



Canada Border
Services Agency

Agence des services
frontaliers du Canada



**Homeland
Security**

Entry/Exit Information System

Phase I Joint Canada-United States Report

Phase I Joint Canada-United States Report

Executive Summary

As part of the *Beyond the Border* Declaration and Action Plan agreed to by President Obama and Prime Minister Harper in 2011, the United States and Canada are developing a coordinated Entry/Exit Information System at their shared land border. The Entry/Exit Information System will facilitate exchanges of entry information such that an entry into one country is considered an exit from the other. This exchange will help better manage immigration program and border management practices, as it is important for Canada and the United States to determine when individuals both enter and depart our respective countries. For example, an Entry/Exit Information System will help determine whether third country nationals and permanent residents are complying with domestic immigration laws. This project can help move us closer to meeting this need through mutual collaboration and without expensive new infrastructure or unnecessary processing that would slow down trade and travel between the two countries.

The Entry/Exit Information System will be implemented in three phases. During the first phase, which began in September 2012 and concluded in January 2013, the countries exchanged biographic entry data only on third country nationals¹ and permanent residents² (but not U.S. or Canadian citizens) who crossed the common land border at four locations. This report covers the activities of Phase I.

The biographic entry data was exchanged using secure means previously established between the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). The information was then reconciled against existing entry records already held for those individuals.

The results significantly exceeded expectations in terms of the ability of both countries to reconcile (referred to as match in the U.S.) entry and exit records. Canada reconciled 94.5% of the records received from the United States, while the United States reconciled 97.4% of the records received from Canada. Both countries believe that these percentages can increase as all remaining automated ports of entry (POEs) are in scope for Phase II and the causes for any non-reconciliation in Phase I are better identified and subsequently rectified.

Phase I limited the data exchanged to those elements necessary to reconcile records and were shared in a manner consistent with the terms of the project, domestic laws and policies, and the *Beyond the Border* Action Plan Joint Statement of Privacy Principles jointly developed by both countries. Both

¹ Third country national means a person who is not a citizen of Canada or a citizen or national of the United States under each country's respective laws. Of note is that citizens of Canada and citizens and nationals of the United States are out of scope for Phase I even though Canadian and U.S. citizens are foreign nationals to the other country. The use of the term third country national is meant to exclude citizens of either country.

² A person who is a permanent resident of Canada or lawful permanent resident of the United States, but who is not a citizen of Canada nor citizen or national of the United States.

countries also committed to transparency and public communication by publishing numerous program documents on-line, including privacy documentation.

Canada and the United States have enjoyed an excellent working relationship in the development and implementation of Phase I. Based on the results of Phase I, both Canada and the United States are optimistic about the success of the future phases of the Entry/Exit Information System.

Background

Beyond the Border: A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness committed both nations to the pursuit of a shared approach to strengthening perimeter security and accelerating the legitimate flow of people, goods and services between the two countries. It also explicitly identified a joint Entry/Exit Information System as a key element where each country's entry data would serve as the other country's exit data at the land border.

Under the *Beyond the Border* Action Plan, Canada and the United States committed to establishing coordinated entry and exit systems at the common land border so that the record of a traveller's entry into one country can be utilised to establish the traveller's exit from the other.

On September 28, 2012, CBSA and DHS announced the commencement of Phase I as outlined in the Action Plan, effective September 30, 2012.

Introduction

When fully implemented, one of the programs the Entry/Exit Information System will support is the integrity of U.S. and Canadian immigration programs by allowing for improved access management to either country; increasing the effectiveness of border management; and enabling targeted policy development and implementation. Both countries have a need to know when third country nationals and permanent residents enter and depart their country in order to be able to determine whether domestic immigration laws are being followed. Exchanging entry data between Canada and the United States allows both countries to obtain the departure data needed to achieve this objective without requiring expensive new infrastructure and procedures that would slow down travel, trade, and commerce between the two countries.

