

CONNECT Presents 13th ANNUAL NORTHEAST TRADE & TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE

The 13th edition of New England's largest and most comprehensive annual trade and transportation conference is coming to Newport, Rhode Island March 18-20, 2009. Logistics and customs professionals from the entire Northeast are preparing for two and a half days of intensive programming featuring nationally recognized speakers from government and industry, panels and workshops on the essential developments in exporting and importing, and solid networking events

The Coalition of New England Companies for Trade (CONNECT) will present the Annual Northeast Trade and Transportation Conference March 18-20, 2009 at the historic Hotel Viking in Newport, RI. The traditional Gala Reception and Dinner will again be hosted at Newport's famed OceanCliff mansion on March 19th.

Demonstrating the national stature of this event, this year's "T&T" will offer premier speakers addressing US Customs, transportation and international trade subjects. Included are Mortimer Downey, the leader of President Obama's transportation transition team; newly appointed CBP Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations, Tom Winkowski; Executive Director of the Port of Seattle, Tay Yoshitani; Washington, DC insider Peter Friedmann. Keynoter Downey has served three Presidents, first as the Executive Director of the nation's largest transit agency, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), then as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation for President Clinton, and most recently as Barack Obama's Transportation Team Leader.

The T&T kicks off on Wednesday afternoon, March 18, with the full program of experts focused on export compliance and air cargo security, followed by the "Off-The-Record" Session – a unique opportunity for all conference attendees to engage in open discussion of all manner of trade and transport concerns facing New England's trade and logistics professionals. No press and no government officials are admitted, to allow for a frank conversation; what's right, what's wrong, what can be improved.

The ambitious agenda for Thursday and Friday features 30 industry and government leaders and experts who will deliver valuable insight into the most urgent and sometimes controversial challenges in today's rapidly changing domestic and international transportation and logistics marketplace: air, truck and ocean freight, logistics, security, pricing trends, supply chain service, risk management, transportation infrastructure, consolidation, in the current economic environment. Additional panels will focus on the changing role of US Customs and Border Protection in imports and exports with an in-depth review of crucial industry topics: 10+2, Automated Export System (AES) the Lacey Act, CBP automation system, and ACE. Trade advice and opinions will be offered by the annual panel of CONNECT-member attorneys.

"The CONNECT T&T will be this year's essential opportunity to be fully briefed on the fast-paced changes in the regulation of the global logistics industry," said Bette Little, CONNECT VP and Senior Manager Customs U.S. Global Logistics, Reebok-adidas Group.

"We know that this annual conference is enormously valuable to the attendees," said Luiz da Costa, Genzyme Trade Compliance Manager and CONNECT Board member, "because our members tell us that it is one of the first items they put in each year's budget and training schedule. They also know that terrific networking opportunities each evening will complement the intensive learning activities offered each day."

For further details on the CONNECT "T&T" Conference, go to www.connect.org.