

Red Rover, Red Rover, Let the Trucks Cross the Border

by Michelle Kelley - Thursday, September 20, 2007

U.S.-Mexico cross-border trucking is once again causing a stir. [Back in March](#), we reported to you about a new pilot program sponsored by the Department of Transportation (DOT) that would allow 100 Mexican motor carriers to make deliveries anywhere in the United States.

As of September, Mexico Transportes Olympic (of Nuevo Leon) became the first carrier cleared by the DOT to operate in the U.S. under the program. Olympic completed its first delivery to North Carolina on September 10th.

The very next day, the U.S. Senate made a move to block funding for the pilot program via an amendment to a \$106 billion bill for transportation and housing programs. The bill was approved by a vote of 75-23, and must be ratified by the House of Representatives and the Senate once again before it can be signed into law by the president.

Many in the Senate cited safety concerns as the motive for halting the pilot program, in part because of the widely held perception that there are no equivalent safety standards for motor carriers between the U.S. and Mexico.

Not so according to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), which performed pre-inspections on all eligible Mexican carriers before they were allowed to participate in the program.

Interestingly, out of 188 FMCSA inspections, 16 failed and more than 100 withdrew because the inspections were “too rigorous”¹.

As an added security measure, federal truck inspectors, along with U.S. Customs, have pledged to check every participating truck that crosses the U.S. border.

Under the pilot program additional carriers will be granted operating authority every month until December, with the number of participants capped at 100. According to the DOT, once granted the proper authority, participating carriers can begin new operations immediately.

Mexico is following suit, and has already issued a permit for Stagecoach Cartage & Distribution (of El Paso, Texas) to make deliveries across the Mexican border. 14 other U.S. carriers are also expecting clearance from Mexico.

The cross-border pilot program was created to implement Annex I of NAFTA, which requires the U.S. to

dissolve its moratorium on cross-border trucking.

Related News

[The Tale of Cross-Border Trucking](#) (3.19.2007)

Footnote

1. According to FMCSA Administrator John H. Hill. See “Letter dated July 12, 2007, from FMCSA Administrator John H. Hill to CBP Assistant Commissioner Jayson Ahern.” U.S. DOT’s Response to Inspector General’s Report. U.S. Department of Transportation. 06 September 2007: 15. <<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/about/news/news-releases/2007/090707.pdf>>.



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