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**Good morning,
Larry Trout.**
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DAVID THOMPSON/Sun-Gazette
Andy Hooker, second from right, general manager of Penram, gives a tour of his business to Samuel J. Cerrato III of the U.S. Department of Commerce, left, Michael A. Lally of the U.S. Department of Commerce, center, and Robert L. Elsas of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Exporting ideas

Federal agency representatives meet with local business owners to discuss opportunities overseas

By DAVID THOMPSON
Sun-Gazette Staff

Attention manufacturers: There could be a lucrative market for your products overseas and the federal government wants to help you tap into that market.

That is the message representatives of three federal agencies brought with them Monday and Tuesday during meetings with owners of area manufacturing companies.

Samuel J. Cerrato III, international trade specialist for the U.S. De-

About 90 percent of Penram customers are overseas. The company does business in 28 countries and has several more lined up.

partment of Commerce's Commercial Services Office in Philadelphia, said the collective agencies can provide "one-stop shopping" for small- to medium-sized businesses looking for

customers offshore.

Cerrato was accompanied by Michael A. Lally, director of the the U.S. Commercial Service; Thomas P. Cummings, business development officer for the Export-Import Bank of the United States; and Robert L. Elsas, regional manager of international finance of the Small Business Administration's Export Assistance Center.

The Export Assistance Center ties together the international trade resources of the Commerce Department with the financial expertise of (See EXPORTING, Page A-6)

Too soon to tell?

Police say arrests nearly unchanged under tighter drunken driving rule

By DAVID B. CARUSO
Associated Press Writer

PHILADELPHIA — Pennsylvania's tougher new blood-alcohol limit for motorists has had a minimal effect on the number of people being arrested for driving drunk, according to state police records.

About 21,000 people were arrested for driving under the influence in the six months after Sept. 30, when the state lowered the legal limit from 0.10 to 0.08 percent.

That number represents about a 4 percent increase from the 20,171 arrests during the same six-month period a year earlier, but is similar to the 21,018 arrested a year before.

Over the past five years, an average of 20,729 people have been arrested for drunken driving between October and March.

Pennsylvania was one of 14 states that adopted the more stringent blood alcohol standard last year to avoid losing millions of dollars in federal highway funding. All 50 states now use the 0.08 standard.

Doctors and anti-drunken driving groups had argued that the lower limit was a more accurate mark of when a person was too intoxicated to drive.

Critics of the law said it could lead to the arrests of thousands of "social drinkers" without having any real effect on alcohol-related crashes.

Trooper David Andrascik, who coordinates drunken driving programs for the state police, said he never believed the law would lead to a dramatic increase in arrests. He speculated that the law's more stringent limits on alcohol may have spoiled

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9/11 panel report won't say attacks were preventable

By HOPE YEN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Sept. 11 commission's final report won't declare that the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history was preventable, though some panelists said during the 20-month investigation they believed the hijackers could have been stopped.

In the end, the panel's five Democrats and five Republicans did not want to draw a conclusion on that major point, believing it could open the way to partisan sniping in a presidential election year.

"My personal view is that the intelligence system we have has been broken for a long time," said Republican commissioner John Lehman, a former Navy secretary. "But we wanted to let the American people make up their mind. They don't need our editorializing."

The 500-plus-page report will be released Thursday. Republican chairman Thomas Kean, a former New Jersey governor, and Democratic vice chairman Lee Hamilton, a former congressman from Indiana, began brief-

"My personal view is that the intelligence system we have has been broken for a long time."

John Lehman,
Republican
commissioner

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City has new assistant fire chief

Dymeck promoted after tour in Iraq

By R.A. WALKER
Sun-Gazette Staff

City firefighter David Dymeck was welcomed home from Iraq with a promotion.

Tuesday, city officials announced that Dymeck has been named assistant fire chief.

The announcement was a little belated. Dymeck was promoted three weeks ago.

But he didn't seem to mind the delay or even expect the announcement that came Tuesday.

In early March, Dymeck was called to active duty by the state's Air National Guard's 193rd Special Operations Wing. For the next three months he was in the Baghdad area before returning home in June.

According to Dymeck, the Air National Guard has been calling up personnel for three-month tours, as opposed to one-year tours some other Guard units are doing.

Prior to his call to active duty Dymeck, then classified as a fire engineer, applied for the assistant chief's position made vacant with the retirement of Fred Hunsinger earlier in the year.

Dymeck said he wasn't informed until his return that he was even under consideration for the position.

He was offered and accepted the job on June 30, he said, and reported to work as assistant chief July 1.



