Mr. Eugenio “Gene” Garza, Jr. was appointed Port Director of the Laredo Port of Entry, first with the U.S. Customs Service; and now with U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Port Director Garza oversees the largest inland port in the United States, managing over 800 employees, four international bridges, one airport and a railroad bridge, with an annual budget of $12 million and with employees in Laredo, Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Roma, Hidalgo/Pharr and Brownsville/Los Indios.

Mr. Garza, a graduate of La Joya High School and a former resident of Sullivan City, Texas, in the Rio Grande Valley started his federal career in 1971 with the U.S. Air Force. He served as a Military Policeman where he had his first introduction to the U.S. Customs Service through the Customs Narcotic Detector Dog Training Center at Lackland Air Base in San Antonio, Texas. Mr. Garza began his civilian career as a Canine Enforcement Officer (CEO) at the Port of Laredo in 1976. A strong proponent of education, he rose through the ranks of the agency and along the way obtained a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Degree. He has held a number of supervisory positions since his initial appointment as a CEO in Laredo, serving an assignment in the Port of Eagle Pass and at the district office in Laredo as the Canine Enforcement Branch Chief prior to being named Port Director. Mr. Garza has also held various management positions at the district and headquarters level, including Acting National Canine Program Director and Canine Enforcement Chief. He has served on various task forces at the Headquarters level, where he has had to deal with broad policy issues while considering operational impact and international implications.

Chief among Mr. Garza’s myriad of assignment experiences is the fact that he has a broad understanding of complex management issues. With a bevy of field position assignments to his credit, he has gained keen operational insight and a heightened appreciation for the challenges our ports of entry face daily in maintaining border security. During the course of his career, Mr. Garza has been widely recognized as an expert in international border security management issues. He has extensive experience in border trade and has been recognized by CBP, the trade industry and the Vice-President of the U.S. for both his expertise in each of the mentioned areas and for his accomplishments. Under Mr. Garza’s leadership, the Port of Laredo has earned a number of Commissioner Unit Citations for the outstanding performance by the Laredo passenger, trade, outbound, and enforcement teams.

In 2007, Mr. Garza was recognized by Texas A & M International University, his alma mater, and the Smithsonian Institute, as a Distinguished Alumnus in the Smithsonian Institution’s Portraits of Latino Achievement. A civic-minded and community-oriented advocate, Mr. Garza is an active participant in numerous civic organizations.

On October 26, 2007, Commissioner W. Ralph Basham and Assistant Commissioner Thomas Winkowski announced the selection of Gene Garza to the Senior Executive Service as the Port Director, Laredo.
A native of Indianapolis, Indiana, David Stone began his career with the U.S. Department of State in 1978. After several years as a Civil Service personnel officer, David joined the Foreign Service in 1985 and served as Vice Consul in Mexico City and Port of Spain, and Consul in Hermosillo, Mexico. Following an assignment to Washington, David served as Consul in Yemen, Consul and Deputy Chief of the Consular Section in Havana, Cuba, and as Consul in Matamoros, Mexico from 2000 to 2003.

He earned a Master’s Degree in Strategic Studies in 2004 from the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. From 2004 until August, 2006, David was Consul General in Nairobi, Kenya. A career member of the Senior Foreign Service, he was assigned as Principal Officer (Consul General) to Nuevo Laredo in September, 2006.

Departing Nuevo Laredo later this year, David will take up his new duties as Consul General at the American Embassy in Kingston, Jamaica in late 2009. His wife, Eileen, has accompanied him to every assignment.