Phase I of this program consisted of a proof of concept which enabled both governments to exchange biographic entry data to evaluate the validity of the information sharing concept and for statistical and analytical purposes, and to identify the steps necessary for improvements to subsequent phases. The biographic entry data exchanged was only used for specified purposes, and the scope for the exchange was limited, in terms of population and ports of entry participation.

Scope

Phase I was launched on September 30, 2012, and its scope was limited to the exchange of biographic entry data on third country nationals and permanent residents of either country at four automated

common land border ports of entry (POEs)³. The Phase I proof of concept ran from September 30, 2012 until January 15, 2013.

Biographic Entry Data

The United States and Canada selected 12 data elements, based on International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards that were believed to provide the best reconciliation results. These data elements were already being collected automatically by each country as part of their entry processes and allowed both countries to determine that the individual fell within the scope of the initiative. The collected data elements that were exchanged about the travellers were first name, middle name, last name, date of birth, nationality, gender, document type (e.g., a passport), document number, document country of issuance, work location code / U.S. POE codes, date of entry, and time of entry.

The only new pieces of information not already known to the receiving country were the date of departure and the port through which the traveller(s) entered (exited the other country), because the remainder would have been collected during the original entry process when the traveller entered the receiving country. These 12 elements were determined to be the minimum necessary in order to carry out the objectives of Phase I, most notably reconciling entry and exit records.

The four automated common land border POEs used in Phase I were:

Canada		United States
Pacific Highway, Surrey, BC	↔	Pacific Highway, Blaine, Washington
Douglas (Peace Arch), Surrey, BC	↔	Peace Arch, Blaine, Washington
Queenston-Lewiston Bridge, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON	↔	Lewiston-Queenston Bridge, Lewiston, NY
Rainbow Bridge, Niagara Falls, ON	↔	Rainbow Bridge, Niagara Falls, NY

These four ports were selected because they are high-volume ports for both countries, especially for crossings by third country nationals; representative of different regions across the common land border; and POEs in two geographic clusters to enable cross-referencing of entry and exit points.

Operational and Technical Process

In Phase I, Canada and the United States tested the IT capacity to exchange and reconcile biographic information on the entry of travellers. Biographic entry data collected on third-country nationals, permanent residents of Canada, and lawful permanent residents of the United States at four selected land border POEs was exchanged between Canada and the United States.

The United States and Canada agreed to four separate, secure network exchanges, which amounted to approximately 90 days' worth of data. Each batch exchange of data covered specified periods of time.

³ An Automated Common Land Border Port of Entry is a port of entry on the shared Canada-U.S. land border with a primary processing capacity to capture traveller (land, ferry and pedestrian) passage as an electronic record. This does not include large cruise vessels deemed to be sea crossings under the laws of Canada and the United States.

Exchanges of Biographic Entry Data:

Exchanges	Collection Start and End Dates	Exchange Date
✓ 1st	September 30, 2012 → October 14, 2012	October 15, 2012
✓ 2nd	October 15, 2012 → November 29, 2012	November 30, 2012
✓ 3rd	November 30, 2012 → January 1, 2013	January 2, 2013
✓ 4th	January 2, 2013 → January 15, 2013	January 16, 2013

The biographic entry data was exchanged over an existing, secure link already in use between Canada and the United States.

Neither Canada nor the United States received any indications from our respective POEs at the four locations that there was any impact in terms of traveller delays or throughput. This is strong indicator that the process appeared seamless to the traveller and the border services officers and did not affect regular operations.

Methodology

Canada and the United States ensured that biographic entry data transmitted between the two countries was done in a secure manner. Once received by Canada, the U.S. entry records were then reconciled with the Canadian passage history system through the use of data analysis tools. Once Canadian records were received by the United States, they were stored in the Border Crossing Information system and reconciled against United States traveller data stored in the Arrival/Departure Information System (ADIS) using advanced and analytic matching protocols in place for reconciling entries and exits in the air environment.

