

Minister of Transport



Ministre des Transports

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0N5

JAN 30 2017

Mr. Peter Holmes
President
Cowichan Bay Ship Watch Society
4411 Kingscote Road
Cowichan Bay BC V0R 1N2

Dear Mr. Holmes:

The Prime Minister's Office provided me with your correspondence of August 27, 2016, regarding large ships anchoring in Cowichan Bay. Please accept my apology for the delay in replying.

As you may know, our government recently announced Canada's Oceans Protection Plan, which is a \$1.5-billion investment to improve marine safety and responsible shipping, protect Canada's marine environment and offer new possibilities for Indigenous and coastal communities. The plan outlines how the Government of Canada will partner with coastal communities to develop a world-leading marine safety system that meets the unique needs of Canadians on all coasts.

Further, our government understands that Canadians, those in coastal communities in particular, need confidence that commercial shipping is taking place in a way that is safe for mariners and that protects and sustains the economic, environmental, social and cultural health of our oceans and coasts.

One element under the Oceans Protection Plan is a commitment from Transport Canada to work with partners to develop regulatory and other tools to engage coastal communities. This will allow better response to local marine traffic issues. While the national interest and economic drivers will be considered, so will other measures, such as placing restrictions on speed and routing of certain sizes and classes of ships to minimize safety risks, establishing areas to be avoided around sensitive sites and prohibiting sewer discharges near harvesting areas. Communities will be engaged in the discussions and development of these measures.

Canada

Under the Oceans Protection Plan, Transport Canada has also committed to examining ways of addressing anchorages outside Canada Port Authorities' and public ports' jurisdictions, including developing best practices for conduct at anchor.

Finally, Transport Canada does not participate in the day-to-day business decisions of Canada Port Authorities given the autonomy granted to them by Parliament.

The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, like all Canada Port Authorities, operates at arm's length from the federal government under the provisions of the *Canada Marine Act* and its respective Letters Patent. These provisions provide the boards of directors with the autonomy and authority to make decisions with respect to operational aspects of their ports' business. I encourage you to continue engaging with the Port of Vancouver regarding this issue.

Thank you for taking the time to write and for sharing your views.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marc Garneau". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the name.

The Honourable Marc Garneau, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Transport

c.c. Mr. Alistair MacGregor, M.P.
Cowichan–Malahat–Langford