online. Visit the following Websites to see what's available at various destinations or transit points around the world:

- Go to www.121airports.com/index.htm for a list of 100 airports worldwide with descriptions of services and amenities. In addition, transportation, parking, and shuttle information is posted, along with links to travel guides for hundreds of destinations.
- Visit www.worldairportguide.com for guides to the world's airports and major cities — and a world clock that tracks the local time for dozens of popular international destinations. It also provides links to reviews of hotels and resorts.
- Search www.amadeus.net/home/airports/en for basic information on many of the world's major airports and links to their home pages for more detailed information.

An Insurance Policy Worth Having

Many people don't realize that their health insurance may not cover them if they become ill when traveling overseas. Trip insurance reimburses you for emergency medical expenses and a medical evacuation. It also covers cancellation or interruption of a trip due to your illness or bad weather, such as a hurricane or tornado, as well as lost or damaged luggage.

One source of trip insurance is TravelInsuranceCenter.com (866-979-6753). Coverage typically runs between \$100 and \$200 per trip, depending on the destination and the traveler's age.

Fire Safety When Traveling Abroad

European fire codes are not as stringent as US codes. Choose a modern, tourist-oriented hotel with multiple exits and entrances. Ask for a room no higher than the eighth floor (most fire departments cannot rescue people on higher floors). When checking in, count the number of doors between your room and the exit stairs. Assume that elevators and lights will not work in a fire and that you will have to use the stairs in the dark. If a fire does occur, drop to the floor and stay low to the ground to minimize smoke exposure. Put your hand on the room door. If it's hot, don't open it; crawl to the bathroom, wet some towels and put them around your head and under the door to block smoke. If the door is not hot, put wet towels around your head for protection and move toward the exit stairs and safety.

TIPPING PAGE AT THE BBC's "h2g2"

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/alabaster/> <http://fita.m.xtenit.com/ct.jsp?uz663502Biz900320>

It's hard to know when to tip, especially if you're traveling in a foreign country. Some people don't tip at all, some tip too much, and I've even heard of movie stars who solve the problem by giving out autographed pictures of themselves as tips. For a fun and informative guide to tipping around the world, go to the Tipping Page (<http://fita.m.xtenit.com/ct.jsp?uz663502Biz900324>) at the BBC's "h2g2 — The Unconventional Guide to Life, the Universe and Everything" (www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/alabaster/A640018). You'll learn something useful at this site, with practical advice like whether you should tip a waiter in New Zealand (only on the rare occasions when the bill says, "Service not included"), to whether you should tip a buggy driver in Egypt (yes).

IMPORT REGULATIONS OF MAJOR COUNTRIES

<http://sme.tdctrade.com/ir/index.htm> <http://fita.m.xtenit.com/ct.jsp?uz663502Biz900313>

Many readers indicated on our recent survey that they'd like more information about trade regulations and standards for different countries. Here's a site with lots of useful information — Import Regulations of Major Countries (<http://sme.tdctrade.com/ir/index.htm>). This page at the Hong Kong Trade Development Council site has information about import requirements for China, the United States, the EU, Canada, Japan, and Australia. There are also links to the Customs Department sites for the various countries, where you can get further information.

These items are copied from the newsletter Really Useful Sites for International Trade Professionals, a free, bi-weekly email publication of FITA — The Federation of International Trade Associations. Please feel free to subscribe to this newsletter at <http://fita.org/useful>.



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PLEASE NOTE:

It is up to YP-35 members to maintain current data on the Website. Please take a moment to log in and verify your information. Make sure that your birth date is listed! If you have difficulty accessing the Website, or if you have questions or ideas concerning YP-35, please e-mail ruby@euro-america.net.

An organization within the HHGFAA for Young Professionals 35 years of age and under



ALAN F. WOHLSTETTER SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

The Alan F. Wohlstetter Scholarship Fund is the cornerstone for the HHGFAA Scholastic Assistance Program, which is aimed at promoting and supporting individuals engaged in higher education involved in the areas of transportation and logistics. Donations (by major annual giving levels) to the Alan F. Wohlstetter Scholarship Fund received to date are as follows:

Platinum (\$5,000 or more)

Household Goods Forwarders Association of America, Inc.
Joyce Wohlstetter
Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel, San Diego

Gold (\$2,500–\$4,999)

Deseret Forwarding International, Inc.
Tri-Star Freight Systems

Silver (\$1,000–\$2,499)

Abba International Inc.
All American Moving Group, LLC
Approved Forwarders
Apollo Transportation Companies
Axis International
Covan International Inc.
Denali Group Companies
Dewitt Transportation Services of Guam
Evergreen Forwarding, Inc.
Gosselin World Wide Moving NV
Hayden-Boettcher & Co.

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Jet Forwarding Inc.
Jack Kagan
National Van Lines, Inc.
Orca Moving Systems
Pac Global Insurance Brokerage, Inc.
The Pasha Group
Royal Hawaiian Movers

Bronze (\$500–\$999)

7M Transport, Inc.
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Arpin International
Cartwright International Van Lines, Inc.
Great American Forwarders
Terry R. Head
Interstate Worldwide Relocation
Paul Arpin Van Lines, Inc.
Phoenix Transport Services
R. J. Hudson Associates
*The Community Foundation, Inc.

The Day Companies, Inc.
The Suddath Companies
True North Relocation

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*Bridgete R. Galbreath
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National Forwarding Co., Inc.
*Ocean-Air International, Inc.
Pearl Forwarding, Inc. S & E Transportation
The Day Companies, Inc.
Vanpac Carriers, Inc.

NOTE: *Denotes contributions received since the May/June issue of **The Portal** was published.

Join this prestigious list of contributors by sending your contribution TODAY! For more information on how to donate, please go to www.hhgfaa.org or www.yj-35.org. Make checks payable to **Alan F. Wohlstetter Scholarship Fund**.

Alan F. Wohlstetter Scholarship Fund

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In Memory of Mrs. Joyce Wohlstetter

Mrs. Joyce Wohlstetter, wife of HHGFAA General Counsel Alan F. Wohlstetter, passed away at her home in Bethesda, Maryland, on April 14 after a long illness.

Mrs. Wohlstetter was very pleased when the the Alan F. Wohlstetter Scholarship Assistance Program was established in her husband's name, and was the very first — and to date still the largest — individual contributor to this fund. HHGFAA members and friends who wish to honor Mrs. Wohlstetter's memory may wish to consider contributing to the scholarship fund. For more information, please refer to the information above.

The May/June issue of **The Portal** included the names of contributors to this special fund. As this issue went to press, the following additional individuals and companies have made contributions in memory of Mrs. Wohlstetter since the original list was published:

The Community Foundation, Inc. (\$500)
Dell Forwarding, Inc. (\$200)
Bridgete R. Galbreath (\$50)
Ocean-Air International, Inc. (\$100)

Emerging Markets Micro-finance Bank Launches

More than 300,000 small-scale entrepreneurs in some of the world's most challenging economies are expected to be financed over the next five years by PlaNet Bank, a new global investment company for microfinance institutions has been launched.

It is a joint initiative of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, and PlaNet Finance, an international nonprofit organization dedicated to the development of microfinance.

Based in Paris, PlaNet Bank will be capitalized at EU31.5 million (US\$38.2 million), of which IFC will invest EU6 million (US\$7.3 million). PlaNet Finance and its investment arm PlaNet Investments will provide equity and quasi-equity to PlaNet Bank together with private investors such as Axa and Société Générale and bilateral and multilateral agencies.