Findings and Results

The objective of Phase I was to exchange biographic entry data between the United States and Canada to establish an exit from the other country for those same travellers, as described earlier in this report. Both Canada and the United States obtained information that allowed them to prove the validity of the information sharing concept and identify steps for further developing an exit information sharing program. Canada and the United States learned to what extent the data fields are compatible and interoperable and developed the ability to reconcile data elements. Each country also confirmed its ability to reconcile entry records to establish exit and identify data quality issues, including rate and type of data reconciliation errors.

In addition, as outlined in the Action Plan, Canada and the United States are measuring progress through the potential to identify the following:

- persons detected overstaying their authorized period of stay;
- improvements to immigration warrant management;
- reconciliation of entry and exit records indicating whether an individual complied with the terms of his or her admission/entry;
- individuals who may have failed to meet residency requirements for permanent resident status or citizenship applications; and
- persons subject to a removal or departure order and who are recorded as having departed.

The table below demonstrates the reconciliation rates for both countries based on the records that were exchanged:

Records CBSA Received from DHS	CBSA Reconciliation	Records DHS Received from CBSA	DHS Reconciliation
343,363	94.5%	413,222	97.4%

The CBSA and DHS were able to successfully reconcile entry and exit records. In total the CBSA sent 413,222 records to DHS and the CBSA received 343,363 records from DHS. Reconciliation results from Phase I data exchange have exceeded the expectations of both countries.

 Canada's Results	 United States' Results
Canada was able to reconcile 298,169 of 343,363 records, accounting for an initial reconciliation rate of 86.8%. The U.S. records were then further reconciled using a combination of exact and probabilistic matching, which resulted in a successful reconciliation rate of 94.5%.	The United States was able to reconcile 402,513 of 413,222 records, accounting for a reconciliation rate of 97.4%. This rate was achieved through the use of an existing traveller entry/exit system.

Both Canada and the United States found the following from biographic entry records exchanged from the four POEs selected for Phase I:

- entry and exit records were reconciled, thereby indicating whether a third country national complied with the terms of his or her admission/entry;
- potential overstays were identified;
- potential unexecuted Canadian immigration warrants were identified;
- opportunities exist to identify document anomalies or fraud; and
- relying on a travel document number in and of itself may be insufficient to reconcile an entry record with exit data.

Privacy and Due Diligence

Phase I was carried out in accordance with each country's privacy laws and policies, as well as the *Beyond the Border Action Plan Joint Statement of Privacy Principles*.⁴ An evaluation of privacy implications can be found in each country's respective Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA). The executive summary of the CBSA's PIA for Phase I can be viewed on the CBSA web site: www.cbsa.gc.ca/btb-pdf/es-se-eng.html. The DHS PIA for Phase I can be found at the DHS web site: www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/privacy/PIAs/privacy_pia_cbp_whtibtb_sept2012.pdf.

Canada and the United States shared information in a manner consistent with the terms of a Letter of Intent (LOI)⁵ and each country's respective domestic privacy laws and policies. The LOI is a document signed by Canada and the United States that establishes the framework for the collection, retention, use, disclosure and disposal of biographic entry data for Phase I, for the purpose of establishing a record of exit from the United States and Canada, and was made publicly available prior to the beginning of Phase I.

Permitted Use

Canada and the United States exchanged biographic entry data limited to that which was necessary to successfully reconcile entry and exit records within the systems of each country. In the LOI, Canada and the United States clearly outlined the parameters of use for the exchange of data in Phase I. The biographic entry data was used to determine the feasibility of reconciling data and to inform future phases of the project.

Information Security

Canada and the United States treated the information received from the other in confidence and took all reasonable measures to preserve its confidentiality and integrity by safeguarding the biographic entry data against accidental or unauthorized access, use or disclosure. Both countries protected all biographic entry data exchanged with administrative, technical, and physical safeguards appropriate to the sensitivity of the information.

Data Retention

Neither country will retain personal information received from the other country for longer than six months beyond the last exchange of information. As such, each country is currently preparing to delete information that was exchanged during Phase I according to their domestic laws and policies, or has already done so.

