

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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U.S. TRAVEL AND TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD

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MEETING

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MONDAY

JUNE 5, 2017

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The Board met in the Walter E.
Washington Convention Center, Room 204 A/B,
Washington, D.C., at 10:30 a.m., John Sprouls,
Chair, presiding.

PRESENT

JOHN SPROULS, Chair; Universal Parks and Resorts
MARGARET MCKEOUGH, Vice Chair; Metropolitan
Washington Airports Authority
GEORGE AGUEL, Visit Orlando
HELANE BECKER, Cowen and Company
BRUCE CHARENDOFF, Sabre
TODD DAVIDSON, Travel Oregon
BRAD DEAN, Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
FRED DIXON, NYC & Company
KURT EKERT, Carlson Wagonlit Travel
ELLIOTT FERGUSON, Destination DC
MIKE GALLAGHER, CityPASS
ADAM GOLDSTEIN, Hipmunk
JAMES HAGEN, South Dakota Department of Tourism
NICK HENTSCHEL, AmericanTours International

MARY MOTSENBOCKER, International Tourism
Marketing, Inc.
SUSAN PRESBY, Mt. Washington Cog Railway
OLGA RAMUDO, Express Travel
SHERRY RUPERT, American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association
ADAM SACKS, Tourism Economics
WILLIAM TALBERT, Greater Miami Convention &
Visitors Bureau
DENISE THEVENOT, Louisiana Tax Free Shopping
ERNEST WOODEN, JR., Los Angeles Tourism and
Convention Board

ALSO PRESENT

BRIAN BEALL, Designated Federal Officer
ISRAEL HERNANDEZ, Deputy Chief of Staff,
U.S. Department of Commerce
KENNETH HYATT, Deputy Undersecretary,
International Trade Administration,
U.S. Department of Commerce
ISABEL HILL, Director, National Travel and
Tourism Office, U.S. Department of
Commerce
ROGER DOW, U.S. Travel Association
THOMAS S. ENGLE, U.S. Department of State
MATT HAYDEN, U.S. Department of Homeland
Security

KARIN KING, U.S. Department of State

LAURA MANDALA, Mandala Research

DANIEL TANCIAR, U.S. Customs and Border
Protection

TIMOTHY WILLIAMS, U.S. Department of the
Interior

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 10:35 a.m.

3 MR. BEALL: All right. Good morning,
4 everybody. Welcome to our Travel and Tourism
5 Advisory Board meeting this morning. Great to
6 have you all here in Washington, D.C., for those
7 of you who traveled to the meeting.

8 As we kick off this morning, I'd like
9 to first turn it over to Israel Hernandez, who is
10 Deputy Chief of Staff to the Secretary of
11 Commerce and Acting Undersecretary for
12 International Trade. Thank you.

13 MR. HERNANDEZ: Good morning,
14 everyone. John, good to see you.

15 First of all, before we get started,
16 I want to thank you for taking the time. I know
17 you meet often. I am now new to the Department
18 of Commerce this time, but I was here previously
19 before and have worked with Brian and Isabel, and
20 new with working with Ken. I know that they
21 spent countless hours on this really important
22 industry.

1 I remember when I worked in the Bush
2 administration Department of Commerce under ITA,
3 some of the things that this board has started to
4 do when people arrived at airports.

5 Like, the videos -- the welcoming
6 videos -- I thought were very important. I
7 thought that was a nice touch. And since then
8 you have evolved and have addressed issues that I
9 think are really important.

10 I think you'll know as you have heard
11 from the secretary in his nomination on his
12 feelings on this industry. I know that he spoke
13 to you previously on a call asking for a review
14 of the goals and the strategy, which I think
15 you're working through at this point.

16 I very much look forward to these, as
17 does the secretary, and I think maybe we'll be
18 done by the end of the month. In which case, I
19 think we need to have a really --- once again a
20 full discussion of things that you bring forward,
21 which I think will be really important.

22 So, I'm really glad to be here and,

1 more importantly, here to listen to your ideas,
2 your thoughts as you've worked at this. And if
3 there is anything that we could do, I want you to
4 know that we are here to listen.

5 I am temporarily serving as Acting
6 Undersecretary for International Trade until Gil
7 gets confirmed, which we don't know when that
8 will be.

9 But because there are so many issues
10 that are important coming through ITA, I want to
11 make sure that they are fully addressed, which is
12 why I'm taking on this role, but will then go
13 back to just maintaining my position as Deputy
14 Chief of Staff.

15 So, look forward to working with you
16 on an ongoing perspective even after Gil gets
17 confirmed. So, thank you again for your time.

18 And if I have not met you
19 individually, I look forward to meeting you after
20 this meeting. Thank you.

21 John, I think it's your turn.

22 CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you for being

1 here, thank you for taking the time, thank you to
2 everyone who's been able to make the meeting
3 today.

4 We've got a number of pretty important
5 things that we want to talk about today. You
6 know, we've had our subcommittees working on
7 various recommendations around the National
8 Tourism and Travel Strategy, as well as the other
9 subcommittee groups around communication and
10 facilitation and priorities for the Department of
11 Commerce as we see them from our industry.

12 And what we would like to accomplish
13 today is to have a good discussion of where
14 they're at amongst the full board -- because each
15 of the subcommittees obviously have been working
16 together closely -- so that we can proceed as
17 quickly as possible, which has become the norm
18 for this committee.

19 The first term that I served on this
20 committee, we worked for two years to put
21 together a series of letters at the end where we
22 made recommendations. In the last two terms I had

1 been on, we have never done anything at the end,
2 because we do everything at the beginning, but
3 that's okay.

4 This group has learned to work very
5 quickly together and the good thing is
6 surrounding this table are people that are well-
7 steeped in our industry. So, when you ask us
8 what are the issues, we can identify them pretty
9 quickly.

10 So, with that, what I'd like to do is
11 first turn it over to Isabel to give us a Travel
12 and Tourism Office update.

13 MS. HILL: Good morning, everybody.
14 Thank you, John. And I want to thank everybody
15 for all of the work that you all have been doing
16 at the committee level.

17 I know I and my team have had a very
18 good time evolving our role with you as the
19 coordinators of this group. And we are really,
20 really appreciative of the deep dive that each of
21 the groups has been working on and very much
22 looking forward to hearing your thoughts and your

1 conversation.

2 In your packet, you have a pretty
3 sheet here that has our top ten markets with
4 respect to spending. That was just released for
5 2016 by the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

6 This will be followed in another month
7 or so by the visitor counts, so we will be able
8 to merge those two things finally a little bit
9 later, as you know, as we're working through the
10 automation process with the Department of
11 Homeland Security.

12 What you will notice is that there
13 have been declines in a number of our markets.
14 The top ten markets remain very much the same --
15 at least as far as the top five -- but there are
16 some shifts beyond that where we are seeing some
17 shifts in the next markets.

18 So, you'll see, number one, that China
19 remains an extraordinary driver of growth for
20 revenues to the United States. And what you'll
21 see, too, is that Canada is declining quite
22 significantly.

1 A lot of this -- you know, it's always
2 hard to know the causality because it's a very
3 dynamic industry, but there is no question that
4 Canada more than any other market correlates with
5 the strength of the dollar. So, that continues
6 to be the case.

7 We have also, I think, some very
8 interesting shifts where you begin to see Germany
9 -- which used to be one of our highest spending
10 markets -- moving down further in the --- in the
11 track, but seeing markets like India moving up
12 significantly. So, there is some dynamic
13 activity.

14 It's a shifting marketplace, but I
15 thought it would be important to give you this
16 information, highlight it. We can give you some
17 additional deep dive, anybody who wants to
18 contact our office and go into this a little bit
19 more. Very happy to talk with you about it.

20 Of course the Survey of International
21 Air Travelers is the research instrument that
22 gives us this data, along with the Bureau of

1 Economic Analysis who runs it through their
2 import and export models to find the balance of
3 trade.

4 So, again, welcome to all of you,
5 happy to talk more deeply about this. But
6 thought it would be very important -- given the
7 role of this group right now in looking at our
8 goals and strategies -- to look at what the
9 dynamics of the marketplace in the international
10 arena are. So, thank you very much.