PlaNet Bank will create or invest in 15 microfinance institutions over the next 5 years.

At least 60% of these will be in African countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo. The rest are expected to be in PlaNet Finance's network countries such as Argentina, Brazil, China, India, and Mexico.

In the past 30 years the microfinance industry has expanded rapidly, in large part through the commercialization of specialized financial institutions that began as NGOs or donor-funded projects. IFC is one of the largest investors in commercial microfinance with a worldwide microfinance portfolio of more than US\$260 million. PlaNet Finance in turn provides technical assistance and consulting services that have helped more than 800 microfinance institutions reach self-sustainability since 1998. It has also increased microfinance institutions' access to financial markets through PlaNet Rating, its rating subsidiary.

PlaNet Bank will build on the strong experience of PlaNet Finance in providing microfinance institutions with services such as IT support, training, and capacity building as well as funding. PlaNet Finance has a staff of more than 150 people in 15 countries, and will provide management services to investees, plus additional technical assistance as needed.

"This initiative demonstrates IFC's continued commitment to and confidence in the microfinance industry, which provides the poor with much-needed affordable access to financial services," says Jyrki Koskelo, director of IFC's global financial markets department. "By helping experienced partners such as PlaNet Finance become owners and managers of local microfinance institutions, we believe we can help create a more sustainable, far-reaching microfinance industry that will benefit some of the world's poorest people."

"PlaNet Bank will complement the services offered by PlaNet Finance," adds Jacques Attali, president of PlaNet Finance. "It will help build a stronger microfinance sector by helping existing organisations transform into full-fledged, regulated financial institutions, and by creating new microfinance institutions in countries that do not have enough of them today."

Through the new initiative, IFC and PlaNet Finance are supporting the Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty. At the same time, the two organisations are supporting the UN Year of Microcredit's objectives of promoting sustainable access to financial services and encouraging innovation and new partnerships to expand the reach of microfinance. In two of PlaNet Bank's target countries, Togo and Democratic Republic of Congo, more than 70% of the population earns less than a dollar a day.

Likewise, PlaNet Bank will develop financial institutions to serve the poor in India and China, which together are home to the largest number of the poor on the planet. Of the 2.8 billion poor around the world living on less than two dollars a day, only 70 million have access to credit.

Small Businesses Boost UPS Mexico Operations

Demand from small and medium-sized companies is helping shipping giant United Parcel Service Inc. (UPS) have posted double-digit sales growth in Mexico, company officials reported recently. During the first quarter, UPS' export business sales from Mexico, the company's biggest Latin American market, grew by 30% versus the like-2004 quarter, building on a 60% annual expansion last year. This trend has been noticed by many economists over the last 18 months. The NAFTA rules have allowed small and medium sized business to gain a foothold in both markets and that activity is creating an intense cross border market. The sense is that many business ventures have been established to connect the two nations and this is fueling a transportation expansion as well.

Is Your Employee Handbook Evolving with Technology?

By Brian P. Paul

The recent growth in popularity of two personal communication innovations, instant messaging and cellular phones with cameras installed, has left employee handbooks outdated and presents potential liability for employers.

In 2002, vendors shipped 18.2 million camera phones worldwide. In 2003, they shipped 50 million. Instant messaging has become equally popular. A survey by the American Management Association and the ePolicy Institute released in 2004 found that 31% of employees use instant messaging at work, and 58% of those employees admit to using it for personal banter.

Both of these technologies, if ignored by employers, can quickly lead to lawsuits and/or breaches in confidentiality or corporate security.

The camera phone

The camera phone presents a unique problem to employers, particularly in an office setting where employees may be expected or required to have a cellular telephone.

With a camera phone, an employee, particularly the departing or disgruntled type, can easily take “push-button” digital photographs of an employer’s confidential information, whether that is in the form of client lists, manufacturing design, new marketing schemes, product formula, etc. Once the pictures are taken, they can be sent from the camera phone instantly via Internet anywhere in the world.

In addition, the use of camera phones can easily lead to harassment and/or discrimination, and not just in obvious places like restrooms and locker rooms. Pictures taken from inappropriate angles or emphasizing certain anatomy can quickly lead to a lawsuit. The potential problems presented to employers by the onset of camera phones are exacerbated by the difficulty in monitoring and detecting the use of camera phones. Employers often will be the last to discover camera phones are being used inappropriately.

An employer’s best defense against the inappropriate use of camera phones is a clear policy concerning the use of cellular phones.

An employee handbook policy cannot eliminate the possibility of camera phone abuse, but it can set guidelines and parameters for their use, thereby limiting the opportunity for abuse. Obviously, the policy must be tailored to each employer’s workplace. Some employers may choose to ban camera phones altogether. However, a more practical approach for most employers may be to ban the presence of camera phones in certain areas of the employer’s facilities and/or to ban their use during working hours or on the employer’s premises.

Regardless of the work environment, every employer’s employee handbook should contain a policy regarding the use of camera phones.

Instant messaging

Employee e-mail creates a documented record of casual conversations between co-workers. Even if e-mail messages consistently conveyed the message they were intended to, which is rare once a jury is asked to question their meaning, they can provide documented support of discrimination or harassment charges that can solidify a plaintiff’s lawsuit.

Instant messaging is the next-worse thing. Instant messaging is a turbo-charged e-mail that provides documentation of off-the-cuff conversations between co-workers at a comment-by-comment pace. In general, very little thought goes into instant messaging. However, employers can rest assured that plaintiffs’ attorneys are becoming more and more aware of obtaining instant messaging to search for “smoking guns.”

In 2001, 7% of companies polled in the new 2004 Workplace E-Mail and Instant Messaging Survey, performed by the American Management Association and the ePolicy Institute, were subpoenaed to produce e-mail and instant messages in the course of a lawsuit.

In 2003, 21% of employers were subpoenaed to produce e-mail and instant messages in the course of a lawsuit. Although 20% of employers were found to have a policy regarding instant messaging use and content, only 6% had a policy regarding the retention of instant messages.

For those employers who are caught off guard and don’t have an e-mail and instant messaging use, monitoring and retention policy, the expense and difficulty of discovery may only be the beginning.

For example, in *Thompson v. United States HUD*, the District of Maryland sanctioned the defendant employer for failing to produce in a timely fashion over 80,000 e-mails. The court ordered that the employer could not use any

of the 80,000 e-mails that were produced, but the plaintiff could use any of the e-mails in his case in chief or in his cross-examination.

Employers, if they have not already done so, are urged to develop a policy dictating how they handle and retain instant messaging. The policy, at minimum, should include policies for content, use, and retention of instant messages.

Brian B. Paul is an associate at the law firm Michael Best & Friedrich, LLP, and a member of the Labor and Employment Practice Group.

Embassy.org: An Electronic Resource

The Electronic Embassy Website was launched a decade ago with only two embassies. Now, most of the embassies have homes on the Internet to complement their addresses on Embassy Row.

The embassy.org site's Business Directories allow companies serving the international community, and those working, living, and traveling internationally, to find their audience. The home page is linked to several directories geared to diplomats, to Americans traveling abroad, to foreign visitors, and to educators and students.

The site features information on several important topics:

- How to get a US visa (www.ineed2know.org)
- Free information on tourist visas and business visas (www.visainaday.com or 202/558-4013) and how to get them in a day
- China visa service, with online rather than paper application processes (www.passportvisaexpres)

Also of interest are several resources, resources, with links to a virtual library, virtual gallery, and even diplomatic quotations. You will also find a list of foreign embassies of Washington, DC, and an Embassy Row tour.

