

SMART BORDERS

COVID-19 VACCINATION:

Review of Challenges Ahead for Canada-U.S. Border Reopening



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CO-CHAIR'S CORNER

Dear FBC Members,

Welcome to the third edition of *Smart Borders*! We would like to wish you a healthy and prosperous 2021. We look forward to engaging with you throughout the year as we continue to move forward with various multi-modal initiatives on border recovery.

The deployment of COVID-19 vaccines is an important step towards the effective containment of the virus and a key factor to reverse the current global health crisis. However, the deployment of vaccines alone is unlikely to activate the normalization of movements across the Canada-U.S. border. The implementation of testing protocols at entry points and the mutual recognition of vaccines are key elements of border recovery.

We invite you to browse through the article on vaccination (pp. 4-6) and read on the outcome of our latest engagement with Canada's federal government on the issues of testing and vaccination (p.7).

Below is a summary of webinars we are planning to organize for the months of February/March 2021:

- **The Safe Travel Resumption Summit** (February 2021) will focus on multi-modal travel looking into the 2021 summer season. The Air Border Task Force, the Land Border Travel Task Force and the Maritime Task Force will provide an update on their work and present their recommendations.
- **The Cross-Border Supply Chain Summit** (March 2021) will focus on the intermodal, cargo and supply chain aspects of border recovery.

We continue to encourage you to engage with us on social media through our LinkedIn and Twitter accounts. Your engagement and participation are fundamental for the long term success of FBC.



Gerry Bruno

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Matt Morrison

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Future Borders Coalition: Our Vision, Our Mission

Responding to COVID-19: Beyond Our Original Mission

Due to the challenges created by the COVID-19 outbreak, the Future Borders Coalition has recalibrated its original mission to focus on border recovery in the coming months. Our main objective is to help restoring the public's confidence in international travel. For this, we have created four Task Forces organized around modes and types of transportation: Air, Land, Maritime and Supply Chain/Movement of Goods. Each Task Force will deliver concrete proposals and pilot projects for recovery based on specific mandates and action plans in the coming months.

Post-Pandemic Agenda: Our Long-Term Vision for the Canada-U.S. Border

Changes in technology and processes often act as a catalyst for a renewed vision and serve as instruments to improve multi-modal cross border travel and trade. With autonomous vehicles, blockchain, video analytics and new detection methods, a new vision to renew the U.S.-Canada border and security relationship is necessary, especially in light of growing public concerns over privacy, sovereignty and data management issues. In our view, the promise of facilitated trade and travel in a seamless manner for both Canada and the United States should be complemented by developing common approaches on biometrics and information sharing, exploring multinational cooperation with trusted partners, and focusing on process convergence with a long-term view to improve the mobility of people and goods through the border (air, land, and sea), all while ensuring that safety and security are not compromised.

Building the Future on Strong Foundations

The Beyond Preclearance Coalition was formed in 2018 as a group of bi-national organizations with a vested interest in advancing the efficiency and security of the Canada–U.S. border. Together, they commissioned a White Paper to explore the opportunities going forward. In 2020, the coalition was renamed “Future Borders Coalition” with a multi-year mandate to continue the work of accelerating a cohesive border vision based on improvements in technology, processes, facilities and innovation, and drive ahead health safety measures to ease border restrictions, economic recovery and security.

For interview inquiries, please contact us at:

info@futureborderscoalition.org



INSIGHTS

COVID-19 Vaccination: Growing Global Fragmentation and Challenges for Recovery

As of January 7, 2021, approximately 15 million people have been vaccinated worldwide – out of a global population estimated at 7.8 billion.

So far, countries located in the Middle East such as Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are leading the pack in terms of doses administered by 100 people, followed by the United States, the United Kingdom and Denmark. For the moment, Canada ranks in ninth position, ahead of Estonia, Croatia, Spain, and France.

In terms of approvals, the so-called mRNA vaccines (i.e., Pfizer/BioNtech and Moderna) have been approved in the U.S., Canada, the European Union, Singapore, Mexico, and some Middle East countries. The United Kingdom has approved the viral-vector Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, which is still under review in Canada.

Deployment and adoption of COVID-19 vaccines across major emerging markets (Brazil, Russia, India, China) remains highly fragmented.



Transportation Logistics and Storage

The rolling-out of COVID-19 vaccines worldwide is already facing challenges, some of which are related to transportation logistics and specialist storage needs that also depend on parallel manufacturing and distribution processes.

The so-called “cold chain” between manufacturers and clinics designated to administer the vaccine on the ground represents one of the biggest challenges of distribution because of the many handoffs required under

strict temperature control. Weak links in the chain could potentially compromise the effectiveness of vaccines. Country-specific factors that may affect the success of vaccine deployment are:

- availability of warehouses;
- access to freezers and back-up generators;
- access to remote temperature monitoring systems;
- changing weather;
- competency of handlers; and
- reliable electricity supply.