11 We also have been working across the
12 interagency. We continue to meet with the
13 Tourism Policy Council and to educate some of our
14 leaders coming in from the administration about
15 the importance of travel and tourism to the
16 economy, and about the roles of these individual
17 agencies in the Tourism Policy Council and the
18 role that their agencies play.

19 We are also looking at a busy summer
20 season. So, we will be working --- continuing to
21 have the conversation across the agencies about
22 preparing for what I think both TSA and CBP

1 recognize is going to be a lot of activity this
2 summer.

3 So, thank you very much and, John, I
4 will turn it back over to you.

5 CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you, Isabel. At
6 this point, we have a special presentation by
7 U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Our resident
8 movie star Dan Tanciar will be leading that
9 presentation.

10 For those of you who travel
11 internationally, you know exactly what I'm
12 talking about.

13 Dan.

14 MR. TANCIAR: Thank you. Thank you,
15 John. Thanks very much for the invitation to be
16 here today following up on all the good work from
17 years past.

18 I'd like to talk to you today about
19 biometric exit and how biometrics are going to be
20 implemented over the next -- course of the next
21 several months both in our air and land
22 environments. I'll focus mostly on land --- air

1 today, but we'll touch on land before we go
2 forward.

3 So, many of you know that there has
4 been a mandate for a long time to implement a
5 biometric exit program. It was a program that was
6 sort of elusive to find the right solution so
7 that we don't have a negative impact on outbound
8 travel and work within our current
9 infrastructure.

10 So, in 2013, the mission for biometric
11 exit was moved from the Department writ large
12 over to CBP to begin to develop an implementation
13 plan.

14 First and foremost that we kind of
15 approached this with is, we can't do this on our
16 own. Certainly we are good at creating ideas and
17 could have developed something to put on top of
18 current processes, but we said to ourselves,
19 there's some considerations we have to have while
20 we --- as we move forward to implementing
21 something.

22 One, we can't add on top of processes

1 that already exist today. Two, it's no secret
2 that the United States has never had a departure
3 control system in it other than the paper I-94
4 cards and the green I-94 cards, which we
5 thankfully have been -- gotten rid of, but we had
6 to work within existing airports.

7 Unlike Europe where they have
8 departure wings and a very controlled
9 environment, it's not feasible to go bulldoze all
10 of our airports and start anew.

11 Thirdly, business models, right? So,
12 airlines and airports operate in a certain way.
13 Time of is of the essence, time is money.
14 Whatever we did, we had to leverage what is being
15 done today according to those business models.

16 And fourth, passengers. We didn't
17 want to have to teach passengers something new or
18 exotic in order to learn how to travel. By and
19 large, people know what to expect in the travel
20 continuum today. And so adding something totally
21 different like fingerprint capture devices wasn't
22 --- really wouldn't work. We didn't want to have

1 to train people to do something new so that there
2 was an impact to their expectations of travel.

3 And finally, we looked at ourselves
4 and we looked at the systems that we've had and
5 the rules that we've had in place for many years.

6 We get data in advance in the air
7 environment, from our airlines. Let's use it.
8 Let's use it to not only strengthen that law
9 enforcement mission and mandate, but let's figure
10 out a way that we can use that better to leverage
11 and facilitate travel.

12 So, we looked within ourselves where
13 really the novelty here is -- is the way in which
14 we're going to take advance passenger
15 information, go get pictures of folks who are on
16 those planes, and do a search against just that
17 very small gallery.

18 That makes facial recognition fast and
19 it makes it accurate. It's a lot different than
20 trying to take one face and searching it against
21 a billion photos. So, we're excited about the
22 way in which we took our infrastructure and

1 looked at it differently.

2 This is a --- really, the point of
3 this diagram is to say a lot of the work that is
4 being ---- a lot of work is being done today. A
5 person checks in, information is sent to CBP
6 through APIS, we conduct vetting, make sure
7 there's no bad guys, wants, warrants, terrorism
8 concerns and a variety of other things.

9 Today on outbound, we do go to gates.
10 If there is someone we are concerned maybe is a
11 victim of trafficking or someone who has an
12 outstanding want or warrant, we do that work
13 today. We go to departing flights and investigate
14 those individuals before they depart to ensure
15 that there isn't something to worry about.

16 All we're doing when we start talking
17 about biometric exit is inserting a camera into
18 the boarding process. There shouldn't be a whole
19 lot of new work that results from that. There
20 will be some, but not as though we're taking on a
21 completely different mission.

22 By and large, people departing the

1 United States are law abiding and what issues we
2 have today are not going to change based on
3 having this process in place. So, really, what
4 the new piece there is adding the camera and the
5 biometric photo gallery.

6 And what we did is about a year ago we
7 deployed a camera -- a NeoFace camera from NEC --
8 which was another supporting organization of
9 ours. We were inspired by it being used down at
10 a theme park.

11 We taped it to a pole. It's really
12 kind of ugly. We put a tablet on it and we
13 loaded a matching algorithm onto that tablet.

14 Ninety minutes before we flight, we
15 download that manifest with the photos. And as
16 the traveler would board the aircraft, they would
17 scan their boarding pass with the gate agent,
18 walk a few steps into the gate doorway, and then
19 scan again to have their photo captured.

20 We've had over 20,000 participating
21 passengers. And roughly --- and I say high 90
22 percentile, because, obviously, it changes day by

1 day -- but roughly 96, 97 percent of all
2 travelers on those flights at Atlanta that we
3 did, a Tokyo flight and a Mexico City flight,
4 we've had photographs on. And then when you talk
5 about matching rates, we're in the very high
6 match rates. We've had as high as a hundred
7 percent, 99 percent, 96 percent.

8 This is very exciting and it shows
9 that we can do certain things. So, in the future
10 we're using those existing biometrics. And I'll
11 talk about US citizens in just a moment and all
12 of the privacy things that we take very
13 seriously.

14 There's no new data. I'm not asking
15 people to submit anything new. It's the same
16 thing you do to buy a ticket today.

17 We're matching one to few, so I no
18 longer need to swipe a passport or scan a
19 boarding pass in order to match up your
20 biometric.

21 That's how the systems operate on
22 inbound today. Everybody I see, I have to swipe

1 a passport. It then goes into the database,
2 retrieves that fingerprint, and then it really
3 does a match one to one. One finger to one
4 finger, two finger to two finger. We're changing
5 this up so that we can do truly tokenless travel.

6 And the good news is that -- I don't
7 know if you saw over there, we have a camera.
8 And the folks from our IT shop who have put it
9 together, that's the footprint of today's camera.

10 It's pretty small, only requires power
11 and some Wi-Fi connectivity. And real quickly,
12 you can see how quickly someone can walk up to
13 the camera and get --- I didn't give them a heads
14 up, by the way. So, give them just a second.

15 You can see he'll walk up to the
16 camera and you should see a green light. And,
17 yeah, it will turn green. Again, I didn't give
18 them a heads up. Well, in any event, you'll see
19 a green light there. The purpose --- you know,
20 demos never really go the way you want them,
21 right.

22 The whole purpose of that --- well,

1 that's okay. The timing is of the essence. It
2 has to happen. I have to acquire an image, match
3 an image, and our goal is to have that done in
4 under two seconds. We've been very successful in
5 Atlanta with that.

6 This is really kind of exciting. So,
7 you hopefully understand a little bit about what
8 we're doing on outbound, but I want to just for a
9 moment give you our vision for inbound.

10 So, imagine being able to come off the
11 aircraft, walk up to the CBP officer and instead
12 of handing them the passport and the boarding
13 pass, they actually already know who you are
14 based on the photograph that we've just taken of
15 you.

16 The officer then can do their purpose
17 and intent interview, which they will always do.
18 Remember, this is a security program first and
19 foremost. Border security is our number one
20 mission.