Website: www.embassy.org/

E-Notes

Despite serious security and Spam issues, as well as the obvious reduction in employee productivity, many respondents to a national survey of small and medium businesses admit that they don't use computer protection tools. Respondents said they do not use antispam software (29%), antispymware software (34%), anti-adware software (47%), antivirus software (4%), and Internet firewalls (9%) on either or both work or home computers. Thus, nearly all the annual Maritz poll respondents reported that computer performance levels were affected by up to 50% due to security issues. Indeed, 75% of small and medium businesses were hit by at least one virus in the past year, with some affected more than 100 times; 40% had been targeted by hackers.

"With these numbers demonstrating how computer security and spam issues reduce employee performance, I'm surprised we don't see 100% of small and medium businesses taking advantage of the protection technology available," says Paul Cousino of the Maritz Information Technology Group.

Play It S-M-A-R-T

In sales, raw intelligence will get you only so far. What you really need are smarts. Smarts mean more than just intelligence. They require the ability to take intelligence and use it in a way that benefits the customer and the company. Smarts involve instincts, gut feelings, intuition, and action. So, how do you get those kinds of smarts? Here are five ideas to get you started.

- **Study.** Make learning a part of your everyday life. Attend seminars and workshops to hone your hard (technical) and soft (listening, closing, etc.) skills. Study up on your clients and the industries you serve. Ask questions, seek answers, and don't be afraid to say, "I don't know, but I'll find out."
- **Mind.** When meeting with clients, mind your manners. Practice humility and putting the client's needs ahead of your own. Let them take center stage, and they will respond more favorably to what you have to say.
- **Act.** Don't wait for business to come your way. Go out and make it happen. When you're feeling discouraged, make one more sales call or one more follow-up. Go the extra mile. You'll always come out ahead.
- **Respond.** Follow up quickly whenever a client or prospect contacts you. If they are having problems with your company or a product you sold them, step in and solve the issues fast. Let the client know you care about them and their satisfaction, even after you've made the sale.
- **Try.** Never assume something can't be done just because nobody has done it before. Nobody had stepped on the moon before Neil Armstrong jumped down from his lunar lander. Henry Ford failed in business five times before starting the Ford Motor Company. Both of these people succeeded, and you can, too — but only if you keep trying and keep believing things can be done. After all, how do you know you can't sell a tough account until you've tried and tried again?

Managing Interruptions

By Jonathan Vatner

It's no secret that chatty, intrusive co-workers can spoil otherwise productive time at the office. How to handle them effectively? Following are some tips from Sue Morem, a business consultant and author of *How to Gain the Professional Edge* (www.suemorem.com).

- **Remove temptation.** If co-workers tend to stop in and chat at length, make your workspace less inviting by removing extra chairs and putting away that candy dish.
- **Hold all messages.** When you're on deadline, turn off the phone ringer and stop checking e-mail. Leave a voice mail greeting and an e-mail response saying you are unavailable and noting when messages will be returned.
- **Hang a sign.** If office interruptions persist, consider putting a "do not disturb" sign on your door or cubicle entrance.
- **Get up and go.** If a visitor overstays his welcome, excuse yourself from your own office, perhaps under the guise of checking for a fax. When all else fails, find another place to do your work. "In that kind of situation, you're better off removing yourself and getting the project done," says Morem.

Survey: Benefits Packages Remain Competitive

Despite rising healthcare costs, most organizations continue to offer competitive benefit packages to employees, according to results from the Society for Human Resource Management's (SHRM) new 2005 benefits survey. The survey of 386 human resources professionals covers 219 benefits offered by employers and tracks trends from the past five years. Sixty-nine percent of respondents indicated that costs of their organization's voluntary benefits had remained about the same as in 2004, while 28% reported increases. Other findings revealed that dependent-care flexible spending accounts increased from 73 to 79%; vision insurance rose from 71 to 80%; and prescription drug coverage remained at 97%. Organizations offering paid family leave increased from 24% to 30%, and 93% of organizations continued to offer professional development opportunities to staff.

Global Goods Jugglers

Outsourced warehouses boom as factories move offshore, and people expect quick shipping. Such omnibus facilities are increasingly important way stations in the global, just-in-time economy. Cost-cutting and shifting of production offshore are driving growing numbers of manufacturers, retailers and suppliers to outsource their warehouses and distribution needs to the \$89.4 billion third-party logistics industry. Revenue for the US warehouse and logistics sector increased 16.3% last year. Some believe that regionalization in the marketplace over the past few years has been driven by large global sourcing companies that have found "regional global networks" to be the most efficient way to handle tighter supply chains. This requires these companies to have more warehouse space available overall, dispersed in smaller facilities that are regionally located. Since they don't own these facilities, they have more flexibility to expand or contract that space — hence one of the reasons for the boom in outsourcing of warehousing and warehousing management.

Going Against Conventional Wisdom

Treat all customers equally, right? No, say more than half of 1,000 people polled about whether they mind when some customers receive special recognition and services because they provide more value to a company or organization. The survey by Grizzard Performance Group, a customer strategies firm, "challenges misperceptions that the level of customer service must remain consistent across all customer segments" for fear of alienating elements of an organization's customer base. That said, 79% report that they expect better treatment from organizations to which they are especially loyal, from which they purchase frequently, or to which they refer other customers. "Targeting resources toward customers based on their value makes strategic, fiscal, and now common sense," concludes President Michael King.

HHGFAA 43rd Annual Meeting
 October 22–25, 2005
 Washington, DC

SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

Saturday October 22	Sunday October 23	Monday October 24	Tuesday October 25
8:30–6:00 p.m. Registration	7:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Registration	7:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Registration	7:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Registration
9:00 a.m.–5:00 a.m. Exhibit Set-up	7:30 a.m.–9:30 a.m. Buffet Breakfast	7:30 a.m.–9:30 a.m. Buffet Breakfast	7:30 a.m.–9:30 a.m. Breakfast and Bloody Mary Mixer with Exhibitors
9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. AMMB/Executive Committee Breakfast Meeting	9:00 a.m. Network Central Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening	9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Network Central and Exhibits	7:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m. Network Central and Exhibits
11:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Executive Committee Meeting	9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Network Central and Exhibits Open	9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Military and Government Affairs Workshop	9:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Active Membership Meeting
1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. Executive Committee Lunch	9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Claims Workshop	11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Cocktail Reception	11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. Exhibits Hall Teardown
5:30 p.m.–6:30 p.m. New Members' Reception	11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Exhibitors Reception	11:00 p.m.–2:30 p.m. Presidents Luncheon	11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. Lunch on Your Own
6:30 p.m.–10:00 p.m. Opening Reception	12:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. ISA Board Luncheon and Meeting	3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. Network Central and Exhibits Reopens	1:30 p.m.–4:00 p.m. Partnership in “Families First”
9:00 p.m.–11:00 p.m. Dancing and Entertainment	1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. YP-35 Board Meeting	3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. General Membership Meeting with Keynote Speaker	6:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m. Reception
<p>Support your association through Annual Meeting Advertising in The Portal!</p> <p>For more information and advertising rates, turn to page 40 of this issue.</p>	2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m. YP-35 Members Meeting	9:00 p.m.–11:30 p.m. YP-35 Mixer (YP-35 Members Only)	7:30 p.m.–10:30 p.m. Closing Dinner and Entertainment
	2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. ISA Members Meeting		10:30 p.m.–12:30 a.m. Post-Banquet Entertainment
	4:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m. ISA Board Meeting		
		<p>For Annual Meeting schedule updates, visit</p> <p style="color: blue;">www.hhgfaameetings.org</p>	

Support Your Association through Annual Meeting Advertising

Get the most possible bang for your advertising dollar — place your ad in the Annual Meeting issue of **The Portal** magazine, copies of which will be available to attendees at the gathering in Washington, DC, this October, as well as mailed to all HHGFAA members worldwide. It's a great way to get yourself noticed and acquaint your fellow Annual Meeting delegates with you and your company.