Safeguards

To provide further safeguards for the privacy, security, confidentiality, integrity and availability of the information systems and the information they store, process and transmit, Canada and the United

⁴ This document can be found at: www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/policy/beyond-the-border-action-plan-statement-of-privacy-principles.pdf

⁵ The text of the Letter of Intent can be found at: www.cbsa.gc.ca/btb-pdf/loi-ldi-eng.html

States were prepared to provide notice to each other in the event of a disaster or other situation that could have disrupted the intended transfer of information between them. No such disaster occurred during Phase I.

In addition, both countries were to provide immediate notification as soon as reasonably practicable, but no later than 24 hours after becoming aware, of any breach of the security of the information systems containing, or unauthorized use or disclosure of, any personal information. No such breach occurred. Canada and the United States remain prepared to cooperate with each other in conducting any review or audit of compliance.

Communications and Public Notification

For accountability and transparency purposes during Phase I, the CBSA and DHS developed communication plans and issued a joint news release notifying the public of the launch of Phase I. In addition, the Executive Summary of Canada's Phase I Privacy Impact Assessment and the U.S. Privacy Impact Assessment have been posted online.

Right of Access

Canada and the United States notified the public of the parameters of the collection of this information and, to the extent specified in their respective domestic laws and policies, provided persons who are the subject of information exchanged the opportunity to request access to personal information about themselves, as well as the opportunity to request correction of the personal information where the individual believed there is an error or omission. This was done through existing redress practices in the United States and through access to information practices in Canada.

Quality Assurance

The data quality of all fields can affect the accuracy of statistics, as well as trends and patterns derived from the data. Records, received through secure network exchange, were regularly reviewed to ensure that new and undiscovered data anomalies were recognized and the reasons for their occurrences investigated to ensure data quality was maintained. Of the 12 fields exchanged, Work Location/Port of Entry, Date of Entry and Time of Entry are system-populated fields; as such, they are considered to be insusceptible to data quality issues and were taken at face value.

Information Integrity

Canada and the United States made reasonable efforts to ensure that the information shared was accurate, timely, and relevant. Both countries were prepared to take corrective action had they received notification from the other that there were inaccuracies in the information originally provided. To reinforce this concept, the data was exchanged in stages as described earlier to allow for continual improvement and application of lessons learned in subsequent stages. For example, out of scope data was inadvertently transmitted during the first exchange. However, the error was promptly detected and corrected through mutual collaboration, and the records were permanently deleted. Subsequently, no further out of scope data was transmitted.

Best Practices

Canada and the United States enjoyed a productive and synergistic working relationship during the development, implementation and post implementation of Phase I. Canada was able to gain immeasurable insight from the United States' sharing of information on their own current system, which resulted in both countries keeping costs to a minimum, and providing for the implementation of optimum border management practices in a less than ideal economic climate.

Phase I reinforced the value of the use of certain best practices, which contributed to the timely launch and success of this phase. These best practices include:

- An Integrated Team from both countries formed joint working and sub-working groups governed by Terms of Reference; maintained joint issue and action logs; and developed a joint schedule that allowed for critical milestones to be met, as well as momentum and progress to be maintained on initial, critical planning and analysis;
- Continuous, robust and candid communications contributed to resolving issues in a timely manner;
- Involvement of technical, legal and policy personnel from both countries during project planning throughout Phase I ensured broad awareness and engagement;
- Effective Project and Program documentation aided both Canada and the United States in being able to move forward and provide effective upwards reporting to senior management throughout the process; and
- Continual work on refining filters to ensure future exchanges of biographic entry data remain in scope.

Next Steps

By June 30, 2013, the *Beyond the Border* Action Plan commits both countries to begin implementation of a program exchanging the biographic data of third-country nationals, permanent residents of Canada and lawful permanent residents of the United States, at all automated common land border ports of entry.

Beyond 2013, the U.S. and Canada will continue to move forward on their previously agreed objectives under the joint action plan.