21 But if I can accomplish that border
22 security mission, strengthen it, make it even

1 tougher to get in here for folks who shouldn't
2 be, but still facilitate those legitimate trade
3 and travel --- travelers, I think all the better.

4 So, right now we re-collect
5 fingerprints for every foreign national each and
6 every time they arrive. Under this program or
7 this process, we won't need to do that anymore.
8 I can run the fingerprints in the background.

9 So, now I can take what's taking a
10 two-and-a-half minute to three-minute inspection
11 and boil that down to 30 seconds, 40 seconds, 50
12 seconds across the board for everyone but first-
13 time Visa Waiver travelers or anyone who's their
14 first visit to the United States.

15 We will always use fingerprints as the
16 basis of our law enforcement checks.

17 Fingerprints have been used for a hundred years
18 in law enforcement and we will continue to do
19 that. It's just we don't need to collect them on
20 every time we see you. We can use another
21 biometric to match you up to your identify.

22 So, why facial recognition? A lot of

1 people ask us that. It has the potential to
2 provide a seamless, frictionless travel
3 experience throughout the airport environment and
4 also increase the way in which we vet people.

5 The tricky thing with vetting is you
6 can type any name, address or date of birth. We
7 always validate it against documents. But if we
8 could begin to attach photographs or people's
9 identities with biometrics, think about how we
10 can also reduce the number of people who get
11 caught up in that I have the similar name of
12 someone else. This will only aid and help us.

13 It will enhance security and improve
14 various processes and hopefully -- what we're
15 attempting to do is work hand in hand with the
16 airline industry. We have to do it.

17 We --- the work we've done here over
18 the last several years has only demonstrated that
19 we're all in this together.

20 So, while there's still a conversation
21 to be had ultimately about the front-end and the
22 cost and the fee, I think what we're trying to

1 do, though, is work to find a process that can
2 meld into the current airline and airport
3 processes without being a blocker to travel.

4 So, that is it in a nutshell. I do
5 want to say that land of course is -- the same
6 principals here that we're using in air, we can
7 do with land. There are frequent crossers who
8 cross every day. I can build a separate gallery
9 for them and hopefully match them up on the
10 pedestrian side.

11 So, we're going to do some work in
12 pedestrian. You'll see some of that towards the
13 end of the year.

14 We also can begin work with third
15 country nationals, folks who maybe fly into
16 Canada or Mexico, come into the United States for
17 a day or two and then leave and their intent is
18 to fly home from Mexico or Canada.

19 We can implement processes on the land
20 border in the nearer term that should not clog up
21 any traffic. I mean, we're also very sensitive
22 to the land border.

1 So, I think you'll see a lot of
2 progress being made on the --- in this front in
3 the next few months. You'll see that we are ---
4 JetBlue already announced their work from their
5 Boston to Aruba flight. We are working with them
6 on that.

7 We've been working with Delta Airlines
8 and Atlanta Airport down in Atlanta. And then
9 we've just recently --- tomorrow is the real
10 launch, but we soft launched biometric exit at
11 Dulles Airport working with NWA. And, of course,
12 this is an Emirates flight that's departing, an
13 8380.

14 So, you'll see some more gates be
15 deployed this year and our --- we'll continue to
16 work with the private sector.

17 So, with that, I will be happy to
18 entertain any questions that you may have. I
19 think I kept it to about ten minutes.

20 CHAIR SPROULS: Dan, thank you.

21 First question is, ideally, when is
22 this rolling out?

1 MR. TANCIAR: Yeah, so, again, our
2 first new roll-outs of this new cloud-based
3 matching --- and let me just say something so you
4 can understand the speed and the privacy aspect
5 of this.

6 In order to --- if we did it all
7 through the normal --- the network channels that
8 we normally do, we probably would not get a two-
9 second response time.

10 So, we've worked very hard to find a
11 secure way to send only templated photos into a
12 cloud, which means it's only digits, ones and
13 zeroes, it's hashed, it's protected.

14 The picture that comes from the camera
15 ultimately gets hashed and protected in the
16 cloud, so there's really nothing in the cloud
17 itself that is usable.

18 It is PII, by technical definition,
19 but it's ones and zeroes. There are no photos,
20 like, you know, you can't go in there and take
21 out someone's photo. So, that's how we're
22 achieving this.

1 We have some steps to go so that we
2 can begin to scale it from what we're doing this
3 summer to a nationwide roll-out. So -- but
4 everything that we're doing, starting Dulles and
5 then several additional airports this summer, is
6 live and working in the system and those where
7 biometric exits are being recorded. And then once
8 we're ready to scale, I think you'll see it move
9 very quickly.

10 CHAIR SPROULS: Thanks.

11 Any other questions?

12 MEMBER CHARENDOFF: Dan, thanks so
13 much for the awesome presentations. Holds
14 tremendous promise.

15 I'm wondering what you --- what kind
16 of reaction you've had from international
17 travelers early on, you know. What are the ---
18 what hiccups have you seen, what kind of
19 improvements and tweaks are you making based on
20 the results of these pilot programs?

21 MR. TANCIAR: Sure. So, you know,
22 Atlanta definitely was a pilot. From there ---

1 we were calling this summer technical
2 demonstrations, because, again, they're using
3 this architected solution.

4 So, it's not so much a pilot anymore,
5 but now we're testing out really how does this
6 impact operations. We know we can match using the
7 small manifests. The algorithms continue to get
8 smarter and smarter. And so, we see that continue
9 to raise, but that's definitely one of the things
10 we look at.

11 Whether a photograph can be taken on
12 the fly or we have to pause, those are some
13 things we're looking into as well.

14 But the reaction --- and I worked at
15 Dulles this weekend. I was at the Emirates
16 flight rollout. People are actually okay with
17 it, you know. By and large, most people know how
18 to take a photo. I mean, they've done it since
19 they were a baby.

20 There are obviously some exceptions.
21 We have those exceptions. We're not going to
22 make anyone in these early go-arounds do a

1 photograph if you say no.

2 We have processes for that that exist
3 today that will be just like boarding normally.
4 Manual review of the documents.

5 So, by and large, it's been very good.
6 People, you know, give you the poses, in some
7 cases. And so --- and people kind of understand,
8 hey, this is also for my safety. I like it.
9 This is for my safety. We hear that comment over
10 and over again. And others say, wow, that's a
11 lot faster than I thought.

12 And then, of course, there are some
13 people who want to know a lot about it. And we
14 have tear sheets and information and privacy
15 impact assessments and all sorts of documents
16 that people can review if they want. But, by and
17 large, I think both our air carrier partners and
18 airline partners are so far feeling okay about
19 the process.

20 Travelers certainly are okay with the
21 process, at least from what I've personally seen
22 and heard.

1 MEMBER FERGUSON: Dan, great
2 information. And I know this is probably a
3 little premature, but as you're looking at this
4 technology and the same Emirates flight arriving
5 in the UAE, will there be an opportunity to talk
6 to other countries in terms of how that
7 information can be shared so that once that
8 flight lands they don't --- it speeds up the
9 process?

10 MR. TANCIAR: That's a great -- great
11 point, great question.

12 I think that as we begin to embark on
13 this for outbound flights, you're essentially
14 going to have, for lack of a better word, a US-
15 reviewed manifest and identity-validated
16 manifest. So, that certainly could be a good
17 conversation to have with other nations about how
18 can that impact your arrival process.

19 Same goes the other way around,
20 though. Perhaps people departing a country --
21 and we have had some discussions with New
22 Zealand. How could we get that information, that

1 biometric in advance earlier so that we can give,
2 you know, an expedited process. So, there's a
3 lot of opportunity for those discussions.

4 Now, you know, biometric and data
5 exchange is always a complex and challenging
6 conversation, but I think when everyone sees the
7 benefits not only from the law enforcement side,
8 but from the facilitation side, I think we'll
9 have the dialogue there.

10 CHAIR SPROULS: Anyone else?

11 (No audible response.)

12 CHAIR SPROULS: Great. Well, Dan,
13 thank you. That was terrific.

14 MR. TANCIAR: I think you had one --
15 I'm sorry, sir.

16 MEMBER MOTSENBOCKER: Have you had any
17 pushback at all from countries such as the EU,
18 who have very strong privacy laws? What kind of
19 conversations have you had with them and is there
20 any pushback?