If your company plans to exhibit at the meeting and you wish to publish a one-time ad in **The Portal**, you may wish to include your booth number, so that attendees can drop by to meet you and learn more about your company.

Rates for a one-time insertion in the September/October issue of The Portal are as follows:

Full page	\$1,000
Half Page	\$500

To take advantage of this special, contact

Bel Carrington

Phone: (703) 317-9950 • Fax: (703) 317-9960 • E-mail: Bel.carrington@hhgfaa.org

But hurry — reserve your space now. Deadline for submissions for this issue is September 1, 2005.

Your Annual Meeting Source: www.hhgfaameetings.org

This year, all 43rd Annual Meeting information is being disseminated online rather than by mail to ensure that HHGFAA members can access up-to-the-minute information on the 2005 gathering in Washington, DC, Oct. 22–25, 2005. Please refer to the insert being mailed with this issue for hotel and Annual Meeting registration forms, which are also available online. Go to www.hhgfaameetings.org for

- Attendee online registration
- Hotel online registration
- Schedule of events for the Annual Meeting
- Information on exhibiting and sponsorships
- Information on local attractions of interest to visitors in Washington, DC

Trucking Companies Leaping Borders

By Hank Mullen

Trucking companies are leaping borders. Acquisitions by Schneider National and Yellow Roadway and Con-Way Transportation's expansion in Mexico underscore trucking's commitment to be as global as shippers' supply chains.

Yellow Roadway brought a 50% stake in a Chinese freight forwarder in the same week it closed a US carrier. Schneider National purchased American Port Services in a deal that gives it transloading capabilities at six ports.

"As more manufacturing is done offshore and as more markets open up, it's important to have capability [as a carrier]. Either you do it as an alliance or you build it yourself," said Evan Armstrong of Armstrong & Associates.

The moves come at a time of increasing consolidation and blurring lines on the transportation map, requiring companies to add resources to stay competitive.

Yellow Roadway Chairman, President and CEO Bill Zollars said its joint venture "advances this objective by significantly expanding our scale and capabilities in China."

Schneider President and CEO Chris Lofgren is looking overseas, too. He said, "We are having a series of discussions both within the United States and outside about helping customers improve their global supply chain."

World's Largest Convoy to Roll for Special Olympians

Beginning in September, truckers and law enforcement personnel throughout the United States and Canada will join together to form the World's Largest Convoy. Highways in 35 states, as well as Alberta and Ontario, will be lined up with an expected 3,000 trucks as they convoy to celebrate their support of Special Olympics. In 2004 this same event brought together over 1130 trucks in 24 convoys, raised over \$224,000, and was officially recognized by Guinness World Records™. Participating companies pay a minimum donation of \$100 per truck, and may also bid to be the lead truck in the convoy. Trucking companies and truckers who want to participate should go to <http://www.worldslargesttruckconvoy.com> for more information.

Ryder to Manage USPS Non-Mail Freight

Ryder System has been awarded a multi-year contract by the United States Postal Service.

Under the contract, Ryder will manage transportation, shipment planning and related services within USPS' non-mail freight transportation network, the company said in a statement.

Ryder said it would support both national and international USPS locations and that it expected to rollout the new transportation program by November.

Ryder is ranked No. 4 on the *Transport Topics* 100 listing of US and Canadian for-hire carriers.

SOURCE: *Transport Topics*

Wall Street Pub Focuses on Driver Shortage, Business/Regulatory Outlook

The *Wall Street Transcript* has just published its *Transportation and Logistics* issue, a report offering a timely review of the sector to serious investors and industry executives. Last year was a very good year for the transportation sector and hopes were high that 2005 would be a repeat performance. Because of a slow down of several Asian economies, including China, the economy on a global scale will continue to grow, but at a slower rate. Topics include Cost savings initiatives, Transportation infrastructure, Outlook for Asian economies, Congestion and capacity issues, Shortage of qualified truck drivers, Port and tunnel security issues, Regulatory outlook, Stronger pricing in rail and truck markets, M&A activity, Global transportation providers, Investor concerns, Volatility of stocks, Hedge fund investing in the industry, Fuel surcharges, Business and revenue growth activity, Stock recommendations, Stocks to sell.

Germany Successfully Tests GPS Toll Technology

German officials expressed satisfaction with the performance of a high-tech satellite truck toll system, which took in nearly \$1.7 billion in its first six months of operation, the Associated Press reported.

The system, which got off to a rocky start on January 1 after a series of technical troubles, has already beat government expectations for income, German officials said.

Authorities plan to expand the system, which is installed on the nation's highways, to several major arteries that run parallel to them, to prevent truckers from escaping the tolls.

The system uses a Global Positioning System satellite to track the distance trucks travel on toll roads, charging an average of the equivalent to 26 cents a mile, with mobile phone equipment used to automatically transmit billing data.

SOURCE: Transport Topics

Canadian Report Shows \$\$\$ + Respect = Drivers

Truck driver pay in Canada increased by 8% in 2004, putting truckers in the middle of the pay scale with other occupations, according to the 2005 Trucking Industry Compensation Benefits Study authored by Toronto-based transportation research firm, Cerno Research. What counts as second? Remember Aretha Franklin's big hit — R-E-S-P-E-C-T? It means a lot to the American driver as well.

Highway Watch Training Tops 100,000 Mark

The American Trucking Associations' Highway Watch anti-terrorism program has completed training more than 100,000 truck drivers and transportation professionals, ATA recently reported.

"These transportation professionals and the thousands who will join them are the first line of defense in protecting the transportation industry and ensuring that no commercial motor vehicle is ever used as a weapon," said Highway Watch Vice President Bill Jacobs.

Highway Watch was formed in 1998 as a safety awareness program for truckers, but grew to include anti-terrorism training in 2002.

In 2004, ATA entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to expand the program to the entire transportation sector.

SOURCE: Transport Topics

A look at the people and events shaping HHGFAA member companies

APPOINTMENTS



Farish



Krakholm

Coleman American Companies, Inc., of Dothan, Ala., has named **Joyce Farish** chief financial officer. In her new role, Farish will be responsible for defining and implementing financial management, and organizational processes throughout Coleman American's family of companies.

In recent years, Farish has played a pivotal role in successful efforts of Coleman American to increase its reach and expand profitability. She joined the company in 1997 as an accounting supervisor. In addition, she has served as director of accounting for Covan International, Inc. Her most recent position was vice president of accounting.

Website: www.colemanamerican.com



Crown Relocations has named **Shane Helmle** to the position of Americas systems trainer.

Helmle, who joined Crown in 2000, was a graduate of the Crown University program. His first assignment was group systems marketing analyst based in London, England. He then returned to his home state of Texas, where he has been a relocation consultant for the past 3 years.

