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Mexico Opens Bids for Concession of Services at Four Ports

by LADB Staff

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On Feb. 27, the Communications and Transportation Secretariat (SCT) announced terms for domestic and international companies to bid on concessions to operate support services at the ports of Altamira and Veracruz in the Gulf of Mexico, and at the Lazaro Cardenas and Manzanillo ports on the Pacific Ocean. The SCT said the process for concession of these services was expected to last about six months.

The SCT announcement said bids will be awarded for 20 years for terminals exclusively handling shipping containers, and 15 years for multiple-use facilities. According to the SCT, preference will be given to those companies whose proposals offer the best opportunity for development of the ports. The contract for the multi-use terminal at Altamira will be good for 20 years, since the facility is also able to handle shipping containers. According to the terms of privatization, concessions will be open both to Mexican nationals and foreign companies. Any Mexican company that applies for the bids, however, is expected to participate in partnership with a foreign company, since Mexican companies have been severely affected by the recent downturn in the Mexican economy.

The companies granted licenses to operate the shipping terminals at the four ports will work under the supervision of private companies hired to conduct day-to-day operations. The private management companies took over the role of the government agency Puertos Mexicanos, which was eliminated in September of 1994 (see SourceMex, 09/28/94). In a separate but related matter, deputy SCT secretary Aaron Dychter told reporters at a transportation conference in early March that the Zedillo administration does not expect to sell its 34% share in Mexicana airlines anytime soon. On the other hand, Dychter said the SCT will soon open new opportunities for private companies to invest in the airport services agency Aeropuertos y Servicios Auxiliares (ASA). [Sources: Spanish news service EFE, 02/27/95; La Jornada, 02/28/95, 03/03/95; El Financiero International, 03/06/95]

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