21 MR. TANCIAR: Well, so this is a
22 United States requirement for our departing

1 flights. And so, all of these collections are
2 being done here in the United States on US soil.

3 So, while we certainly have good
4 relationships with the EU and have worked through
5 the PNR privacy pieces through those agreements
6 and we will work with anyone's concerns on
7 privacy, there is no -- it's US legislation that
8 mandates it.

9 And so, we are working to build our
10 system in a secure, safe manner so that there
11 shouldn't be anyone who has concerns with it.

12 But certainly we will talk to them,
13 but there's no impact because we're collecting
14 that here, which is different than the PNR where
15 that information is being provided overseas and
16 then sent here.

17 But no pushback yet that I'm aware of,
18 but we will continue those dialogues to assure
19 people of the process.

20 CHAIR SPROULS: Great. Dan, thank
21 you.

22 MR. TINCIAR: Thank you.

1 CHAIR SPROULS: Now, we'll move on to
2 the working group presentations and see where all
3 of our subcommittees are at. The first is on the
4 National Tourism -- Travel and Tourism Strategy
5 Review.

6 Todd.

7 MEMBER DAVIDSON: Thank you, John.

8 We've had some interesting discussions
9 of late, but first and foremost we are incredibly
10 grateful for Secretary Ross' call for this board
11 to undertake a review of the National Travel and
12 Tourism Strategy.

13 He asked for us to make sure that the
14 strategies are still relevant, that the goals are
15 still aggressive. He also wanted us to be sure
16 and advise him on the steps that we believe were
17 necessary in order to meet the goal contained in
18 the current strategy.

19 It's important to note for those that
20 may not have a lot of familiarity with the
21 National Travel and Tourism Strategy, that this
22 is a strategy of the federal government, not the

1 US travel and tourism industry.

2 It was written by and for the federal
3 government. It's a cornerstone document, is how
4 I look at it. It defines how the federal
5 government can and will direct its energy, its
6 time and its resources.

7 As the strategy currently states, the
8 US government plays a unique role in creating a
9 positive environment for private sector job
10 growth in the travel and tourism industry while
11 protecting resources, travelers and the public.

12 International travelers require
13 services when they apply for US visas, enter the
14 country, visit federally-managed sites and
15 navigate our transportation systems.

16 The quality of these services
17 obviously will either enhance or detract from
18 their image of the United States as a travel
19 destination and impact our ability to compete
20 globally.

21 The strategy continues by stating no
22 other nation, no other nation can compete with

1 the diversity of experiences found across the
2 United States and its territories, whether it's
3 public lands, waters, and iconic, cultural and
4 historic sites.

5 A lot has changed in the five years
6 since the strategy was first adopted. The global
7 travel market is becoming increasingly
8 competitive as other countries and new
9 destinations are aggressively competing for
10 market share. So, the secretary's call to review
11 the National Travel and Tourism Strategy at this
12 time is both a prudent and a necessary step.

13 The existing National Travel and
14 Tourism Strategy focuses on five key strategic
15 areas. And our subcommittee's deliberations to
16 date have resulted in recommending that these
17 five areas remain both relevant and central to
18 outlining how the federal government must harness
19 its whole of government approach to growing the
20 economy, expanding exports and creating jobs and
21 businesses and communities across America.

22 I'll address our in-process

1 recommendations within each of those five areas.

2 The first is promoting the United States.

3 As was stressed in this board's letter
4 to the secretary dated May 10th of 2017, creating
5 a positive and welcoming message for
6 international visitors is an essential step in
7 creating certainty for millions of international
8 business and leisure travelers that America
9 welcomes them.

10 The federal government has tools at
11 its disposal that must be deployed to communicate
12 the tourism opportunities in America to a larger
13 domestic and international audience, whether
14 those are agency websites, social media tools,
15 embassies, consulates and the use of high-profile
16 officials.

17 The federal government should
18 similarly embrace the necessary role of Brand USA
19 in its mission to promote international travel to
20 the United States.

21 America knows what it's like and what
22 the repercussions are of not having a national

1 travel and tourism organization. Documented,
2 independent research shows that between 2001 and
3 2011, America's travel and tourism industry
4 experienced what has been referred to as the lost
5 decade.

6 During these ten years, the US lost
7 fully one-third of their market share of global
8 international travel. And yet, with the formation
9 of Brand USA, the most high-functioning and
10 impactful public-private partnership found
11 anywhere at absolutely no cost to taxpayers,
12 we've been able to claw our way back.

13 A review of the results of Brand USA's
14 marketing prowess, 13.6 billion dollars in
15 incremental visitor spending, including millions
16 of dollars generated in federal, corporate and
17 personal income taxes.

18 Over 50,000 jobs supported annually
19 and an estimated 200 million dollars generated
20 through excess ESTA fees that are going directly
21 against federal budget deficit reduction are
22 evidence enough and showcase the alignment

1 between Brand USA's achievements and this
2 administration's priorities. And it provides our
3 subcommittee with the confidence necessary to
4 recommend Brand USA's continuation.

5 The secondary is enabling and
6 enhancing travel and tourism to and within the
7 United States. Again, we believe and we
8 recommend that federal agencies must continue to
9 prioritize the reduction of institutional
10 barriers to the free flow of trade in travel
11 services to expand the Visa Waiver Program.

12 As many will sometimes note in the US
13 travel and tourism industry, the Visa Waiver
14 Program is probably the best program for American
15 security with the worst possible name, because it
16 creates the illusion that we are somehow waiving
17 something for folks to be able to enter the
18 country, where nothing could be further from the
19 truth.

20 It's truly a program that provides
21 increased and enhanced security as data is
22 exchanged between the countries that become part

1 of the Visa Waiver Program. So, it's a tool that
2 serves both the economy and our security needs.

3 We want to see the enhancement of the
4 US visa processing. We want to see the work with
5 foreign governments -- as well as with American
6 state and local governments -- to assess and
7 address security issues.

8 We look for an expansion of Trusted
9 Traveler Programs and improve the processes for
10 arrival and departure --- this presentation this
11 morning is very timely for this particular
12 recommendation -- but for arrival and departure
13 and aviation security screening.

14 Our nation's posture to the world's
15 travelers can be one that America is both
16 welcoming and secure, because these two
17 principles are not mutually exclusive.

18 The third area is providing a world-
19 class customer service and visitor experience.
20 Here, we believe that the government needs to
21 take steps to ensure a high-quality experience
22 for travelers that inspires repeat visitation.

1 This is supporting workforce
2 development initiatives. This is supporting
3 small business initiatives. This is using
4 technology to provide information and interpret
5 content for non-English-speaking visitors.

6 The fourth area is coordinating across
7 government, the whole of government approach.
8 Federal agencies must continue to work together
9 with public and private partners to maximize the
10 potential of travel and tourism to create jobs.

11 The federal government must prioritize
12 its support for the travel and tourism industry
13 and take steps to better coordinate federal
14 policies and programs.

15 The secretary plays a pivotal role as
16 the chair of the US government's Tourism Policy
17 Council, a council of each federal department and
18 agency that influences the prioritization of the
19 travel and tourism industry within this
20 administration and coordinates the efficient
21 implementation of this strategy. That must be
22 continued.

1 And the fifth area is conducting
2 research and measuring results. Public and
3 private parties need up-to-date information to be
4 able to make smart decisions, to track the
5 results and to be --- continue to be held
6 accountable.

7 So, the federal government can work
8 with the travel and tourism industry and academic
9 researchers to make sure that we're conducting
10 research on travel and tourism industry and
11 trends.

12 Performance metrics and accountability
13 measures can be used to ensure the continual
14 progress of important goals, the goals of Brand
15 USA, the goals contained within this strategy.

16 And while I also have comments
17 regarding the Survey of International Air
18 Travelers, there's a letter in our packet from
19 Rossi Ralenkotter, who is a former national chair
20 of the US Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, that
21 actually speaks much more articulately and
22 succinctly to that.