Website: www.crownrelo.com



Stein A. Krakholm has been promoted to marketing and sales manager of **Trans-Link Relocation** in Thailand. He has been taking care of UK, European, Scandinavian markets and other corporate accounts since joining Trans-Link.

Prior to arriving at Trans-Link in 2003, Krakholm worked for Henden Fiskeoppdrett A/S in Norway to handle shipments of 800 tons of salmon, priced to create a secure financial standing for the company.

Krakholm is fluent in English, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish. He can be contacted at stein_k@translink.co.th.

EXPANSIONS

Doree Bonner International continues to reinforce its position in Scotland with another acquisition. **John Duncan's** began trading in 1906 and is one of the oldest moving companies in Scotland, enjoying a great reputation. The company will be integrated with the Group's current express removals business in Edinburgh, consolidating their position and making Doree Bonner International one of the largest movers in Scotland. The company will continue to trade under the current John Duncan brand, with Anita Spiers remaining with the business in a sales capacity.

Website: www.doreebonner.co.uk



PWC Logistics, a global provider of end-to-end supply chain solutions, and **GeoLogistics Corporation**, an international freight forwarder and logistics services provider, have entered into an agreement wherein PWC Logistics will acquire GeoLogistics from its principal shareholders, for approximately US\$454 million on a debt-free basis. GeoLogistics' senior management team will remain in place under PWC Logistics' ownership and no material organizational changes are expected as a result of the acquisition. The combined group will generate revenues in excess of US\$3 billion with over 10,000 employees in more than 100 countries worldwide.

Tarek Sultan, chairman of PWC Logistics, commented that "GeoLogistics will significantly increase PWC Logistics' global forwarding capabilities, especially within, to, and from the Middle East."

Bill Flynn, president and chief executive of GeoLogistics, cited "the terrific fit and the growth opportunities of the combined companies," and said the acquisition positions the company to "provide our customers with ever-increasing levels and breadth of service."

Websites: www.pwclogistics.com and www.geo-logistics.com



AES Cargo Helps Aid Agency

When Iraq's national football team managed to reach the quarterfinals of last year's Asia Cup, many football watchers were stunned. Despite severe obstacles, including a lack of proper training facilities and equipment, the team managed to overcome a formidable Saudi Arabian side before finally succumbing to tournament host China.

Given the lack of basic athletic equipment at the national level, it's not hard to imagine the obstacles Iraqi children face in getting involved in sport. Indeed, in today's Iraq the opportunities for children to play organized football, or any other sport for that matter, are limited to say the least. Leaving the considerable security concerns aside, one of the main obstacles is the fact that Iraqi children often do not have the basic equipment to engage in sports and other games.

So when a British humanitarian aid agency approached AES for assistance with importing footballs into Iraq, AES was more than happy to lend a hand. Having sought assistance from several other logistics companies with little success, the agency was relieved to find that AES could execute the project. The 108 deflated balls, which had been donated by a concerned expatriate living in nearby Oman, were recently shipped from Muscat to the AES office in Kuwait before moving on to Iraq (pictured en route above).

As a company with offices in many of the world's troubled zones, AES Cargo is a regular contributor to humanitarian projects, from grassroots initiatives to large scale aid delivery programs.

Arpin Int'l Group Launches Arpin PAC Program

Arpin International Group is promoting its unique relocation system designed to speed up and simplify the domestic moving process. The timing coincides with the busiest season for the moving industry, when drivers and trucks are in high demand. Arpin PAC presents companies with an alternative to traditional van lines.

Arpin PAC (Planned Arrival Containerization) is a unique program that applies the streamlined process of international moving to domestic moves by expertly packaging items into a steel-banded container for more secure transportation. Arpin PAC also shortens transit times and eliminates warehouse handling and redelivery charges for shipments placed into temporary storage, while providing customers with online quotes and delivery tracking. A sample delivery quote may be obtained at www.arpinintl.com by selecting "PAC Estimator" and entering user ID "aig" and password "pac."

"When you've hired a new executive from Boston and your business is located in Chicago, that transferee normally has to wait about three weeks before the items are delivered," said Bob Sullivan, Arpin's commercial vice president. "But if you could get your new hire established in about 10 days, your company would reduce expenditures on per diem, temporary living and other soft costs, which are impossible to quantify."

This has been an exceptional year for the industry, when shortages of both drivers and trucks have left many HR professionals unable to meet their hiring and relocation goals for the year. This program provides a high-level and cost-effective solution for corporate HR departments. Many of AIG's marquis clients have been using this system for years with tremendous success — it makes the HR team look good and the employee will be more productive upon arrival in the new location.

Website: www.arpinintl.com

Crown Unveils New Kids Website

Crown Relocations has launched a new colorful and interactive Website for children — "Kids Connection," at www.crownrelo.com/kids. New features include a "Museum Spotlight," which provides educational information on different museums around the world and a section for "Grownups."

Other sections include "About Your Move with Crown," "Moving Tips," and a section for "Games." This new Website is just one component of Crown's official Children's Program, which incorporates Destination Guides, truck-shaped boxes for packing special belongings, stuffed lions and more - all geared toward helping the younger members of the family prepare to move.

"From 40 years experience in international relocation, we have learned that you ignore the needs and concerns of our children at your peril," said David Muir, CEO Crown EMEA. "Whether four or fourteen, any relocation is perceived as a huge interruption to a young person's life. If handled carefully and sensitively, it is also a huge opportunity to experience another world, and gain true global perspective. Our challenge at Crown is to make this opportunity irresistible through access to entertaining information and communication."

Arpin Int'l Group Introduces Internet-Based Resource

Arpin International Group has implemented a new Internet-based customer service reporting system that enables Arpin customers to receive prompt, personal feedback to their concerns.

In the short term, the system enables the company to quickly respond to customer concerns; in the longer term, it will facilitate improvements to service based on customer suggestions.

Arpin has hired the Parsifal Corporation to conduct service evaluations, to ensure that the company receives an objective evaluation of its performance.

Once an Arpin shipment delivers, the system, called the Quality Service Review, automatically triggers an e-mail to the transferee with a quick Internet link to the survey. The transferee simply answers a few questions online to complete the survey, and the information is instantly loaded into the Quality Service Review database for Arpin's review.

In the event of a low score on a service evaluation, Arpin executives receive an e-mail alert; this allows senior management to respond instantly and resolve the issue.

Website: www.arpinintl.com

Two Record Centers Using O'Neil Cited In Inc.'s 500 Fastest Growing Companies

What gives a company the cutting edge needed to make *Inc. Magazine's* list of America's fastest growing companies?

Excel Archives in Sterling, Va., and ArchivesOne in Waterbury, Ct., have at least one thing in common: Their record centers are using **O'Neil Software's** RS-SQL(r), to automate and respond to the pace, pressures, and demands of the record storage management business — and they're doing it better than anyone else. They've incorporated this technology into their operations and earned a place on *Inc. Magazine's* list.

Jeff Fredrick, chief technology officer of Excel Archives of Virginia, whose customers are D.C.-area medical institutions, architects, accountants, banks and law firms, noted, "The storage and retrieval of mountains of document; security and privacy; regulatory compliance; fast records access for authorized personnel; disaster recovery and business continuity — these are just a few of the demands today in our particular business.... We knew that O'Neil would be with us for the long term as we grew and enhanced our record-keeping operations."