MARK NANCE/Sun-Gazette

Assistant Fire Chief David Dymeck stands at fire headquarters Tuesday.

In a telephone interview Tuesday, Dymeck declined to answer questions about his Iraq experience, but he said he is "supervisor of training for the 193rd fire department" out of Harrisburg.

His new duties include overseeing operations and training for the city Bureau of Fire.

Dymeck, 34, served four years active duty with the Air Force, including assignment to the Middle East during Operation Desert Storm, and eight years as an Air Guard fire protection specialist.

He is also a member of the state's Squad 2 Technical Rescue Team and recently received an associate's degree in fire science from the Community College of the Air Force.

He is married and the father of two children.

Dymeck joined the Bureau of Fire in 1993, but was one of the younger firefighters laid off due to budget cuts in the mid 1990s.

He then spent four years working as an emergency medical technician for Susquehanna Health System before being recalled by the department.

Exporting opportunities

Federal agency representatives meet with local business owners

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the Small Business Administration and Export-Import Bank.

Together, they represent a complete line of exporting resources with one goal in mind, said Lally.

"Our goal is to help companies make international sales. We operate in 83 countries through embassies and consulates whose staffs focus full-time on business development to help companies make sales."

On Tuesday, the group met with Andy Hooker, general manager of Pennram, 1315 W. Third St., which manufactures municipal incinerators.

Hooker said he knows the importance of foreign markets.

About 90 percent of Pennram customers are overseas, he said. The company does business in 28 countries and has several more lined up.

"It's the only reason we're going," he said. "If we relied on domestic sales, we'd be kaput. There's not enough domestic sales."

Pennram currently employs 15 people on one shift but has a two-year backlog on orders, Hooker said. An expanding foreign market could mean up to 30 new high-paying jobs and around-the-clock manufacturing for the company, he said.

Last year the company sold 325 units. This year it already has sold 417, he said.

"We're expanding our sales to \$7 million next year."

The agencies are focusing on smaller businesses because they account for about 70 percent of American manufacturing jobs, said Lally. Increasing exports "will create jobs, add wealth in our own country and address the trade deficit," he said.

Cerrato said his focus "is to work with companies in rural areas in Northeast and Central Pennsylvania."

"Basically, the initiative is to work with companies who would not normally have access to (export) services," he said.

Exporters have access to counseling and advocacy services, market research, international partnerships, trade events and product promotions.

Among the financial services available are low-interest loans to acquire inventory, pay for direct or indirect costs and to support foreign "irrevocable letters of credit."

Letters of credit, Hooker said, are money set aside that will be released once an exporting company reaches a certain milestone in filling an order.

Banks inexperienced with foreign transactions are often unwilling to recognize letters of credit when exporters seek more financing, he said.

Financing is available to foreign customers, often at rates much lower than they could get in their own country.

That can often make a sale more palatable, said Cummings, especially when a company from another country might be competing for the sale with a lower-priced product.

"In many of these countries, there's very little financing," he said. "Just the availability of financing is amazing."

Companies also have access to risk



Andy Hooker, second from left in top photo, general manager of Pennram, discusses his business with Samuel J. Cerrato III of the U.S. Department of Commerce, left, Robert L. Elsas of the U.S. Small Business Administration, Thomas P. Cummings of the Export-Import Bank of the United States and Michael A. Lally of the U.S. Department of Commerce. In lower photo, a sign marks the entrance to Pennram, 1315 W. Third St.

DAVID THOMPSON/Sun-Gazette

insurance that will cover 90 to 100 percent of financing if a customer does not pay due to bankruptcy, war or inconvertibility of currency.

"If you can lend money without risk, that is a good deal," said Cummings.

In addition to Pennram, the federal representatives met with the officials of six other businesses whose products have export potential: veneers, above-ground swimming pools and spas, log homes, steel manufacturing equipment and steel cable.

Three businesses from the Williamsport area and one each from Trout Run, Lewisburg, Northumberland and Deer Lake were visited.

"There's a lot of companies in this area that we feel can go international," Lally said.

Why consider exporting?

According to the U.S. Commerce Department, there are several reasons:

- Ninety-five percent of the world's consumers live outside the United States, so if a business is only selling domestically, it is reaching just a small share of customers.
- Exporting enables companies to diversify

their customer bases and weather changes in economic climate.

- Through May, U.S. exports are up 13.7 percent from the same periods last year. U.S. exports to Mexico were up more than 15 percent, to Canada up 8.4 percent, to the European Union 12.1 percent, and to China, up 37 percent.