1 And so, I will let Rossi's letter
2 carry that for me just for the sake of time,
3 John.

4 There's a sixth area not currently
5 called out as a sixth area in the National Travel
6 and Tourism Strategy that we think warrants
7 consideration, and that's transportation
8 infrastructure.

9 The president's focus on increased
10 investments in America's transportation
11 infrastructure is paramount to the health and
12 vitality of the travel and tourism industry.

13 An efficient, modern, multimodal
14 transportation network will result in a more safe
15 and secure system and a better visitor
16 experience.

17 For these reasons, our subcommittee
18 feels strongly that infrastructure warrants a
19 more significant presence in the National Travel
20 and Tourism Strategy, whether it becomes a
21 standalone strategic area of focus, or is a key
22 component of the aforementioned focus on

1 providing world-class customer service and
2 visitor services and visitor experiences.

3 This brings me to the goal. The
4 current goal is one hundred million international
5 visitors spending \$250 billion by the end of
6 2021.

7 With \$246 billion being estimated to
8 have been spent by international visitors
9 recently, we have essentially met the spending
10 goal even while lagging in the overall visitation
11 number.

12 This dichotomy is a direct result of
13 a variety of factors, including global political
14 and economic transcurrency exchange rates, and a
15 changing mix of both visitors and markets that
16 are traveling to America.

17 So, we believe that the time has
18 arrived for a new strategy, for a new strategy
19 with a new goal and a new ten-year time line.

20 This administration has before it the
21 opportunity to demonstrate its awareness and
22 appreciation of the role and importance that the

1 travel and tourism industry plays in the nation's
2 economy.

3 We believe this will best be
4 accomplished through the development of a new
5 ten-year National Travel and Tourism Strategy
6 that focuses the goal squarely on the spending of
7 international visitors to the US.

8 The focus on spending is not done at
9 the detriment of tracking visitor volume, but
10 instead recognizes the economic reality that it
11 is the spending that drives the economy and
12 creates jobs.

13 And it also brings America's unit of
14 measuring success in line with the International
15 Monetary Fund and the means whereby we track the
16 export value of all other American products and
17 services.

18 This morning you're going to be
19 hearing, following me, a number of important and
20 substantive recommendations. At the request of
21 Secretary Ross, this Travel and Tourism Advisory
22 Board will then be prioritizing all the various

1 recommendations that you'll hear here this
2 morning.

3 Our subcommittee will then use these
4 priority recommendations as variables in our
5 formula for establishing a well-informed and
6 aggressive new goal for the secretary.

7 The goal that our subcommittee will
8 then provide to the secretary later this month
9 will be solely predicated on the adoption and the
10 enactment of the priority recommendations yet to
11 come from the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board.

12 John, thank you.

13 CHAIR SPROULS: Todd, thank you very
14 much.

15 What I'd like to do is move through
16 the four reports of the four working groups, and
17 then we'll open the floor to questions for
18 everybody so that we can get everybody's input so
19 we have it all on the table.

20 Bruce, facilitating travel.

21 MEMBER CHARENDOFF: Well, on behalf of
22 the Facilitation Subcommittee, which includes

1 Kurt Ekert, Adam Goldstein, Steve Morrissey,
2 Ernie Wooden, Helane Becker and Henry Cruz, I'm
3 delighted to give you a status check on the
4 subcommittee's progress.

5 Many of the issues that I'll mention
6 have been pre-staged by what Todd has presented
7 maybe with a few additional additions.

8 Our subcommittee has received
9 briefings from several folks, including Dan
10 Tanciar and Suzy Shepherd, who I see over there,
11 at CBP.

12 We've had briefings from the World
13 Economic Forum and from US Travel, all of which
14 have been extremely helpful in focusing our
15 subcommittee's work.

16 So, we very much took to heart the
17 idea that for the new administration and for
18 Secretary Ross particularly, security needs to be
19 at the center of any recommendations that come
20 from the TTAB.

21 So, we've started from the familiar
22 premise that world-class security and world-class

1 facilitation can exist side by side, but we're
2 doubling down on the notion that if we strengthen
3 some of the government's finest security
4 programs, we can increase the chances of catching
5 criminals and actually make the travel experience
6 better and more free of friction for the vast
7 majority of travelers who pose no harm to our
8 nation.

9 So, what are these programs? They
10 start with the Visa Waiver, pre-clearance and
11 Trusted Traveler Programs, three of the best
12 programs that the government has designed in the
13 travel space in recent memory, perhaps, until the
14 biometric exit program that Dan just demonstrated
15 for us and I'm going to mention some specific
16 action items that we think are relevant to
17 improving each of these programs in a second.

18 But in the course of considering these
19 specific programs, the subcommittee --- and I'll
20 give a shout-out to Ernie Wooden and his
21 colleague Adam Burke --- we came up with what I
22 thought was a very cool, big idea that I've

1 socialized with some of you and with Isabel and
2 her team.

3 The notion is for the secretary to
4 announce a public-private initiative to create an
5 umbrella brand and communications platform that
6 clarifies promoting travel security is a shared
7 responsibility between the government and the
8 industry. And it reminds travelers, and
9 potential travelers to the U.S., that they are
10 visiting a country that makes their safety and
11 security a top priority.

12 Now, one possible name for this
13 initiative could be the Secure Travel Partnership
14 --- I see Roger Dow. Hey, Roger -- which was
15 originally a U.S. Travel suggestion for renaming
16 the Visa Waiver Program. Here, it would be a
17 label that would attach to all public facing
18 security programs.

19 This secure travel partnership idea
20 could be an answer to Secretary Ross' charge to
21 find an I Love New York-style branding
22 proposition that would stress this commitment to

1 safety and security. And the beauty of it is
2 that it could end up being a clever way of having
3 the administration market a welcome to low and
4 no-risk travelers.

5 We're planning to recommend that the
6 secretary create a public-private task force
7 among the Departments of Commerce, State and
8 Homeland Security, along with the TTAB, U.S.
9 Travel and Brand USA, to develop the secure
10 travel partnership value proposition, which
11 would, among other things, involve message
12 creation, marketing, branding and a communication
13 strategy.

14 At the end of all this we imagine a
15 logo that could be put on public and private
16 websites, kiosks, Trusted Traveler enrollment
17 pages and more touting the secure travel
18 partnership.

19 We also received a thoughtful comment
20 from Brian Rothery that we might consider
21 developing a secure travel pledge again taking
22 the public-private shared responsibility element

1 to a higher level.

2 I suspect there are many creative
3 things that we could do with this and that will
4 be the goal of the task force.

5 Part of the idea here is to
6 communicate with the international traveling
7 community about security programs in a new and
8 positive way. So, they're not viewed as a
9 hassle, but as programs that help those who pose
10 no risk to navigate through checkpoints in a more
11 efficient way with much less friction.

12 So, of course, in addition to the
13 branding and communications exercise, we're also
14 developing some concrete recommendations on how
15 to strengthen the government programs that I've
16 described that will all be contained within this
17 branding umbrella of secure travel partnership.

18 First is the Visa Waiver Program, as
19 Todd mentioned. We'd recommend that the name be
20 changed through congressional action to reflect
21 more clearly the security aspects of the program.

22 We'd also recommend that the program

1 respond to various vulnerabilities, including
2 strict enforcement of information sharing and
3 lost passport requirements, implementation of the
4 ban on VWP travel for those who have traveled to
5 high-risk countries, and better physical
6 inspection of passengers and luggage.

7 We'll also support the broad
8 implementation of functioning biometric exit
9 programs we've heard about today, which we know
10 is a prerequisite for Visa Waiver Program
11 expansion.

12 On the pre-clearance program, today
13 the program is available 15 airports in six
14 countries. It pushes out our borders and ensures
15 that those who pose a threat are stopped before
16 they even board a flight to our country. We'd
17 like to see that program expanded and made more
18 customer-friendly.

19 We'd also like to leverage the private
20 sector relationships across the travel and
21 tourism ecosystem to convince foreign governments
22 to adopt the program.

