



## INTERMODAL ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

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### *From the Editor's Desk*

If you're working outside Washington, sometimes it can be hard to gauge how the goings-on there will affect your business. For intermodal people, it's easy to ignore many Washington events because freight in general doesn't get much attention—or money. You might think you're about to read another plea for Congress to give freight more money. Not so. That's a subject for another month.

This month, it's time to be serious, truly serious, about the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC). Literally any day now, this issue is going to burst out into the public view and your business will be powerfully affected very soon. The rules are very clear: if you set foot in a port and want to conduct business as you do now, you will have to get a TWIC. Period.

While it has taken far longer than originally planned to get the program moving, it will be starting as early as next month. The Coast Guard is going to enforce this law, because they view TWIC as a truly critical national security step.

Consider what will happen if your people don't have a TWIC when it's required where your business operates. What will happen if 10 percent or even 20 percent of the workers you count on don't have that card by the time it's required. Certainly, nobody needs a reminder of past crises that have resulted when the supply of labor and demand to move cargo get out of whack.

Members can start to prepare for the TWIC revolution by doing just that: preparing. That means learning about the process and informing the people who will be part of the program that they must have the cards. You can help them take the steps necessary to get one as soon as enrollment, which will be done on a port-by-port basis, actually begins. Enrollment had not been started as of press time.

The first round of enrollments will be announced as soon as security officials are comfortable that the signup process works properly and the system functions smoothly at Wilmington, Delaware, the first port where a TWIC will be needed. That could be as early as September. After that, enrollment dates will be announced for each port, as well as dates when the card will have to be carried.

Learning about and starting the enrollment process early is critical. If a problem such as an old criminal conviction or immigration issue surfaces during a mandatory background check, the process will take longer. There are very specific rules for those kinds of circumstances and those rules are available for review now. There is also a waiver process, which will take additional time, if an applicant believes, for example, that a mistake has been made during background checks.

Even before the process begins, you can learn more about TWIC at the TSA Web site [www.tsa.gov/twic](http://www.tsa.gov/twic), which has extensive information. Check IANA's Web site for the latest details. IANA will send e-mails to every member whenever an important milestone, such as the beginning of enrollment, happens.