The Issue of Vaccine Effectiveness

Vaccines report different levels of effectiveness through each trial phase, test data is not always available or peer-reviewed, and in some cases, data differs from country to country.

For example, the Pfizer/BioNtech and Moderna vaccines have consistently reported 95% effectiveness rates across countries surveyed, including Canada and the U.S.

However, while Sinovac vaccine was reported to reach 91% effectiveness in Turkey based on interim data, Brazilian scientists have estimated the effectiveness of the vaccine at 50%. Sinopharm has claimed that its vaccine is effective at 79%, but authorities in the United Arab Emirates have recently found effectiveness at 86% based on phase-three trial results. The Sputnik V vaccine reports 95% of effectiveness but test data has been disputed and adoption outside Russia is limited to Algeria, Argentina, and Bolivia.



The Issue of Global Skepticism

According to a 15-country poll carried out by New Ipsos/World Economic Forum in December 2020, 40% of French respondents expressed their willingness to take the vaccine – compared to 80% in China, 77% in the U.K., 71% in Canada and 69% in the U.S.

As of January 8, 2021, France has only administered 80,000 vaccines, compared to 1.3 million in the U.K., 476,000 in Germany, and 278,000 in Spain.

Other countries surveyed by the New Ipsos/WEF poll were Russia (43%), South Africa (53%), Japan (60%), Mexico (77%) and Brazil (78%).

Fragmented Global Access Jeopardizes Recovery

The next challenge is the price tag associated with the purchase, storage, and distribution of vaccines. On this front, higher-income countries are likely to have higher vaccinations rates than lower-income countries, and coverage disparities within countries may also occur as the cost per dose varies greatly: Pfizer/BioNtech (\$20), Moderna (\$33), Sputnik V (\$10) and Oxford/AstraZeneca (\$4). Ultra-cold freezers are also reported to cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

Many governments in middle- or low-income countries – which comprise more than 75% of the world’s population – might not be able to pay for the costs related to COVID-19 vaccination and in some cases may end up adopting low-cost but also less effective vaccines. This scenario is likely to result in uneven global recovery with various pockets of high-risk countries with low levels of vaccination or countries/regions whose vaccines are not recognized globally.

The above scenario could also directly impact the movement of people across national borders and continents. For example, we could witness the emergence of “recovery tiers” around the world, whereby countries within a specific tier have limited or no travel connectivity with other tiers. This could result in the further fragmentation of international travel, which is currently suffocated by a patchwork of travel restrictions, mandatory quarantines, and divergent testing requirements.

So far, it seems that fast deployment of COVID-19 vaccines has been most successful in countries with a strong central government with the ability to coordinate and mobilize their local population.

A case in point is Israel, a country that continues to implement strict country lockdowns and travel restrictions. Israel is currently delivering 150,000 daily doses of the Pfizer/BioNtech vaccine, with priority given to people who are clinically vulnerable, the over-60s, and health workers. The Government of Israel is also directly contacting its citizens through the health care system. In terms of distribution, it has subdivided shipments of the vaccine in various warehouses near air cargo hubs. This approach was implemented to facilitate the distribution of small batches in remote communities.

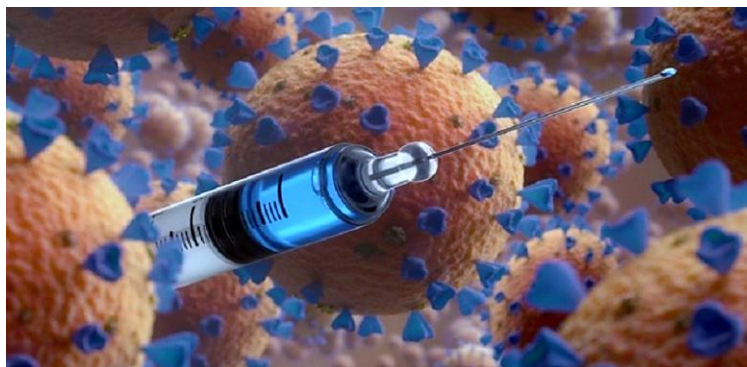
Testing Protocols and Mutual Recognition of Vaccines

Vaccination is the most effective tool to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among local populations and is likely to help governments stabilize health systems worldwide.

But considering the slow pace of vaccination in major economies such as Canada and the U.S. – as well as the many challenges faced by medium- or low-income countries with diverse and dispersed populations – vaccination should perhaps be considered an additional risk mitigating layer instead as the ultimate solution for industry recovery and cross-border travel resumption. That is why the implementation of testing protocols at entry points is so fundamental in minimizing the risks of further COVID-19 spread.

