



## ***EBTC INFORMATION BULLETIN***

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The Olympic motto is faster, higher, stronger - and a group of Canadian and U.S. leaders say that needs to help speed the flow of traffic between the countries, as federal Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day promised there will be no lengthy border lineups during the 2010 Winter Games.

The Pacific Northwest Economic Region summit issued a border charter Tuesday with suggestions to help speed the flow of traffic between the countries, as federal Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day promised there will be no lengthy border lineups during the Games.

Day welcomed the suggestions, saying some are already being put in place while others are under consideration.

"The 2010 Olympics, there is going to be a great amount of resource and planning at the border," Day said in a luncheon speech to the summit, a gathering of business and political leaders taking place in Vancouver.

"We are not going to have those long, multi-hour lineups at the border that some people are talking about. I want to give you that assurance today."

Part of border management during the Games will likely involve tighter security at crossings, but the price tag for security measures hasn't yet been revealed by the federal government.

Day acknowledged Tuesday that the initial figure presented when Vancouver won the bid for the Olympics was too low.

"We've got some numbers that we're just finalizing and going over with the B.C. government," he told reporters.

"It's going to be more than \$175 (million) clearly, and the exact numbers will be out pretty soon."

Business and government officials agreed security is a priority but said it's equally important that it doesn't impede the flow of traffic and business between Canada and the U.S.

The charter called for the implementation of frequent-traveller programs that use new technologies like radio frequency identification that help speed people through the border. While thousands of Americans are already using such programs, fewer Canadians are because Canadian technology is not as developed.

Commercial vehicles now take longer than ever to get across borders and tourism from the U.S. into Canada is plummeting, the group said.

The charter also calls on the federal governments to beef up border staffing and develop better traffic management procedures for peak times.

"At some of the border points already the plans are in place for infrastructure to move from four lanes to 10 lanes," Day said.

"Staffing is going to be a challenge but we are up for that challenge."

An estimated 5,000 additional people and 2,500 cars will cross the border each day of the Games than normally do, said B.C.'s Minister of Public Safety John van Dongen, who is also the vice-president of the group.

"We appreciate the work done to date; there's more work to do before the region plays host to the 2010 Winter Games," he said.

And no one wants the legacy of the Olympics to be how long people sat in line at the border, said Stephen Regan, president of the Council of Tourism Associations. "We have an unprecedented opportunity to showcase what a welcoming border, what a secure border we have," Regan said.

Vancouver Olympic organizers have said repeatedly that to them the Games aren't about security. "The Games are about sport, celebration, culture and nation building," said Terry Wright, executive vice-president of services and Games operations.