

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS FOR CROSS-BORDER TRIPS NOT WELL UNDERSTOOD: STUDY

Survey of Americans and Canadians reveals confusion as details unfold about new U.S. travel requirements

TORONTO, March 31, 2006 – There is considerable confusion in the United States and Canada about what is currently required to travel to the other country, a new survey indicates, with about three in ten people mistakenly believing that they must present a valid passport to customs officials.

The survey by TNS Canadian Facts, in consultation with the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC), found that while driver's licences and birth certificates are currently acceptable forms of ID, 32% of Americans and 29% of Canadians believe that a passport is required for travel across the border.

In the U.S., another 24% indicate that they are not sure what is required, meaning that fewer than half of Americans have a clear understanding that they do not currently need to show a passport to visit Canada.

"In the U.S., the misconception that a passport might be required is surprisingly high, even among those who have recently travelled to Canada," said Richard Jenkins, vice-president of TNS Canadian Facts.

Fully 35% of Americans who have travelled to Canada for an overnight pleasure trip within the past two years believe that a passport is currently required.

"In combination with other factors, such as the rising Canadian dollar and increased cost of gasoline, there is little doubt that misconceptions about travel ID requirements are having a negative impact on travel from the U.S. to Canada," Jenkins added.

The U.S. government passed legislation in 2004 that will require all travellers from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, Bermuda and Panama to carry a passport or other secure, accepted document to enter the U.S., including returning Americans. The new requirements are set to take effect December 31, 2006 for travel by air and sea, and one year later for travel by land.

"Having two separate implementation dates may seem impractical, but because the rules execute legislation passed by the U.S. Congress, it's unlikely their implementation can be delayed," noted TIAC President and CEO Randy Williams.

"In any case, doing so would simply prolong the confusion and uncertainty that are currently keeping some people away from the Canada-U.S. border. To some extent, the damage has already been done," said Williams.

Canada's tourism industry is focussing on how the new passport rules will be implemented, in order to mitigate the effects of the new requirements. "We want to ensure that the Canada-U.S. border remains secure without adding undue cost and inconvenience to legitimate travellers," said Williams. He believes that the recently announced PASS card is a step in the right direction, but warns that much more needs to be done.

The PASS (People Access Security Service) card was announced in January 2006 by the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, and is currently in the development phase. The card will have biometric features and will be available as an alternative to a traditional passport for use by U.S. citizens crossing land borders into Canada.

On a general level, Americans appear to show modest support for the idea of some form of a new secure ID document for travel. While details of the PASS card remain unclear, one-third say that a new form of travel ID would make trips between the U.S. and Canada easier, while only 19% disagree, and about half are neutral.

“We need easy-to-obtain and affordable passport substitutes, developed jointly by the United States and Canada, effective border management plans, and extensive public information and awareness campaigns,” said Williams.

Added Jenkins: “Given the confusion today about cross-border travel requirements, there is an opportunity to inform Americans that travel to Canada does not currently require a passport, and may in fact be easier than they believe.”

The *Travel ID Requirements* study was conducted by TNS Canadian Facts, in consultation with TIAC. For the study, a survey was administered online between January 26th and January 30th in the U.S. and Canada. E-mail invitations were sent to nationally representative samples of the TNS 6th Dimension Internet access panels in both countries. The panels comprise hundreds of thousands of individuals who have agreed to participate in survey research from time to time. Over 1,000 interviews were completed in each country: 1,702 in the U.S and 1,127 in Canada. The survey results are representative of the online U.S. and Canadian adult populations and are considered accurate to within three percentage points (2.4 in the U.S.; 2.9 in Canada), 19 times out of 20.

TNS Canadian Facts (www.tns-cf.com) is one of Canada's most prestigious full-service marketing, opinion and social research organizations.

About TNS

TNS is a market information group:

- The world’s largest provider of custom research and analysis
- A leader in political and social polling
- A major supplier of consumer panel, media intelligence and TV and radio audience measurement services.

TNS operates across a global network in over 70 countries, allowing us to provide internationally consistent, up-to-the-minute and high quality information and analysis.

The group’s employees deliver innovative thinking and excellent service to local and multi-national clients worldwide. In the custom business, they combine in-depth sector knowledge with expertise in the areas of new product development, positioning and segmentation research, brand and advertising research and stakeholder management.

TNS' strategic goal is to be recognized as the global leader in delivering value added information and insights that help our clients to make more effective decisions.

TNS is the sixth sense of business.

www.tns-global.com

About TIAC

The Tourism Industry Association of Canada is the national private-sector advocate for Canada's \$57.5 billion tourism industry. It performs a unique and pivotal role in ensuring the Canadian business and policy environment works for tourism, by communicating its importance to Canadians, advocating positive measures, and lobbying government for action. (www.tiac.travel)

###

Media Contacts:

Richard W. Jenkins

Vice President, Corporate Director, Public Opinion Research
TNS Canadian Facts
Tel: (613) 230-4799
e-mail: Richard.Jenkins@tns-cf.com

John Mohler

Senior Research Associate
TNS Canadian Facts
Tel: (604) 668-3309
e-mail: John.Mohler@tns-cf.com

Margot Booth

Director of Communications and Public Relations
Tourism Industry Association of Canada
Phone: (613) 238-6251
Cell: (613) 222-8382
e-mail: mbooth@tiac-aitc.ca