Jonathan D'Elia, senior vice president of sales and marketing at Connecticut-based ArchivesOne, explained, "We have recently completed our 22nd acquisition in the records management industry and now have over a million square feet of space storing files. Partnering with O'Neil has been great because their software solutions have helped our integration process with new acquisitions."

O'Neil recently announced their latest upgrade to their software, RS-SQL, Version 2.07, which further lightens the load on record center staff and reduces the time and effort it takes to access information.

Website: www.oneilsoft.com

MILESTONES

UK-based **Sterling Corporate Relocations** has announced the successful completion of a management buyout of the company.

Peter Carter and Richard Levine have sold their interest in Sterling to the management team and are retiring from the company. The management team is led by Rupert Morley (chief executive officer), Jeremy Beglin (chief operating officer), and Bill Heximer (chief financial officer).

Morley said, "We are privileged to be offered the opportunity to take Sterling forward to the next stage in its development. Our company has an exceptional standing in the marketplace and is currently benefiting from a period of strong growth with a number of important new clients selecting us this year. I would like to pay tribute to the founders of the company for their strategic vision and operational dynamism in building Sterling up from a standing start to its current position as a world leader."

Website: www.sterlingrelocation.com



Eran Drenger, Ocean Company CEO.

Ocean Company Takes Equipment from Israel to Saudi Arabia

Eleven years ago the previous mayor of Nahariyam Israel, planned to build a magnificent Luna Park with an investment of over 26 million shekels. The designated location for this project was found to be unsuitable as it was located on top of an asbestos burial site, which is commonly known as being a cause of cancer.

The project was halted and canceled. As a result, 11 years later, it was decided to sell the Luna Park equipment. A Saudi Italian-owned company purchased the 21 containers after long and protracted negotiations. Within the next few days these 21 containers were being sent to Saudi Arabia in a complex logistics operation orchestrated by **Ocean Company**, which is an international forwarding and relocation firm.

The project involved retrieving the containers from the sandy dunes of Nahariya, and special equipment was designated for this task with the highest standard of quality control and rigid inspections due to the special cargo and its destination being Saudi Arabia, which has no diplomatic relations with Israel.

Website: www.ocean-il.com

HONORS AND AWARDS

The Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce recently gave its 2005 Chairman's Award to **Arthur E. "Bud" Morrisette IV**, executive vice president of **Interstate Worldwide Relocation**, headquartered in Springfield, Va. At the Falls Church, Va., ceremony with 500 business executives and political leaders in attendance, Richard Duvall, the Chamber chairman, recognized the outstanding support and valuable participation in the organization by Morrisette and the Interstate team.

An active member for over a decade, Morrisette was acknowledged for his personal commitment as well as that from his company. He has served on the Board of Directors since 1997, and on the Executive Committee since 2001. During this time he has represented the Chamber on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Revitalization Policy Review Committee, chaired and co-chaired the 'Innovations' Business Trade Exhibition, the 'Valor' Golf Outing, and Membership Development committee. Today he remains a trustee with the NoVABizPAC and is incoming treasurer for the 2005/06 fiscal year.

The honor was awarded at the annual meeting and luncheon of the Fairfax County Chamber that featured the Pulitzer Prize winning author and humorist Dave Barry. A private reception was held after the luncheon with Barry for key customers and business partners of Interstate.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Georgia Angell
President
Dell Forwarding
HHGFAA Chair

On behalf of the Household Goods Forwarders Association of America, Inc., I want to extend a warm welcome to those who are new to our organization.

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

AGS Frasers International Removals Ltd.

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Fax: (232) 22 236 779
E-mail: ags-frasers@sierratel.si
P.O.C: Willem Schutyser

Ameritrans International, Inc.

20301 Bond Road
Pulsbo, WA 98370
Tel: (360) 779-7708
Fax: (360) 779-0411
E-Mail: s@atrans.us
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By Jim Wise
PACE-CAPSTONE



Free Trade with Central America And the Dominican Republic

President Bush is ramping-up efforts to build House support for the Central America Free Trade Agreement, which Republican leaders scheduled for a vote for the end of July. The Senate approved the trade agreement 54-45 on June 30, but House passage has been far less certain. The House Republican whip operation is focusing on several GOP pockets of resistance, including members worried about China's rising influence in the world trading system and members concerned that CAFTA would lead to a new influx of Central American immigrants. GOP leaders are banking on the notion that a separate vote on China will allow members to blow off steam and smooth CAFTA's passage. "There are a lot of our members who are very concerned about the unfair playing field created by state-owned companies engaging in trade with America," said Chief Deputy Majority Whip Eric Cantor (R-VA) during a news conference. House Democrats remain steadfastly opposed to the agreement, and criticized as mean-spirited Bush administration promises to Senate Democrats of more financial assistance to the region to enforce labor laws. Below is an outline of the case for and against DR-CAFTA.

The case for CAFTA

Growth, Opportunity: Central America and the Dominican Republic make up the second-largest US export market in Latin America, behind only Mexico. The US exports more than \$15 billion annually to the region, making it America's 10th-largest export market worldwide*. CAFTA-DR is a larger US export market than Russia, India and Indonesia combined. The American Farm Bureau Federation estimates CAFTA could expand US farm exports by \$1.5 billion a year. Manufacturers would also benefit, especially in sectors like information technology products, agricultural and construction equipment, paper products, pharmaceuticals, and medical and scientific equipment.

CAFTA levels the playing field argument: Today, nearly 80% of products from Central America and the Dominican Republic already enter the United States duty-free, partly because of unilateral preference programs such as the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) and the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). America's market is already open. CAFTA opens the region's markets to goods, services, and farm products from the United States.

The Freedom and Democracy argument: In the 1980s, Central America was characterized by civil war, chaos, dictators, and Communist insurgencies. Today, Central America is a region of fragile democracies that need US support. Elected leaders in the region are embracing freedom and economic reform, fighting corruption, strengthening the rule of law and battling crime, and supporting America in the war on terrorism. But anti-reform forces in the region have not gone away. CAFTA is a way for America to support freedom, democracy and economic reform in our own neighborhood.

Textiles: Garment factories in Central America and the Dominican Republic purchase large amounts of fabric and yarn from the United States: the region is the second-largest world market for US textile fabrics and yarns. Garments made in the region will be duty-free and quota-free under the Agreement only if they use US or regional fabric and yarn, thereby supporting US exports and jobs. But with the expiration of global quotas on textiles/apparel at the end of 2004, regional producers face a new competitive challenge from Asian imports. CAFTA would provide regional garment-makers — and their US or regional suppliers of fabric and yarn — a critical advantage in competing with Asia.

Labor and the environmental considerations: A study by the International Labor Organization (ILO) demonstrated that labor laws on the books in Central America and the Dominican Republic are generally in line with ILO core labor standards. Indeed, labor protections in the region are broadly similar to labor laws in Morocco, and in some areas (child labor) are stronger. Congress gave broad bipartisan support to an FTA with Morocco in 2003. But the enforcement of labor laws in the region needs more attention and resources. CAFTA is specifically designed to respond, improve enforcement and expand resources:

1. The agreement requires that countries effectively enforce their labor and environmental laws. An innovative dispute settlement system uses monetary fines, as well as potential loss of trade benefits, to promote enforcement.

Monetary fines would be used to fix the problems identified.

2. Countries in the region have already taken numerous, concrete steps to improve labor law enforcement. And a cooperative effort of Labor Ministries and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is identifying additional specific recommendations to improve labor law enforcement.

