

# Rolling Retreat

August 2008

## SUMMARY

The theme can be described as *Beyond the Concrete* – recognizing that we cannot build or pave our way to success, but must look to partnerships, policies & strategic actions to effect change. It means better utilizing existing infrastructure to increase capacity, securing competitive tax regimes, attracting new people to careers in transportation and improving how the industry communicates – both its environmental and social stewardship, and its merits and values as an industry – to its stakeholders including the public.

Discussions focused on four broad issues:

### Capacity

Optimism and appreciation was expressed that our challenges today include dealing with “Prosperity Problems” and this is a good position to be in.

Surge capacity is needed to handle spikes in demand or recover from a disaster. Disruptions tax the system, damage our reputation with customers and recovery is painful for all parties. Increasing the normal level of storage capacity is desirable but it is difficult to set the amount of such capacity. Assets must be used at optimal rates, especially with the competition for investment funds.

Efficiency improvement is a source of capacity. Issues included where and how products are handled; the shortage of industrial land in key areas; and costly disconnects such as differences in weights on inbound and outbound loaded containers.

### Policy

WESTAC’s *Framework for a National Transportation Policy* was tabled in its final stage before distribution to members and other stakeholders. The document is expected to be a catalyst for system improvement and wide commitment to the principles that connect all elements of a strategic transportation network. It should also generate the benchmarks and measurements to promote collective internal excellence.

### Image

There is a desire to communicate our passion for this industry. The message is that we are an intelligent industry, with good people and good will. The challenge is how to share this and communicate our passion and our good deeds. Success can reduce opposition to commercial transportation’s footprint and increase interest in career opportunities.

### Environment

Everyone agreed that although there are corporate benefits to cleaning up environmentally, the top reason for engaging in this type of corporate social responsibility is because “it’s the right thing to do”.

There was discussion about how to demonstrate that we are “ahead of the curve”, communicate better about what we are already doing in every mode, as an industry and as organizations. This means engaging the support of both outside environmental groups and those who work in the industry to “walk the talk” and share the good news.

This year’s Rolling Retreat took place August 26 & 27 on the Rocky Mountaineer Rail Tour from Vancouver to Calgary. We thank our gracious host Rocky Mountaineer and Peter Armstrong, whose outstanding staff gave the kind of service that set the backdrop for our focused and productive sessions. At the conclusion of each Rolling Retreat, participants say over and over how superb the venue is: high quality amenities, excellent food and service, private working environment, all contributing to successful transportation relationships. Ultimately this translates into a better transportation system.

The following action items were raised and will be studied for possible implementation:

1. Form an **environmental stewardship task force**. This group would focus on sharing best practices and knowledge and learning on how we can truly take our corporate responsibility forward with innovative and prosperous tactics.
2. Advance WESTAC's *Framework for a **National Transportation Policy*** – This document presents an opportunity to share the industry's goals and desires for an optimal system. It is a starting point for others to exemplify and as a document for industry to live by. The best commitment to excellence is through practice of strategies endorsed by all.
3. Determine if we can hasten removal of the **restrictions on domestic container movements**.
4. Advance research to find at least partial solutions to current **work/life balance** issues for those employed in the industry.
5. Identify by surveying the industry, the **key technical skills** needed, along with the weak skill areas, and create plans to address the weaknesses.

### Participants:

**Yves Lemieux**, Director, Network Strategies, CN

**Hon. Dan D'Autremont**, Minister of Government Services, Government of Saskatchewan

**Clay Reich**, Chief of Staff to Minister of Highways & Infrastructure, Government of Saskatchewan

**Jim Belsheim**, President, Neptune Bulk Terminals (Canada) Ltd.

**David Watson**, President, Canadian Operations, OOCL (Canada) Inc.

**Capt. Kevin Obermeyer**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Pilotage Authority

**Capt. Chris Badger**, Chief Operating Officer, Port Metro Vancouver

**John Grogan**, Vice President, Ridley Terminals Inc.

**Kevin Irvine**, President, Seaspan International Ltd.

**Tom Prendergast**, Chief Executive Officer, South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority (TransLink)

**Mike Wheten**, National Legislative Director, Teamsters Canada Rail Conference

**Dr. Mike Henderson**, Regional Director General, Pacific Region, Transport Canada



L-R: Jen Perih (WESTAC), Lisa Baratta (WESTAC), Peter Armstrong (Rocky Mountaineer), Yves Lemieux (CN), Ruth Sol (WESTAC), Hon. Dan D'Autremont (Government of Saskatchewan), Clay Reich (Government of Saskatchewan), Tom Prendergast (Translink), Capt. Chris Badger (Port Metro Vancouver), Capt. Kevin Obermeyer (Pacific Pilotage Authority), John Grogan (Ridley Terminals Inc.), Dr. Mike Henderson (Transport Canada), David Watson (OOCL), Jim Belsheim (Neptune Bulk Terminals Canada Ltd.), Mike Wheten (Teamsters Canada Rail Conference), Kevin Irvine (Seaspan International Ltd.), Terry (Rocky Mountaineer).

