



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

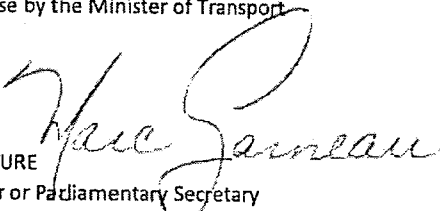
PETITION NO.: 421-03055

BY: MR. MACGREGOR (COWICHAN-MALAHAT-LANGFORD)

DATE: DECEMBER 7, 2018

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: THE HONOURABLE MARC GARNEAU

Response by the Minister of Transport


SIGNATURE
Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Marine transportation

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada recognizes that transportation safety, environmental protection and economic development must be aligned to ensure sustainable outcomes for Canadians. As a trading nation, the marine transportation system is key to Canada's continued economic and social well-being. Over 90% of goods consumed in Canada arrive at our borders by ship, and 95% of our export commodities and processed goods are carried to the rest of the world by ship.

In Canada, as in many other countries of the world, the right to navigate including anchoring is part of the common law right of navigation. A ship is generally free to anchor temporarily and for a reasonable period of time in any appropriate location.

Commercial shipping anchorages are identified based on the quality of their anchor-holding ground, shelter from high winds and proximity to shipping routes and port logistics. These criteria ensure the safety of vessels and their crew as well as the safety of other users of the water space and surrounding environment.

Although anchorages are an integral part of safe navigation, Transport Canada is very sensitive to the need to protect coastal regions.

As international trade continues to grow and commercial shipping expands to further connect Canadian exporters to global opportunities and provide Canadian consumers with the goods they need, so too will the need for safe and sustainable navigation and anchorages. That is why the Government launched the National Anchorages Initiative in 2017 with a view to responding to the changing needs of Canadians.

This initiative brings together technical experts, the marine industry, Indigenous peoples, and local communities, and takes into account local requirements and knowledge to enable the assessment of a range of considerations to both marine safety and the surrounding coastal environment.

Through the National Anchorages Initiative, Transport Canada has launched a series of studies that will examine the drivers of anchorage use, mitigation options to minimize the impact of anchorage and compare approaches used in selected countries to identify and manage anchorages outside of public ports.

Transport Canada is beginning its detailed work. The department has already heard from a number of coastal communities and will have discussions with industry, First Nations, and others.

In the meantime, Transport Canada implemented an Interim Protocol for the use of southern British Columbia (B.C.) anchorages on February 8, 2018. The Interim Protocol is a collaborative effort by Transport Canada with the Pacific Pilotage Authority, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, the Nanaimo Port Authority, the Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia and the Shipping Federation of Canada. The Protocol aims to:

- more equitably distribute vessels throughout the existing 33 anchorage locations along the south coast of British Columbia, so as not to continuously impact any single community;
- communicate with vessel Masters about the impact of noise and lights from the vessel, and request they minimize them, while still ensuring the safety and security of the vessel.

The Interim Protocol will be reviewed on an ongoing basis based on Transport Canada's regular analysis of the anchorage use data, the comments received from coastal residents as well as industry feedback. The department will share the results of this analysis as Transport Canada engages with all concerned. The interim step is providing important lessons that will help inform the work under the National Anchorages Initiative to guide anchorage management in the future.