1 We've had conversations with Margaret
2 about some of the inbound challenges that US
3 airports are facing with this program and they
4 also need to be -- need to be addressed.

5 And then on the Trusted Traveler
6 program side, we're still developing our thinking
7 about recommending a global Trusted Traveler
8 Program where information sharing and
9 internationally-recognized standards would be the
10 order of the day.

11 One enrollment, can you imagine, could
12 one day allow you to have trusted traveler
13 benefits throughout the world. The World
14 Economic Forum and Marriott have done
15 extraordinary work in this space that we are
16 attempting to draft on.

17 So, one final thought concerns
18 funding. Underlying all our recommendations is
19 the need for secure, reliable, adequate funding.
20 We're not going to suggest that funding for Brand
21 USA be bled off to pay for these programs, which
22 of course we think is wholly misguided.

1 Instead, we go back to a previous
2 recommendation, which we hope the secretary will
3 take to heart.

4 Specifically, we need to stop
5 diverting the funds that are collected for
6 security purposes to deficit reduction and to
7 other programs.

8 The amount of funding diverted in 2016
9 was \$1.25 billion, which dwarfs the hundred
10 million dollars in federal matching funds for
11 Brand USA.

12 If security is the top priority of the
13 administration, and I think it is, then we hope
14 there will be allies in stopping the improper use
15 of these funds.

16 So, that's our report. Thanks to
17 those who have provided input. Look forward to
18 getting more of it and turning these ideas into
19 priority recommendations that will resonate for
20 Secretary Ross. Thanks.

21 CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you, Bruce.

22 On communications strategy, Brad.

1 MEMBER DEAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 I have the privilege of presenting
3 recommendations on behalf of the Communications
4 Working Group. Our task was to identify some
5 top-line strategies on messages and methods that
6 will help to ensure the United States remains a
7 welcoming destination while also ensuring
8 national security.

9 And I do want to thank the members of
10 the working group for their participation. We've
11 had several meetings and very robust discussions.
12 So, thank you to George Aguel, Mike Gallagher,
13 Taylor Hoang, Susan Presby, Olga Ramudo and Gary
14 Schluter.

15 Mr. Chairman, we've had a number of
16 discussions of communication strategy and we came
17 up with seven recommendations, but we'd like to
18 really focus on the top three today that we think
19 are timely, important and very necessary.

20 The other four recommendations we
21 still think are important and merit
22 consideration, but there's a good deal of overlap

1 with those in the other two working committees
2 you've heard today. And so, we'll focus our time
3 on the three that we think are most important.

4 The first will be no surprise to the
5 members of TTAB. It aligns very closely with the
6 letter that we all approved and, Mr. Chairman,
7 you sent to Secretary Ross and that is the
8 importance of a welcoming message being delivered
9 by the administration. And I don't think that
10 could be stated any more importantly and urgently
11 than today.

12 We believe that the administration
13 must deliver a clear, pervasive message that
14 reassures global travelers that the United States
15 aspires to remain the safest nation in the world,
16 while also welcoming all travelers who pose no
17 threat to our nation's security.

18 And we think that those are not
19 mutually exclusive goals. We think we can grow
20 inbound international travel and tourism, but
21 also protect our national security. We don't
22 believe those are mutually exclusive goals.

1 The administration has made it very
2 clear of its commitment to providing national
3 security, but I think many of the Communications
4 Working Group members feel the administration has
5 been largely silent on the importance of growing
6 inbound international tourism.

7 Hopefully, that will begin to change.
8 I know with Secretary Ross attending IPW and
9 other opportunities, hopefully we will hear more
10 about that, but, frankly, we think those two
11 goals need to be married.

12 And while we all agree that the
13 private sector plays an important role in
14 delivering that welcoming message, frankly, the
15 private sector can't speak for the president.
16 So, it needs to come from the top of the
17 administration on through Secretary Ross and
18 other key messengers of that.

19 We don't believe that there's any
20 inherent damage or cost, if you will, of
21 delivering that balanced message. In fact, we
22 would recommend it be a purposeful message.

1 So, as we're talking about measures
2 that might confuse the issue of being a welcoming
3 nation, travel bands and whatnot, that there
4 should and could be a purposeful message that we
5 welcome those travelers who pose no threat.

6 As was pointed by one of my
7 colleagues, that is a message that has no cost
8 unless it's not delivered. And so, we think it's
9 very, very important that that message come
10 through loud and clear.

11 And we know that when it does come
12 from the administration, Brand USA and the
13 private sector will willingly and eagerly help
14 amplify that message.

15 And that leads to a second
16 recommendation, Mr. Chairman. And this is that
17 the secretary through his pivotal role as the
18 head of the Tourism Policy Council, initiate a
19 collaborative effort amongst all government
20 agencies to amplify the welcoming message that
21 Brand USA delivers.

22 It comes as no surprise, I'm sure,

1 that the members of this working group will leave
2 Brand USA as an essential, highly-effective
3 public-private partnership that should continue.

4 And, in fact, that was one of the
5 secondary goals that we concur with Todd's
6 working group on, but we think it's important to
7 acknowledge the importance of amplifying that
8 message.

9 And I'll give the secretary a lot of
10 credit. He actually spurred that discussion, as
11 you recall, during our previous conversation with
12 him where he talked about his infinity for the I
13 Love New York campaign.

14 And while we all recognize that, it's
15 a legendary campaign and still serves today as
16 kind of a gold standard of tourism promotion, I'm
17 sure my colleague to the left of me who knows a
18 lot more about that than I do, could attest to
19 this that one of the often overlooked, but
20 essential reasons why that campaign was so
21 successful, is it had many, many brand
22 messengers.

1 It wasn't just the destination
2 marketing organization touting "I love New York."
3 It was the mayor and every government agency and
4 taxi drivers. I mean, the visitors themselves
5 were buying T-shirts to promote New York.

6 And when you have that many messengers
7 with that message, it's no longer just a tag
8 line, it's now a true brand message.

9 We think the same thing needs to
10 happen with Brand USA's message. So, where
11 they've developed very creative media assets like
12 videos, those need to be running in every embassy
13 and every place where a visitor might see those.

14 And it's not just the advertising
15 message of Brand USA that needs to be pervasive
16 throughout government agencies that deal directly
17 with foreign visitors, not just in the marketing
18 realm, but also in the operational realm.

19 Now, we're not so naive to think that
20 there aren't protocols and other priorities,
21 security of course being one of those, but we,
22 again, don't see any reason why we can't present

1 ourselves as a welcoming destination while also
2 aspiring to be the safest country in the world.

3 And so, we would like to see the
4 secretary use his position as the head of the
5 Tourism Policy Council to influence the other
6 government agencies to be brand messengers, if
7 you will, and help amplify the Brand USA message.

8 And then the third, Mr. Chairman, is
9 timely -- in fact, could not be more timely --
10 and that is that we feel like we're at a very
11 historic event this week with IPW, the first time
12 it's ever been held in our nation's capital,
13 anticipating that this will be a great IPW.

14 And it's gotten off to a wonderful
15 start. We have every reason to think that it
16 will end just as well as it has started.

17 We have all these global partners that
18 are here. There was energy and enthusiasm. We
19 think there's an opportunity to continue that
20 momentum after IPW and we would like to recommend
21 the secretary initiate strategies that will
22 continue that momentum based upon the energy that

1 we all are going to witness this week with our
2 global partners. It's not just an IPW message
3 that's welcoming, but that message should
4 continue on.

5 And so, we got into a lot of detailed
6 discussions about how the secretary and the
7 administration might be able to do that. I'm
8 happy to share those at a later date, but the key
9 thing is to not let the momentum created from
10 this epic IPW stop here, but rather continue on.

11 Mr. Chairman, those are the three main
12 recommendations. The others, just for note, was
13 to affirm the importance of Brand USA, to affirm
14 the importance of the SIAT as a communications
15 tool.

