

FMCSA 05-07

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Contact: Melissa Mazzella DeLaney

Tel.: (202) 366-2309

U.S. & Mexican Trucking Companies Cleared to Operate Beyond the Border DOT provides details on steps taken to ensure safety of year-long Demonstration Project in response to latest Inspector General report

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Stagecoach Cartage and Distribution from El Paso, Texas, was today given approval to operate in Mexico, and Transportes Olympic of Nuevo Leon, was cleared to operate in the U.S., marking the start of a year-long cross border demonstration project that will allow U.S. trucking companies to operate in Mexico for the first time, and change the way a select group of Mexican trucking companies operate in the United States.

The cross border trucking demonstration project was cleared to begin today with the release of the U.S. DOT Inspector General’s (IG) official report – mandated by Congress – on the safety of the program and the U.S. Department of Transportation’s response to this report, which also was submitted to Congress earlier today. The report confirmed FMCSA has taken the necessary steps to ensure the safe implementation of the demonstration project.

“This long-awaited project will protect public safety on American highways as we work to both save consumers money and help our economy,” said John H. Hill, Administrator of DOT’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), which will oversee the trucking demonstration project.

Specifically, the IG affirmed FMCSA’s plans to go beyond statutory requirements and check every truck that crosses the border as part of the demonstration. The response identified how federal truck inspectors are coordinating with state and Customs and Border Protection personnel to conduct the checks. The response also detailed how it is working with the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Sheriff’s Association and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance to ensure its state partners have the necessary information to oversee safety.

Under the demonstration project, a small number of Mexican trucking companies, many of which already operate daily in major U.S. cities like El Paso and San Diego, will be able to travel beyond the approximately 25 mile commercial zone that runs along the U.S. border. Participating U.S. and Mexican trucking companies can begin their new operations immediately once they have been granted operating authority by U.S. DOT and have secured cargo to haul.

In the first 30 days of the program, 17 trucking companies from Mexico will be given operating authority. Each subsequent month until December, additional companies will be added if they pass FMCSA’s rigorous inspection process and after a public comment opportunity. No more than 100 Mexican companies will be permitted in the project. Every company, vehicle and driver is subject to a significant and rigorous safety inspection prior to being admitted to the demonstration project.

U.S. DOT’s response to the IG’s report can be found at <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/about/news/news-releases/2007/090707.pdf>