

Florida Foreign Trade Review



A monthly publication of the Florida Foreign Trade Association

Rafael Puga, President

Jorge A. Ramirez, Editor & Communications Director

For information, log on to www.ffa.com or call 305.471.0737 or 800.823.5714



OCTOBER

INAUGURAL ISSUE DEDICATED TO FLORIDA'S TRADE PIONEERS

We dedicate this issue to all those pioneers who had the vision to promote international trade in our community; we also want to express our thanks to the staff of *Florida Shipper*, who have made this publication possible.

By Jorge A. Ramirez, Editor

Almost 18 years ago, a small group of Florida business owners, decided to create a platform from where the small and medium enterprises, or SMEs, would be able to have easier access to local and international markets; thus the Florida Foreign Trade Association, or FFTA, came to be in 1985.

Since that day the FFTA has been developing initiatives that promote International Trade and which are affordable to SMEs; one key example of such initiatives is Trade USA, a program of incoming trade missions to Florida which is organized by the FFTA and supported by several private and government trade organizations such as Enterprise Florida Inc., U.S. Commercial Service – U.S. Department of Commerce, the City of Miami International Trade Board, the World Trade Center – Miami, local and foreign Chambers of Commerce and Consular Trade Offices based in South Florida, among others.

The latest initiative developed by the FFTA is this publication called the "Florida Foreign Trade Review," which is being developed with the support of *Florida Shipper*. Our segment will cover issues that have a significant impact in international trade, such as new regulations, market trends and local events. It will also include articles submitted to us by key representatives and leaders of our international trade community and a "Frequently Asked Questions" column, where readers will be able to submit questions related to international trade.

We are confident that a dynamic interaction between our readers and the trade community at large, will serve a valuable purpose, that of sharing knowledge, initiatives and opportunities that will benefit all in our community.

We look forward to receiving your comments and trade related inquiries.

MIAMI IDEAL PLACE TO HEADQUARTER FTAA

When completed in 2005, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, or FTAA, will be the largest free-trade area in the world, spanning the entire Western Hemisphere from Canada to the southern tip of Chile. It will include 34 democratic countries with a combined population of more than 800 million and a GDP between \$12 and 14 billion.

The FTAA will require a permanent headquarters (Secretariat) after 2005. This Secretariat is initially projected to house 200 people including diplomats, trade specialists and support staff. Its final location will be decided by the 34 member nations.

Until then a temporary Administrative Secretariat is rotating among several countries – Miami was its first home from 1998 to 2001; it is now in Panama City, Panama, until 2003 when it will move to Mexico City through 2005. We hope it will return to Miami in its permanent form.

Miami, as the final location for the Permanent Secretariat will offer a wide range of benefits, including superb location, ease of access and transportation, security



Hugh Simon
Florida
Undersecretary
of State for
International
Affairs

and multicultural trade support and services. Miami's political and business community is also committed to providing the Secretariat with a specially created, signature structure representing regional integration and the spirit of the Americas.

Widely known as the "Gateway of the Americas," Miami is an economic, intellectual and cultural crossroads for the Western Hemisphere. It is also seen as "neutral" territory among the many nations of the Americas and as the ideal spot for the Permanent Secretariat. Miami is the only city offering the FTAA headquarters such a wide range of benefits – making it the most logical choice for hosting the Secretariat and becoming the "Brussels of the Americas".

CITY'S ITB TO CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES

In the name of City of Miami Mayor Manuel A. Díaz and Johnny L. Winton, commissioner and chair of the International Trade Board, it is a pleasure to participate in *Florida Foreign Trade Review*.

The City of Miami International Trade Board, or ITB, is honored to work with Jorge A. Ramirez and Ralph Puga on this exciting new publication.

As a way of introducing ourselves, the ITB is responsible for planning and implementing the city's international trade promotion policies for the purposes of stimulating commercial and residential development and expanding the city's tax base through the promotion of foreign trade and local investments in accordance with the bylaws



Lazara L. Piñera
Executive Assistant,
Special Events,
Trade Missions &
Media
International Trade
Board,
City of Miami

adopted by the city.

The ITB's Board of Directors is selected equally by all the City of Miami Commissioners with one of the Commissioners serving as its Chairman. Currently there are a total of sixteen Board Members including the chairman, City of Miami Commissioner Johnny L. Winton. Of special importance, the Board strives to enlist the fullest and most active participation of the private sector and other outside organizations in the fulfillment of its objectives, thus maximizing the agency's annually budgeted resources. The ITB is staffed by three fulltime employees. They are an executive director, a senior executive assistant and an executive assistant for special events, trade missions and media.

The organization's principle trade partners include the U.S. Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Enterprise Florida and the Florida Foreign Trade Association.

In the coming months we will be contributing interesting articles that deal with the ITB's important role in leveraging international trade and commerce to create new and dynamic business opportunities in the South Florida community.