16 And while we're encouraged to see
17 there could be more money, we're also a little
18 worried, frankly, that if those ESTA funds are
19 not available, that SIAT could go away. And so,
20 that's bothersome.

21 The importance of revisiting the
22 national strategy particularly with an economic

1 goal that I think most of our committee felt like
2 that was an appropriate pivot.

3 And then last, but certainly not
4 least, we also discussed the need for that
5 collective identifier for all of these measures
6 that Bruce referred to that are not just pro-
7 safety, they're actually pro-travel.

8 I think a point that often gets
9 overlooked is if there is a breach of national
10 security, we're the first industry that's going
11 to feel that.

12 So, we are a perfect partner and an
13 ally with this administration to tout those. And
14 that collective brand identifier, if you will, of
15 all those pro-security/pro-travel measures will
16 not only help us speak to our global partners,
17 but also help us speak collectively and clearly
18 to our friends on Capitol Hill.

19 So, Mr. Chairman, that is the
20 recommendation of the Communications Working
21 Group. Again, I want to thank the members and
22 thank the secretary for spurring this, what we

1 hope to be a good conversation going forward.

2 CHAIR SPROULS: Great. Thank you,
3 Brad.

4 And the fourth group, Top Priorities
5 for the Department of Commerce. Fred.

6 MEMBER DIXON: Thank you. Tricia
7 Primrose of Marriott who could not be with us
8 today, I'm happy to share her report.

9 I just want to start off by thanking
10 Dan for that incredible presentation. We thank
11 you for your teamwork and all of the partnership
12 at CBP. It is vital to the work that we're all
13 doing going forward.

14 And of course to our good friends at
15 NTTO and Isabel, thank you for your indispensable
16 work. We certainly appreciate all of that.

17 Helane, congratulations on a great
18 IPW. Your team has done a phenomenal job. And
19 as Brad has said, we all feel like we're off to a
20 great start and we're very pleased. So, thank
21 you for that.

22 As we've heard today, and this

1 committee that I'm working on, along with Tricia
2 and the rest of the team, have the inimitable
3 task of synthesizing all of these priorities for
4 the working group.

5 The industry is actively looking at
6 ways to share our insights on issues of
7 importance to the more than 15 million people
8 across the 50 states whose livelihood depends
9 upon a thriving travel and tourism industry.

10 As the number one service export,
11 together this industry adds \$2.3 billion in
12 output to the US economy and helps reduce the
13 annual trade deficit.

14 International travel is international
15 trade and it represents a market in which the
16 United States has an historical advantage.

17 So, protecting and increasing that
18 advantage is at the very heart of the key
19 priorities our committee is working on going
20 forward.

21 We appreciate the opportunity in this
22 report to bring those efforts together, which

1 will be synthesized across the committees and
2 shared with the secretary at the June 28th
3 meeting.

4 They fall roughly into three key
5 areas, areas as you have heard mentioned already
6 today, and the importance by ranking to our
7 national economy.

8 And first and foremost, keeping the US
9 competitive in the global environmental
10 landscape.

11 Secondly, securing our nation's
12 borders and its people. And third, investing in
13 21st century infrastructure. We believe these
14 are not mutually exclusive goals, but rather
15 independent --- interdependent ways to move the
16 economy forward.

17 For the travel and tourism industry,
18 keeping the U.S. competitive means systematically
19 and directly marketing the welcome, as my
20 colleagues have mentioned, to not only counter
21 any negative perceptions, but to expand the
22 economic impact of international travel across

1 our country.

2 In line with the goal -- this goal is
3 the continued support for the work of Brand USA
4 and we cannot underline its importance, as well
5 as the Department of Commerce's own Survey of
6 International Air Travelers, the SIAT, for which
7 a lot of our work would not be possible. It
8 allows us to know and track how the markets are
9 performing.

10 The Department of Commerce has a long
11 history of working with the industry, as well as
12 other governmental agencies, to ensure that
13 border security is effective and efficient while
14 supporting the growth of our economy.

15 We know that when international
16 travelers, especially business travelers, find it
17 difficult to enter our country, American
18 businesses lose.

19 In looking forward, one way to enhance
20 and rebrand our efforts is through bilateral
21 agreements in the securing of travel partnerships
22 and getting smarter about our existing and,

1 actually, quite effective security frameworks as
2 we've heard today, such as the Trusted Traveler
3 Trograms, including VWP and global entry.

4 The industry supports efforts to
5 engage foreign governments to preserve and
6 strengthen border security in full compliance in
7 the easing of access to the United States.

8 Our infrastructure investments are
9 also critically important, as we've heard, and
10 they benefit not only domestic industries and
11 economies, but they also are modeled to the
12 travel and tourism industry.

13 These investments also enhance our
14 industry's ability to support both domestic and
15 international travel. Better and safer roads and
16 bridges are good for everyone. Better rail
17 systems make the US more independent. Better
18 airports support a strong economy.

19 Along with airport modernization
20 programs, there are new opportunities, as we've
21 heard today, with biometric exit. All of these
22 deserve support and prioritization.

1 The committee looks forward to
2 discussing these priorities further with all of
3 you and incorporating the ideas and concepts from
4 all of the working groups into this synthesized
5 joint effort report, which will be shared with
6 the secretary at the June 28th meeting.

7 And we ask that the chair show their
8 draft recommendations with the Top Priorities
9 Working Group as soon as possible. Thank you
10 very much.

11 CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you, Fred.

12 And thank you to all of the working
13 groups. A tremendous amount of work in a very
14 short period of time. And as I said earlier, I
15 really want to echo it's because we've got the
16 right people at the table with respect to this
17 board, that we're able to turn those kinds of
18 things around and come up with recommendations
19 that are impactful and actionable, which is what
20 we've been asked to do.

21 I'm going to open the floor, but I
22 would like to take out of order the public

1 comment portion. We're trying to accommodate a
2 couple people's schedules and we have two or
3 three folks that want to have public comment.

4 So, I would ask them to keep their
5 remarks to two or three minutes and, Brian, you
6 have the list.

7 MR. BEALL: Oh, great. Yes. If
8 anyone is interested in public comments, I think
9 we had a few people who expressed interest.

10 We have a podium in the corner. We'd
11 invite you to use that to provide your comments.
12 And first, I believe we have comments from Roger
13 Dow, please. Thank you.

14 MR. DOW: Much more formal than I'd
15 like to be. I just want to say "thank you."
16 Thanks for being here, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for
17 giving me a minute on the program and, Izzy, for
18 hosting this at IPW, because it's really a great
19 opportunity.

20 Our theme is one big welcome and we're
21 going to have 500 journalists and 1600 of the
22 biggest buyers of travel go home somewhere and

1 say how welcome they felt, that that's how
2 important.

3 I just want to say this group is so
4 important. I don't sit at the table like ---
5 well, I stole a seat at the table for a minute,
6 but it's great to be here because, as you said,
7 this is serious work.

8 I'm really seeing this group become a
9 serious group that's really making a difference
10 working with Commerce together on the issues that
11 were so well expressed by the committees.

12 One thing I think is so important for
13 us to --- I'd just like to say, is high travel to
14 other parts of business.

15 We're seeing that \$2.3 trillion
16 industry. But when you think about it, the
17 Robert Trent Jones Golf Course that brought all
18 the manufacturing to Alabama and the plants, the
19 real estate --- I live in Florida, and all the
20 foreign languages I hear from international
21 buyers buying real estate.

22 You look at retail and all these

1 things that happen, and I totally echo what was
2 said so well about the importance of Brand USA.

3 So, I just want to thank you for the
4 opportunity to be here. This committee is so
5 important. I thank the secretary for continuing
6 its viability and welcome to IPW. Thank you.

7 CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you, Roger.

8 Do we have any other public comments?

9 MR. BEALL: Our next comments are from
10 Laura Mandala.

11 MS. MANDALA: Good morning, everyone,
12 and thanks for the opportunity to offer my
13 perspective on the Survey of International Air
14 Travelers.