3. Congress appropriated \$20 million for FY05 for “labor cooperation, capacity building on fundamental labor rights and the elimination of child labor, and improvement in labor administration.” The Administration will work with the IDB and others to target these funds toward the areas of greatest need. The CAFTA contains also groundbreaking environmental provisions, including a first-ever citizen participation process designed to identify and correct trade-related environmental problems. Ten environmental NGOs from the region have endorsed CAFTA.

The case against CAFTA

If sugar interests are successful in defeating the Central American Free Trade Agreement — and sugar has emerged as the major obstacle to President Bush’s goal of achieving congressional passage this summer — some powerful Washington players may no longer be picking up the phone when the cane and sugar beet growers call. Sugar is certainly not the only thing holding back CAFTA’s passage in Congress. House Democrats have condemned the pact’s labor provisions as inadequate, because they lack penalties for those countries that fail to bring their labor laws in line with internationally accepted standards. Even centrist Democrats, who have previously backed trade agreements negotiated by Republican and Democratic presidents, are opposing CAFTA over the labor issue. Members of Congress from textile- and apparel-producing districts are divided over the deal: Yarn spinners and some textile firms are looking to Central America as a key export market that must be preserved in order to withstand competition from Asia, while others see only further erosion of US jobs in the sector. A handful of other House members are withholding support from CAFTA, seeking to get GOP leaders to agree first to a vote on legislation attacking supposedly unfair trade practices by China, including currency manipulation. The main opposition points are as follows:

- Small-scale farmers in the region would be unable to compete against duty-free American imports, forcing farmers off the land and, in some cases, to migrate to the United States.
- The US sugar industry says the increase in Central American imports, to reach 1.7 percent of US production after 15 years, could drive down prices in the oversupplied market and open the way for other sugar exporters to undercut US producers in future trade deals.
- CAFTA would require countries to enforce their own labor and environmental laws. Critics say this is inadequate to protect worker rights and the environment in countries with a history of abuses in these areas.
- Critics say CAFTA would extend rules that limit generic drug competition to the benefit of the US pharmaceutical industry.

CAFTA is patterned after NAFTA, which critics say has caused US job losses, rising trade deficits and lower wages in Mexico.

Review of the Port Security Grant Program Report

As a result of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the United States intensified its focus on protecting the country's transportation systems, including seaports and port facilities. In 2002, Congress provided funding to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), then under the Department of Transportation, to enhance the security of ports and other facilities. TSA, along with the Maritime Administration (MARAD) and the US Coast Guard (USCG), developed the Port Security Grant Program. The purpose of this program is to reduce the vulnerability of American ports to potential terrorist attacks by enhancing facility and operational security. To date, the program has awarded over \$560 million for over 1,200 projects.

TSA, originally part of the Department of Transportation, was created by the Aviation and Transportation Security Act of 2001, which was signed into law on Nov. 19, 2001. Shortly thereafter, on Jan. 10, 2002, Congress passed the Department of Defense (DOD) Appropriations Act of Fiscal Year (FY) 2002, which included funding for port security grants. Congress made over \$93 million available to the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security to award competitive grants to critical national seaports. These grants were to finance the cost of enhancing facility and operational security as determined by the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security, the Administrator of MARAD, and the Commandant of USCG. The grants could be used for security assessments and for implementation of measures once assessments had been performed. Congress did not intend for the funding to displace current security funding and activities either provided by the ports or by federal agencies, but rather that it be used for additional security activities that were not being performed at the ports at that time.

The Port Security Grant Program provided funds for security within the maritime industry, generated additional investments, and significantly increased awareness of security needs. With no shortage of potential projects to choose from and limited funding, the program strove to award funds to projects that best matched its eligibility criteria. Last month the Department of Homeland Security issued a report critical of the grant program and recommending changes. Below is an outline of the reports findings in brief along with its recommendations:

Findings

- While the program's eligibility criteria are directed broadly at national critical seaports, the current design of the program compromises the program's ability to direct resources toward the nation's highest priorities.
- The program is attempting to reconcile the goals of the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002 (MTSA), the competitive grant program mandated by Congress, and risk based direction of grant monies. MTSA is a nationwide security mandate that widely affects the maritime industry. The program is faced with the competing pressures of offsetting MTSA related costs while making competitive and risk based grant decisions to protect the nation's most critical ports and port facilities.
- The program did not have the benefit of national key asset and critical infrastructure protection information now being developed by the Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection (IAIP) directorate. Program administrators and IAIP, which is responsible for developing strategies for protecting the nation's critical infrastructure, did not collaborate to integrate the program with broader national security initiatives.
- Grant award decisions are made with the intent of expending all available funding and spreading funds to as many applicants as possible. The program funded projects despite dubious scores by its evaluators against key criteria, raising questions about the merits of several hundred projects. Frequently, headquarters and field reviewers did not agree about the eligibility or merit of projects and did not consistently document their rationale for recommending or not recommending funding.
- The question of where the private sector's responsibility for preventing terrorism ends and where the federal government's responsibility begins poses a dilemma for the Port Security Grant Program. DHS does not have a formal policy to provide financial assistance to private entities, a group that includes those that own and operate high-risk facilities. Private entities have applied for and received substantial funding. Some of that funding went to projects that reviewers scored below average or worse during the evaluation process.
- At each level of the application review process, reviewers were challenged to meet short deadlines to evaluate, rate, and rank projects. This affected the ability of reviewers to document thoroughly their decisions and made subsequent levels of review more difficult.
- After three rounds of the Port Security Grant Program, recipients spent only a small portion of the entire amount awarded. Of the \$515 million awarded between June 2002 and December 2003, including \$75 million provided under the Office for Domestic Preparedness's (ODP's) Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), grant recipients had expended only \$106.9 million, or 21% of total program awards as of Sept. 30, 2004. As a result, the majority of projects have not been completed and the program has not yet achieved its intended results in the form of actual improvements to port security.
- Port security grants were awarded through two different statutory authorities, TSA's appropriation and ODP's UASI program, which have different award processes and eligibility requirements. A third authority, MTSA, mandates security requirements for port facilities and vessels and contains another grant authority intended to

offset the costs of the security mandates. The consolidation of ODP's UASI program and TSA's. Port Security Grant Program into SLGCP and the impact of MTSA cloud the statutory intent and future direction of port security grants.

Recommendations

1. Determine to what extent the program should incorporate MTSA requirements.
2. Incorporate critical infrastructure and key asset data from IAIP into the evaluation of proposed port security projects. Among the changes to consider:
 - The addition of an IAIP official on the Executive Review Board;
 - Use of the IAIP national asset database to identify critical facilities in need of mitigation with a view toward soliciting proposals from these facilities; and
 - Collaborating with IAIP in an outreach program to improve the quality of vulnerability assessments and proposals.
3. Consider changing the weighting of the evaluation criteria, with greater emphasis placed on the criteria that reduce critical vulnerabilities.
4. Cease the practice of funding projects that do not meet the definition of a Priority I project. Consider implementing a scoring threshold that ensures that projects not meeting that threshold are not funded. Consider seeking a change in appropriations language to have these grant funds designated as "no-year monies" to reduce the impetus to fund doubtful projects.
5. Require reviewers to document their decisions in the grants management system, particularly when they are inconsistent with recommendations from a lower level of review.
6. Develop parameters that define applicant eligibility under the "nationally important economic port or terminal," "responsibilities for movement Review of the Port Security Grant Program of a high number of passengers" and "responsibilities for the movement of hazardous cargo" criteria.
7. Communicate information to field reviewers to educate them on eligibility. Improve dissemination of "lessons learned" at all levels of review.
8. Evaluate timeframes for reviewing applications with an emphasis on providing more time for review in the field and by the ERB.
9. Clarify department policy on funding private sector projects. In the absence of such policy, and if funding private sector projects is continued:
 - examine private sector projects to preclude the funding of cost of business expenses;
 - develop financial eligibility criteria, including an income test or cost-benefit analysis; and
 - consider giving greater preference to projects that are submitted jointly by private and public entities.
10. Accelerate the acquisition of more information from applicants about the scope of their projects.
11. Ensure that the program has sufficient operational expertise to administer the program after the award is made.
12. Seek clarification on the legislative intent for the program (sector-specific vs. larger infrastructure protection initiatives) and construct a unified program (policy, purpose, process, and eligibility) to comply with that intent.