Another issue to be tackled in the coming months is the mutual recognition of vaccines across countries, which could potentially be driven by geopolitics, international competition and other market access considerations. Digital certificates such as the ones promoted by the Commons Project are a viable solution for global recognition as long as politics does not get in the way.

Countries should also abide by the principles promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and recognize that the unequal development in different countries of disease control, especially communicable diseases such as the COVID-19 virus, is a common global danger that should be tackled in a spirit of cooperation.



COVID-19 Vaccination in Comparison

(Canada versus the United States, as of January 8, 2021)

Total doses administered	235,000	5.92 million
Total doses administered by 100 people	0.62	1.79

Sources: US and Canadian Governments, Oxford "Our World in Data".

Vaccination and Recovery in the Canada-U.S. Context

So far, the distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines has been more challenging in countries with decentralized systems of government such as Canada and the U.S., and where the purchase and the administration of vaccines is under the control of various levels of government (i.e., federal, state/province, and local).

In the coming months, the successful deployment of vaccines in key tourism markets such as the European Union, India, Brazil, and Mexico to name a few – coupled with the implementation of clear and traveler-friendly testing protocols – are critical to recovery of international travel from those markets into Canada and/or the U.S.

In the short term, a tailored approach that focuses on stimulating certain low-risk markets should also be considered by both governments. In addition to addressing the issue of skepticism (p. 6), high rates of vaccination, mutual recognition of vaccines, and implementation of compatible and bilaterally-agreed testing protocols could be key elements for recovery in some key business/tourism markets for both Canada and the U.S.

Webinar on Testing and Vaccination for Safe Air Travel Resumption



As part of our Coalition's advocacy agenda, a webinar was co-organized with the National Airlines Council of Canada (NACC) and the Canadian Airports Council (CAC) on December 8, 2020. More than 280 participants attended the webinar, including senior government officials from Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Canada Border Services Agency, and Transport Canada. Additional participants included representatives from other provincial and territorial government departments, along with seasoned industry executives from Canada's aviation and tourism sectors, as well as the business and trade communities.

The Government and Industry Panels offered perspectives on the path to recovery from the federal government, as well as Canadian airlines and airports. The Roundtable brought together moderators and panelists – including special guests from the business, trade, and the tourism sectors – for an engaging discussion aimed at identifying concrete steps to kick-start aviation industry recovery in the coming weeks.

At the end of the Roundtable, the Public Health Agency of Canada expressed its willingness to meet with the industry to discuss concrete proposals for recovery. On the industry side, consensus was reached around the need to implement rapid testing in Canada. Industry also agreed that vaccination is not a panacea to stimulate recovery and testing remains the best approach to safely reopening borders to international travel. On the government side, consensus was reached that it is time to move the conversation into action and encourage further collaboration with the industry.

A few days after the webinar, the Future Borders Coalition – together with the NACC and CAC – submitted a joint proposal for a comprehensive pilot that would involve a country-to-country air travel corridor with layered departures/arrival testing at multiple airports that involves several airlines. The proposed pilot was discussed at the follow-up meeting between PHAC, Health Canada, NACC, CAC and FBC on December 17, 2020 and is currently under review by federal government officials.



CANADIAN
AIRPORTS
COUNCIL

Paths to Recovery

Testing and Vaccination for Safe Restart of Air Travel
December 8, 2020



NACC
National Airlines
Council of Canada



FUTURE BORDERS
COALITION

"COVID-19 has created the ideal context to think about the border of the future"

John Ossowski
President

Canada Border Services Agency

"The reopening of borders must consider the needs of all modes of transportation"

Brigitte Diogo
Vice-President, Health Security Infrastructure
Branch, Public Health Agency of Canada

"The most important factor for a safe reopening: what happens at the point of origin and at the point of destination"

Tamara Vrooman
President and CEO
Vancouver Airport Authority

"The successful implementation of travel bubbles and bridges require similar standards and rules on both ends"

Calin Rovinescu
President and CEO
Air Canada

MEMBERS' CORNER

Interview with the Maritime Task Force



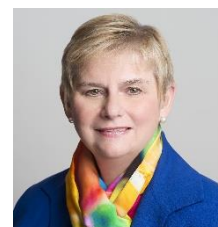
Donnie Brown
Co-Chair



Peter Xotta
Co-Chair



Ryan Malane
Vice-Chair



Sue Stiene
Secretariat

Q What is the overall focus of the Task Force?