Economic impact

- Exporting supports 12 million jobs in the U.S.
- About one in every five American factory jobs depends on exporting.
- Small businesses create 70 percent of new jobs in America. It is important to help those firms increase their exports.

Too soon to tell?

Police say arrests nearly unchanged under new DUI rule

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some people into changing their driving habits.

"The point," he said, "is for people, or the public, to have that one less drink before they hit the road."

Defense attorney John Mancke said he thought arrests would increase as police became more comfortable with the new standards.

"What I've been hearing is that some police officers may be a little unsure with the new law, and may be easing into it in terms of enforcement," he said.

Rebecca Shaver, the executive director of the Pennsylvania chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, said it is too early to measure the law's full effect.

Many of its provisions, including harsher penalties for repeat offenders and people who drive while very drunk, did not become law until February.

First-time offenders get more lenient treatment under the law.

One provision will allow a driver to keep their license if they had a blood-alcohol content of less than 0.10 percent. Previously, anyone convicted of driving while intoxicated lost their license for at least a few months.

The difference between the two levels can be as little as a single glass of wine.

Experts say a 170-pound man will reach the 0.08 percent limit if he consumes four drinks on an empty stomach within one hour.

To get to 0.10 percent, the same man would need to have five drinks.

Drunken driving arrests in Pennsylvania

Arrests for driving under the influence have remained steady in the state, despite a change that lowered the legal limit for motorists' blood-alcohol levels from 0.10 percent to 0.08 percent.

The number of arrests during the first six months under the new rules, compared to the same time-period during years under the old limit:

At 0.08:

- Oct. 2003-March 2004: 21,036

At 0.10:

- Oct. 2002-March 2003: 20,171
- Oct. 2001-March 2002: 21,018
- Oct. 2000-March 2001: 20,359
- Oct. 1999-March 2000: 21,064

Source: State Police

9/11 Commission report won't say attacks were preventable

(From Page A-1)

ing congressional leaders Tuesday and will meet with President Bush today.

Besides calling for a new Cabinet-level intelligence chief, the report will recommend combining the House and Senate intelligence committees and removing term limits from members, said House majority whip Roy Blunt, R-Mo.

Currently, the limits are set at eight years for senators and six years for House members, with some exceptions that can extend to 10 years. Blunt said removing term limits is a "particularly bad idea," explaining that members would become overly ingrained within the intelligence community.

"The process of having oversight is to have someone watching, not part of the process, but carefully watching," he said.

House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., said Congress will carefully consider the panel's recommendations but

doesn't believe there is time this year to undertake any major intelligence revisions.

In recent interviews with The Associated Press, commissioners said the report will fault Congress for poor oversight of intelligence gathering and criticize government agencies for their emergency responses to the 2001 attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania.

The harshest criticism will be leveled at the FBI and CIA, with the panel citing poor information sharing and intelligence analysis as key factors that allowed the hijackers to carry out their plot. Both Kean and Hamilton have said the attacks conceivably could have been prevented had government officials done their jobs better.

Commissioners won't point to individuals in the Clinton or Bush administrations, instead laying out what

they consider a factual accounting of events.

"What's worked for us all along is looking at what the facts are and not trying to put any spin," said Democratic commissioner Jamie Gorelick, a former deputy attorney general. "We will lay out the facts with as much particularity as we can."

However, several commissioners say those facts could lead readers to conclude the attacks were preventable had the government done a better job following up on intelligence tips and tracking the 19 hijackers, some of whom entered the country illegally.

Commissioners have said it is important for them to unanimously endorse the report so their findings and recommendations are not seen as partisan. A poll released Wednesday by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press found 61 percent of Americans believe the commission has done a

good job. The support was nearly even among Republicans and Democrats.

Still, the report is expected to provide fodder for arguments in the presidential campaign.

Advisers to Democratic candidate John Kerry have said they hope to use the report to show that in the summer of 2001 the Bush administration was inattentive to threats of a possible attack.

The Clinton administration, meanwhile, was under fresh scrutiny after federal authorities said they were investigating former National Security Adviser Sandy Berger in connection with the disappearance

of highly classified terrorism documents.

Berger said he inadvertently took some documents from the National Archives and later returned them but could not locate two or three copies of a highly classified report that concerned al-Qaida threats during the December 1999 millennium celebration.

A commission spokesman said that probe wouldn't affect the panel's final report.

Meantime, several relatives of Sept. 11 victims said Tuesday they looked forward to reading the report and hoped that discussion of the nation's "colossal systemic failures" will transcend election-year politics.

The commission plans a briefing with relatives Thursday before the report is released.

Commissioners plan an aggressive lobbying effort to push recommended changes.

