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Last updated February 23, 2007

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News

DOT 20-07

Thursday, February 22, 2007

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U.S. Officials Will Travel to Mexico to Conduct On-Site Safety Audits of Trucking Companies As Part of New Program Announced Today by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters

Truck safety inspectors working for the U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration will be able to travel to Mexico to conduct extensive safety audits on companies interested in hauling cargo into and out of the United States as part of a new program announced today by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters.

Secretary Peters, who visited a local trucking company in Monterrey, Mexico, to announce the program with Mexican Secretary of Communications and Transportation Luis Téllez, said this step is needed before the United States can allow trucks from Mexico to operate beyond the currently existing border commercial zones that include cities like San Diego and El Paso.

"This program will make trade with Mexico easier and keep our roads safe at the same time," Secretary Peters said.

Peters also noted U.S. inspection teams will now be able to visit Mexican trucking companies to ensure their trucks and drivers meet the same safety, insurance and licensing requirements that apply to all U.S. truckers. She added the inspectors will evaluate truck maintenance and driver testing for compliance with U.S. requirements.

The inspection teams also will check that drivers have a valid commercial driver's license, have a current medical certificate, and can comply with U.S. hours-of-service rules. The teams will review driving histories for each driver the company plans to use to operate within the U.S. and verify the company is insured by U.S.-licensed firms. Finally, each inspection team will verify that every U.S.-bound truck has passed a comprehensive safety inspection. Trucks lacking required documentation will be subject to a "hood to tail-lamps" inspection by the teams.

“With this new program, we prove that safety and economic growth are compatible,” Secretary Peters said.

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