A Our goal is to support the successful restart of cruise and ferry operations at North American Port Facilities. Our focus will be to promote health policy compliant systems (in part through efficient and touchless processes) by adapting new processes and using technology. Our guiding principle will be to make recommendations that could inform policy makers on objectives and guidelines for safe resumption, while delivering lasting value for cruise lines, airlines, ferries, government authorities, facility operators and the travelling public.

Q What are the some of projects you are planning to implement in the next 12 months?

A We recently completed a whitepaper that provides a gap analysis between pre- and post-pandemic passenger and baggage processing conditions. We are now starting to work on developing the following concepts for discussion with industry, public health, and government: (1) A pilot proposal for bi-national cruise passenger and baggage processing for operations between Continental U.S., Alaska and Canada and (2) A pilot proposal for bi-national ferry passenger and baggage processing for operations between Continental U.S. and Canada.

Q What are the key areas that need to be addressed for the safe restart of cruising?

A The Maritime Task Force is focussed on developing a concept for a Canadian Cruise pilot program that meets the needs of industry, public health and government. Our focus is geared towards a customer-friendly experience with multiple layers of safety and security measures built-in to protect passengers, crews, and communities. We will work towards developing processes that are similar in nature to those used in aviation and land border to create a consistent language for passengers to use when travelling by vehicle, ship or aircraft.

Q What are the most challenging areas for international ferries' restart?

A International ferries are operated under the same regulations as the land border operations. Our focus will be to work towards developing solutions for ferry operations based on the best processes and practices currently being used at land border crossings and in-cruise port terminals. We will also support the use of consistent language for passengers.

IN MEMORIUM



CHARLOTTE BELL

For more than five years, the CAC worked closely with Charlotte to resolve issues affecting the tourism and air travel sectors, including COVID-19. Charlotte was a tireless and passionate advocate for tourism and travel, bringing people together from every corner of the country. She was also our neighbour on our floor at the CAC office, and a friend to many of us. Her lessons will not be forgotten, and we are better and stronger for knowing her. Thank you, Charlotte.

In accordance with the wishes of Charlotte and her family, and they ask that those wishing to honor Charlotte direct donations to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Daniel-Robert Gooch

*President, Canadian Airports Council
Corporate Secretary, Future Borders Coalition*

Charlotte was not only the champion for Canada's tourism and travel industry but an important partner of the Future Borders Coalition. We are all saddened by her passing and will miss her engaging personality, her spirit and her enthusiasm for the work of our Coalition. She served as Co-Chair of our eTA/ESTA Working Group prior to the advent of the COVID-19 crisis and then, like the rest of us, refocused her attention on industry recovery.

I will personally miss her, not only as an industry colleague but as a good friend.

Gerry Bruno

*Executive Director, Future Borders Coalition
Executive Advisor to the CEO, Vancouver Airport Authority*

IN MEMORIAM



JIM PHILLIPS

Canadian/American Border Trade Alliance (Can/Am BTA) President & CEO Jim Phillips passed away in July 2020. The Future Borders Coalition salutes his 28 years of service to strengthen the US-Canada relationship and his enduring commitment to effective and creative border solutions.

In 1992, Congressman John LaFalce asked Jim to create a private sector organization to help guide Canadian and U.S. governments through the various issues resulting from the growth of bilateral trade. Jim's condition for establishing Can/Am BTA was that Congressman LaFalce establish a Northern Border Caucus in the House, which was established and continues to this day.

Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, the current Co-Chair of the Northern Border Caucus, [recognized Jim's accomplishments](#) in the House of Representatives: *"Under his many years of leadership at the Can/Am BTA, Jim Phillips became one of the most respected voices in all matters related to the U.S.-Canadian border, consistently earning the trust and partnership of Canadian and U.S. officials at all levels and over many administrations"*.

The Honourable Wayne Easter, Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Co-Chair, echoed the sentiments of the strength of work on bilateral trade and tourism, while fostering greater collaboration and efficiency. He further added in a [message of condolence](#): *"He leaves a lasting legacy that is certain to inspire others and foster new efforts in Canada-U.S. cooperation. He will be missed by all members of the Interparliamentary Group"*.

Self-deprecating, Jim would often start an idea or recommendation with a simple idea and grow the concept to creating wins for governments and the private sector. Privately, Jim was most effective to help resolve problems – an unsung hero to many for the ability to help both countries and private as well as public sector interests move forward together and ultimately strengthen the relationship across trade and travel flows. The Future Borders Coalition applauds his vision, work and legacy. Our heartfelt condolences to his three children and their families for the loss of a larger-than-life giant in US-Canada relationship management.

Solomon Wong
President and CEO
InterVISTAS Consulting Inc.

OUR MEMBERS



Canadian Global Cities Council