TRADE MISSION CENTER EXPANDS SCOPE AND SERVICES

Since its inception two years ago, the Trade Mission Center of the Americas (TMC) has served as Miami-Dade County's official partnership for the promotion and development of two-way trade through Miami International Airport and the Dante B. Fascell Port of Miami, which fall under the county's jurisdiction. The airport and seaport are the county's economic engines and generate directly or indirectly more than 245,000 jobs combined.



Tony Ojeda
Executive Director,
Trade Mission Center of the Americas Inc.

In 2001, the Miami's Customs District 52 did approximately \$54 billion in trade and ranked as the nation's 12th largest trade district. It accounts for 74 percent of the total trade through the State of Florida with the bulk of merchandise trade flowing through the transportation infrastructure of Miami-Dade County.

Though the county's trade statistics are impressive, a soft U.S. economy and the continued financial woes felt by many of South Florida's top-10 trading partners, mostly Latin American and Caribbean nations, have prompted a decline of 4 percent in overall trade for the first time in two decades.

Brazil became South Florida's first \$9 billion trade partner in 2000 and was poised to reach \$10 billion before September 11 further crippled the leading economies of South America and weakened a U.S. economy already in recession.

International trade agreements, economic troubles in the region and growing competition from other U.S. communities for South Florida's traditional markets all signal the need for a better-defined strategy and a comprehensive and integrated approach to trade development. The Trade Mission Center is gearing up to expand its role as a trade catalyst. Beginning in fall of 2002, the TMC will take on a global focus and aggressively cultivate more trade relationships in Africa, Europe and Asia, while strengthening existing trade links in the Americas.

The TMC will also increase its participation in incoming missions, including match-making programs, trade shows and symposia. A new name for the organization, reflecting its broadened scope, will be announced in October 2002.

In an effort to meet its mandate as a clearinghouse for information relevant to international commerce, the TMC underwrote the production of Miami Trade Numbers: A Statistical Guide to the World City, prepared by World City Inc. Miami Trade Numbers is filled with the latest data on South Florida's leading trade partners, country-specific contacts, shipping information and listings of major multinational companies.

TRADE COMMISSION OF MEXICO IN MIAMI ASSISTS FLORIDA ENTREPRENEURS

We at the Trade Commission of Mexico in Miami are delighted to participate in this newsletter and inform the business community in Florida of the wealth of trade and investment opportunities available for your firm in Mexico.



Jose Antonio Rivas
Trade Commissioner

The commission is part of the Mexican Bank for Foreign Trade, a Mexican Government Institution, whose main roles are to promote Mexican exports as well as attract foreign investment into Mexico. In Miami, we are also the Trade Section of the Consulate General of Mexico.

Mexico - United States trade flows have increased dramatically, especially after NAFTA implementation. At this moment, the interest of Mexico to increase business links with this region of the United States, is greater than ever before.

We certainly trust that this Newsletter will increase the awareness of your firm of the untapped business opportunities available for you in Mexico.

Our world-class exporters may help your company reach that competitive edge to outperform your competitors. Let us be your resource in finding the right partner in Mexico for all your outsourcing needs. Our Web address is bxtmia@bellsouth.net

U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE CAN BE A GLOBAL BUSINESS PARTNER

The Commercial Service is the global business solutions unit of the Department of Commerce.

Wide and deep knowledge of markets and industries.

A unique global network.

Inventive use of information technology.

A focus on small

and mid-size businesses. We can help your business compete and win in the global marketplace.

We take pride in public service and in knowing that our mission creates economic prosperity and more and better jobs for all Americans.



John McCartney
U.S. Commerical Service

We pursue excellence in client service and satisfaction. We develop public and private partnerships to better reach and serve our clients. Our work is meaningful and produces concrete results. We believe that diversity makes

us stronger. We reward performance, and we make integrity and accountability the solid foundation of our organization. We encourage creativity, and believe learning and change are integral to quality of service and to career development. Our leaders listen, inspire and empower.

U.S. Commercial Service: A Snapshot

- Founded in 1980
- Worldwide network of 1,800 employees
- 105 U.S. Export Assistance Centers throughout the United States.
- 151 international offices in 83 countries
- Provides comprehensive solutions to international trade challenges
- Helps U.S. firms realize their export potential
- Advocates on behalf of U.S. businesses abroad
- Follows Congressional mandate to emphasize small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- The Commercial Service serves a client base of 88,100 U.S. companies.
- CS domestic offices generated 4,627 verifiable export sales, worth \$5.1 billion, in 2000.
- CS international offices generated 4,628 verifiable export sales, worth \$16.2 billion, in 2000.

Co-workers show mutual respect. We work together in an environment that nourishes growth as team players and as individuals. For assistance from a local export assistance center, in Miami, call 305-526-7425 or 954-356-6640 in Fort Lauderdale or log on to www.buyusa.com.