15 My firm is Mandala Research. We've
16 been in business for 20 years looking at travel
17 and tourism specifically.

18 I had the honor of serving as a Travel
19 and Tourism Advisory Board member from 2012 to
20 2013, which time I co-chaired the Research
21 Subcommittee with my colleague Rossi Ralenkotter.

22 At that time, we had undertaken an

1 extensive review of SIAT, having formed an
2 industry task force consisting of over 30
3 industry representatives, including major
4 research firms such as Gallup, Euromonitor, TNS
5 and our respected colleague in the room, Adam
6 Sacks' organization, Tourism Economics and Oxford
7 Economics, along with university researchers and
8 major U.S. destinations and attractions that use
9 the SIAT data.

10 First, the task force agreed that SIAT
11 is the only source of data on what travelers do
12 once they're in the United States.

13 It's the only way we know how much
14 they spend, where they go once they land, who
15 they're traveling with and what behaviors they
16 engage in when in our country.

17 The spending data alone is
18 justification for SIAT as it contributes to the
19 BEA's calculation on the U.S. balance of
20 payments.

21 Second, there's consensus among
22 members of the task force on the methodology of

1 the study. Irrespective of their diverse
2 interests, these research companies, professors
3 and industry representatives readily reach the
4 consensus that the SIAT approach and methodology
5 are the most effective and accurate way to
6 collect needed data from travelers visiting the
7 United States.

8 They also agree that one change was
9 needed to SIAT, that it needed to include
10 interviews with more international travelers in
11 order to understand visitors from a larger number
12 of countries and provide even greater statistical
13 reliability.

14 I think everyone in this room will
15 agree that knowing more about travelers visiting
16 this country gives the U.S. a strategic advantage
17 and can only make us more secure as a nation.

18 We should be reminded that it is only
19 through information that we can make the most
20 informed decisions about securing our borders
21 while, at the same time, welcoming the visitors
22 who want to spend money here.

1 The Survey of International Air
2 Travelers is a critical tool that can accomplish
3 those two very important goals.

4 It enables industry to meet customer
5 demand at the same time that provides data to
6 government agencies who are making decisions
7 about the best way to maintain the security of
8 the American people.

9 CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you.

10 MS. MANDALA: And, again, thank you.

11 CHAIR SPROULS: Thanks.

12 Any other public comment?

13 (No audible response.)

14 CHAIR SPROULS: Okay. If not, then I
15 will open the floor to the full board with
16 respect to any comments around the four working
17 group reports that we've heard.

18 VICE CHAIR McKEOUGH: John, just let
19 me echo a number of --- your thanks to the four
20 chairs that worked very, very hard in leading so
21 many members of this board in the committee work
22 that was done.

1 I couldn't help but notice as I
2 listened to all of them, some very common themes
3 which I think will be very helpful to us in
4 trying to prioritize our focus and
5 recommendations to the secretary.

6 So, I just wanted to thank you for all
7 the good work and recognize that I heard a lot of
8 common themes in there that were important to
9 every subcommittee's focus. And I think that's
10 going to bode well for us. Thank you.

11 CHAIR SPROULS: Any other comments?

12 Yes.

13 MEMBER DEAN: Just a point that came
14 up in just about every discussion we had in our
15 working group, and I think it's worth noting for
16 everyone here.

17 Oftentimes we're talking about Brand
18 USA as a promoter of travel and tourism, and
19 obviously that's an important part of what they
20 do, but it's just a part.

21 And I think one of the things we had
22 to remind ourselves is Brand USA is not just a

1 marketing agency to invite visitors to come to
2 the U.S.; it's also marketing the welcome.

3 And that's extremely important, but
4 it's also an invaluable ally to the
5 administration in helping explain the policies of
6 the administration.

7 So, I think just today if you're
8 watching the news and we get into these debates
9 and discussions on the travel ban, and regardless
10 of your views on that, if you're the global
11 travel partner and you're getting just pieces of
12 that proposal, who's going to explain that to our
13 partners?

14 And we think that's another vital role
15 that Brand USA plays. So, they're not just an
16 advertising agency for the nation, that's
17 important, but they're also marketing the welcome
18 and they're also, we believe, an invaluable ally
19 to the administration in helping explain the
20 policy. So, just want to note that.

21 CHAIR SPROULS: Thank you, Brad. I
22 totally agree.

1 Having been in the industry when we
2 did not have Brand USA, it is obvious the impact
3 that it makes for all of us and for our country.

4 So, I think we have to be cognizant to
5 your point that it's more than just an
6 advertising agency. It's way more than that and
7 it represents no different than every group that
8 represents a city or a state or other countries.

9 And our country was at a disadvantage
10 for a long period of time not having Brand USA.
11 And having seen the success and the growth that
12 it has helped to drive, I think for us to not
13 want to continue that would be very shortsighted.

14 Unless there are any other comments,
15 what I would say is, again, thank you for all the
16 work from everyone here in terms of the
17 respective working groups.

18 And we're going to try and continue
19 and stay on time as much as we can with respect
20 to trying to get these recommendations finalized,
21 brought before our overall committee so that we
22 can move them forward to the secretary with all

1 delivered speed.

2 Because the sooner we get them before
3 him, the sooner we can --- he and the rest of the
4 Commerce Department can react and, you know, ask
5 us for whatever other help they need, as well as
6 begin to take action on that, whether it be
7 within the Commerce Department, Tourist and
8 Policy Council, et cetera.

9 So, we are shooting to try to come
10 back to this committee overall telephonically
11 probably by the end of the month to say, "Here
12 are the things that we want to put together."

13 And one of the things that we'll talk
14 about between now and then is, what is the best
15 way to transmit the various working groups'
16 activities and cover it all in terms of it coming
17 from our overall board.

18 So, we'll try to figure out, you know,
19 Bruce and I talked about that a little earlier,
20 but try to figure out the -- what are the best
21 logistics to make sure this is impactful as
22 possible and represents the best thinking of the

1 four working groups, but then also of our entire
2 board.

3 So, with that, Brian, I turn it back
4 over to you.

5 MR. BEALL: Thank you, John.

6 Isabel, would you like to offer a few
7 comments?

8 MS. HILL: Yes. Again, I just want to
9 thank the working groups and let you know that we
10 will continue to work with you and drive towards
11 that final product.

12 I think now is the moment where we
13 ought to get consensus so we can do that most
14 efficiently. So, I think that will probably be
15 the next step as you all refine your discussion
16 after the input today.

17 Also, Elliott, thank you so much for
18 this great IPW. How wonderful to have this in
19 our nation's capital. And the events you have
20 put on are -- have just been spectacular and I
21 know that your mayor and everybody is really
22 very, very pleased with the way you've been able

1 to showcase our nation's capital. And speaking
2 for all of us, we really appreciate that.

3 As you know, Secretary Ross will be
4 making comments at the luncheon. And so, we have
5 some tables and Brian can talk to you about that.
6 They've been very gracious to provide the TTAB
7 members with seats.

8 Also, if you have the opportunity and
9 you haven't seen the floor if you're not here
10 exhibiting, do take the opportunity because it
11 really is quite a show down there and it
12 shouldn't be missed.

13 So, thank you so much for everything
14 you've done. Obviously we are here to help you.
15 Let us know if there's anything we can do.

16 MR. BEALL: Great. Thank you, Isabel.

17 And our next meeting we have set for
18 June 28th at 1:00 p.m. It will be via
19 teleconference. And Jen Aguinaga or myself will
20 be again following up with more information as we
21 get closer to that date.

22 As Isabel mentioned, we have three --

1 US Travel has provided --- or set aside three
2 tables for the board for lunch. If you're able
3 to join the IPW lunch, it's in the pink section.
4 We have three tables. Pink section, tables 191,
5 192 and 193.

6 And we'll be down there to help
7 everyone find their way to the tables. Thank
8 you.

9 CHAIR SPROULS: Great. Thank you,
10 Brian. Thank you, Isabel.

11 Is there anything else that needs to
12 come before the board?

13 (No audible response.)

14 CHAIR SPROULS: Then we stand
15 adjourned. Thank you all.

16 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
17 went off the record at 11:47 a.m.)
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