

APPENDIX I

OUTREACH AND COORDINATION

In the performance of this study, it was recognized that a major element should be a concerted and continuing effort to reach out to stakeholders who were not actively involved as study participants (i.e., the state transportation agencies constituting the Southeast Transportation Alliance and the Federal Highway Administration). Outreach activities were necessary (1) to inform various stakeholders about the study's purposes and findings and (2) to solicit feedback and input regarding issues, needs, concerns, etc., to which the study should be responsive. By undertaking these outreach activities, accountability to stakeholders was enhanced.

Accordingly, the Southeastern Transportation Alliance determined that, for the Latin American Trade and Transportation Study (LATTS) to be successful, a proactive public involvement process was essential during all stages of the project; i.e., early and continuous involvement. This approach ensured that there was public availability of study information and that there were ample opportunities for the provision of study inputs, comments and suggestions by the general public, major stakeholders and affected public agencies.

The Southeastern Transportation Alliance includes 14 state transportation agencies, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration. Study participants included multiple representatives of each of these organizations. Accordingly, another important communication need involved coordination of the efforts of the sizeable list of study participants. Traditional means of achieving coordination between study participants included periodic meetings of the Steering Committee and the Working Committee, progress reports, conference calls, etc. These traditional approaches were supplemented with other coordination measures, chief of which was the establishment and maintenance of a study participants web site.

The need for outreach and coordination required that an array of approaches be used to inform and to be informed. These approaches are discussed below.

NEWSLETTERS

As part of the LATTS effort to reach a wide audience, periodic newsletters were prepared in which the study background and purposes, study activities and findings, study organization, etc., were summarized. These newsletters also solicited comments, suggestions and other inputs and provided contact information regarding the transportation agency in each state, the Federal Highway Administration, and the consultant team.

Each of the Alliance members was provided with the newsletters and they made distribution of them according to their individual circumstances. Distributions were made to elected officials, federal, state and local governmental agencies,

universities, commercial and industrial organization, trade organizations, citizen organizations, special interest groups, and private citizens.

WEB SITE

Another means for sharing information and soliciting comments, suggestions and input information involved the use of the Internet. A LATTTS web site was established early in the study for use by the general public and other interested parties. Web access information was provided in the study newsletters, at presentations and through other means. The site was updated periodically with the latest information concerning the study. The contents of this web site included:

- ▶ Project purpose and approach;
- ▶ Study newsletters;
- ▶ Contact information for study participants; and
- ▶ Executive Summary Report

A second web site also was maintained during the course of the study. The purpose of this web site was to facilitate information sharing and study coordination between study participants. In addition to information contained on the public web site, the study participant site contained, from time to time, draft materials of works still in progress and matters associated with study coordination and management activities.

TARGETED CONTACTS

The newsletters and public web site mentioned above were intended to reach a wide audience.

It also was important to LATTTS that additional outreach efforts be undertaken regarding certain organizations whose missions are strongly associated with the focus of this study. The special attention accorded these organizations was for purposes of taking into account the concerns of these special interest groups and the issues they consider to be most pertinent to the scope of the LATTTS project. Additionally, this effort solicited any information that the special interest groups considered relevant to the purposes of LATTTS and which they wished for LATTTS to take into account.

Two types of interest groups were contacted. The first type included those organizations whose mission is strongly associated with international trade and economic development. The second category involved those organizations whose mission is strongly associated with transportation matters which are most relevant to international trade.

Direct contact was made with each of the identified organizations. In these contacts, information was provided regarding the purposes of LATTTS, study activities, study participants, etc. Feedback and inputs from each organization also was solicited.

STUDY PRESENTATIONS

Throughout the study, requests from various organizations regarding presentations concerning LATTs were honored to the maximum practical extent. These presentations were made at a variety of conferences and meetings such as the Southern Governors' Association, American Association of Port Authorities, Western Hemisphere Transportation Ministerial, Southern International Trade Council, etc. Additionally, presentations were made at Annual Meetings of the Southern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and other transportation conferences.

BRIEFING REPORTS

Executive summary-type reports were prepared for purposes of presentations to the Executive Board of the Southern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials at the Annual Meetings held during the course of the study.