



HAUDENOSAUNEE

MOHAWK - ONEIDA - ONONDAGA - CAYUGA - SENECA - TUSCARORA

HAUDENOSAUNEE DOCUMENTATION COMMITTEE

C/O Onondaga Nation Communications Office
258C Route 11A Onondaga Nation Territory (via Nedrow, NY) 13120
www.onondaganation.org

Tel. (315) 492-1922
cayugaconnect@netzero.com

News Release

Tonawanda Seneca Nation Territory - February 27, 2009

Border Crossing

On January 1, 2009, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) instituted a new "informed compliance" policy. This policy gives border agents new instructions about informing travelers about the border crossing rules that will be in effect starting June 1, 2009. Our current Red Cards will still be recognized until at least June 1. If you or anyone you know is told by a CBP agent that your Red Card is not acceptable for passage into the US by land or sea, please take the name of the agent and contact Cherri Morris of CBP in Washington, DC at 202-344-3325.

MOA with US

During late Summer of 2008, CBP distributed a draft template of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with tribes and Nations on Indian-issued ID cards to be recognized for crossing the land borders into the US. Such an MOA would be a government to government agreement between the Haudenosaunee and the US that would include only provisions acceptable to both. In October, CBP came to Onondaga Nation Longhouse to discuss the MOA as well as our concerns about the border crossing rules. The HDC reviewed the template MOA, drafted a counter-proposal based on our concerns, and sent it back to CBP. The HDC also met with CBP in Washington, DC to discuss the MOA. To date, the US has acknowledged receipt of our edits of the draft MOA and has accepted some of our requirements, such as the requirement that our cards be recognized for Haudenosaunee citizens regardless of which side of the border they were born on. CBP has not yet made any counter proposal to our proposed MOA but continues to tell us they are working on it and will have a counter proposal for us soon.

June 1, 2009 Deadline

New documentation requirements for land and sea border crossing are set to go into effect on June 1. It is likely that many of our citizens will not have new Haudenosaunee ID cards by June 1, 2009, partly because the United States CBP has stated that our new cards must undergo 4-6 months of testing by the US before they can be used for border-crossing. The HDC has made it clear to CBP that the US will need to continue to recognize our existing Red Cards after June 1 until our new cards are recognized for border-crossing and are in widespread circulation among our people. CBP has acknowledged the need for continued recognition of Red Cards and we are working with CBP to formalize this policy in writing.

Card Manufacturer

Last July, the HDC entered into an Assessment Agreement with Siemens Enterprise Communications Inc. Siemens is the Grand Council approved ID card manufacturer chosen to develop our enhanced identification. During the assessment period, Siemens and the HDC identified the specific needs that our new card production system requires. Upon Grand Council approval of the Assessment Report, the HDC entered into contract negotiations with Siemens. This week, the HDC and Siemens signed the contract for the building of the card production system and production of the cards. Now, the HDC is entering into the building phase of our card production system. The next task is to set up our application offices, interview and hire the staff, and refine the application process. This will require a major commitment from each Nation that will have an application office.

If you have any questions or comments please contact the HDC at the numbers above, or contact your respective nation's Council of Chiefs, Clanmothers, and Faithkeepers.