The Transportation Bill

For the third straight time, the Transportation Reauthorization Act (TEA LOU) is now pending in a conference committee. Like the recent past two conferences, this one is every bit as contentious as committee attempts to negotiate a compromise between the 1,300-page highway bill that the Senate approved on May 17 and the 1,100-page bill that the House passed on March 10. While participants hope that the conference will be the final chapter in a long saga that began with the expiration of the 1998 highway bill on Sept. 30, 2003, the end is still not in sight. During the 108th Congress, both the House and Senate approved highway bills, but conferees were unable to reach agreement on the main sticking point: the price tag.

Price has driven this debate ever since the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee originally pushed a \$375 billion highway bill, despite the Bush Administration's \$247 billion plan. The administration has bumped up its offer several times — most recently in February, to \$284 billion. The House went along with that spending level this year, but the Senate bill totals \$295 billion. That's \$11 billion more than the White House wants, compared with the original negotiating gap of \$128 billion. The Bush administration again has threatened to veto the legislation. Since the difference between \$284 billion and \$295 billion is a significant reduction in desired funding levels, many in Washington doubt that this bill could become the first veto of this Administration.

According to the National Journal, history runs against Bush. The last veto of a highway bill was in 1986, when President Reagan objected to Congress's spending largesse. Lawmakers responded by overriding Reagan's veto. The first President Bush and President Clinton both complained about Congress's spending habits, only to eventually sign — and take credit for — highway bills with record-breaking spending levels.

House and Senate leaders have largely cooperated with Bush on the currently spending bill. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn) was one of only 16 senators to back a failed last-minute effort on the Senate floor to reduce the bill's authorization limit from \$295 billion to \$284 billion.

Still, it would be much easier for congressional leaders to gain the support of a broad swath of lawmakers if the final bill totaled \$295 billion, which would allow for a greater return of investment for the states that contribute more gas-tax revenues to the federal Highway Trust Fund than they receive back in benefits. These states, known as "donor states," have been pushing for a formula that guarantees them 95 cents back for every dollar they contribute. The Senate bill allows the return formula to rise from its current guarantee of 90.5 cents to 92 cents, without harming so-called donee states, the ones that get more back than they contribute. The House bill doesn't address the donor-donee issue. Lawmakers from donor states could revolt if their leaders don't guarantee them a higher rate of return.

Once conferees work out the overall funding level and the donor-donee issue, observers expect that negotiating the rest of the bill will be relatively easy, although the large number of minor issues that have to be ironed out will keep conference staffers working long hours. Significant differences remain, for example, over how the money is allocated. The Senate bill gives states more control over more money, while the House bill directs some \$11 billion to specific projects, and each version places different restrictions on how states spend various pots of money. For example, the Senate requires states to spend a total of \$900 million on stormwater projects, while the House doesn't. The House requires \$1 billion to go to Safe Routes to School projects, while the Senate puts only \$312 million toward them. Policy differences remain on tolling, environmental issues, and safety, but none is a showstopper.

Meanwhile, staffers and lobbyists are preparing for a few more weeks of long days and sleepless nights. Here is a look at the major differences between the House and Senate versions of the highway bill now headed to conference committee.

Funding

Senate Bill: Authorizes \$295 billion overall, \$11 billion more than President Bush supports, and he has threatened a veto. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, came up with tax-related measures to pay for the extra funding. But Senate Budget Committee Chairman Judd Gregg, R-N.H., calls the measures accounting gimmicks and maintains the bill will bust the budget.

House Bill: Authorizes \$284 billion overall, in line with Bush's proposal. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Don Young, R-Alaska, originally proposed a \$375 billion bill with a 5-cent-per-gallon increase in gas taxes, but he acquiesced to pressure from House GOP leaders and the Bush administration.

State allocations

Senate Bill: By fiscal 2009, guarantees states a return of 92 cents on every dollar that their drivers contribute in gas taxes to the federal Highway Trust Fund, up from the current 90.5-cent guarantee. States with low rates of return, known as "donor" states, have been pushing for a guarantee of 95 cents on every dollar.

House Bill: Keeps the rate of return at 90.5 cents, but Young and other transportation leaders have promised donor-

state lawmakers that the issue could be addressed in conference. States that receive more money than they put into the Highway Trust Fund are pushing to retain the current formula.

Earmarked projects

Senate Bill: Does not include specific projects, but in past years, the Senate has added projects in conference. A pool of several billion dollars in the Senate bill could be tapped for senators' earmarks.

House Bill: Includes 3,676 projects requested by House members, totaling \$11.2 billion, plus an additional \$6 billion for undetermined "Projects of Regional and National Significance." Critics of "pork-barrel" spending contend that funds should be distributed to states by formula instead.

Tolling

Senate Bill: Allows tolling on new highways and highway lanes, with numerous restrictions. Tolling would also be allowed on the existing Interstate 81 in Virginia.

House Bill: Allows tolling on new highways and highway lanes, with fewer restrictions. Tolling would also be allowed on three undetermined existing highways.

Safety

Senate Bill: Pushes the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration to adopt new standards on rollovers, side-impact protections, and other vehicle modifications. Provides incentive grants to states that adopt primary seat belt laws. Includes exemptions for certain industries from hours-of-service rules for truck drivers.

House Bill: Does not include new standards for vehicles. Includes incentives to states to adopt seat belt laws and some exemptions from truckers' hours-of-service rules. ■

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Industry Calendar

Sept. 10–14, 2005

NDTA Forum 2005
San Diego, California

Sept. 11–25, 2005

FIATA World Congress
Moscow, Russia

Sept. 19–20, 2005

Military/Industry Meeting
Alexandria, VA

Sept. 19–20, 2005

Canadian Association of Movers
2005 Annual Conference and Golf
Tournament
Toronto, Canada

Oct. 20–21, 2005

PAIMA Convention
Washington, DC

Oct. 22–25, 2005

HHGFAA 43rd Annual Meeting
Washington, DC

Nov. 1–3, 2005

GSA Workshop on Travel, Transportation
& Personal Property Programs
Rosslyn, VA

Feb. 22–24, 2006

GSA Household Goods and
Freight Forum
Garden Grove (Anaheim), CA

April 8–11, 2006

AMSA Annual Convention & Trade Show
Ponte Vedra Beach (Jacksonville), FL

April 23–27, 2006

FIDI Conference
Beijing, China

Oct. 9–12, 2006

HHGFAA 44th Annual Meeting
San Francisco, California

Oct. 14–17, 2007

HHGFAA 45th Annual Meeting
New York, New York