

July 11, 2014

Ms. Sheila Malcolmsen  
Chair  
Islands Trust Council  
Via Email: [smalcolmsen@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:smalcolmsen@islandstrust.bc.ca)

**Subject: Regarding the issue of derelict and abandoned vessels.**

Dear Ms. Malcolmsen:

Thank you for your correspondence of April 24, 2014, which was co-addressed to the Honourable Steve Thomson, British Columbia's Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, regarding the issue of derelict and abandoned vessels. I am also in receipt of Minister Thomson's reply to you of May 28, 2014, on this issue.

As you are aware, this issue is complex and involves a wide range of legal and social issues that fall within the purview of several levels of government. Allow me to assure you that Transport Canada is working diligently with other federal departments and its provincial/territorial counterparts to develop a long-term plan for dealing with vessels of concern. Ultimately, the owner of a vessel is responsible for ensuring that his/her property is maintained and operated in a way that does not pose an environmental concern. However, this is not always the case. In response to your comments, I have included information on some of the steps Transport Canada has been taking to address this issue.

Transport Canada officials have met on several occasions with provincial agencies in British Columbia to discuss issues related to abandoned and derelict vessels. At these meetings, officials discuss the size and scale of the issue and associated remediation challenges; roles and responsibilities of the various jurisdictions; current efforts underway; and possible options going forward. Additionally, Transport Canada sits on a working group related to vessels and structures of concern along with the Province, the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and your own organization, Islands Trust.

In addition, Transport Canada officials met with officials from the State of Washington to learn about its abandoned and derelict vessels program, which has been in place for the past 10 years and which has resulted in the remediation of approximately 500 vessels. Departmental officials will consider aspects of that program for application in a Canadian context.

Transport Canada has also recently collected additional information on vessels in British Columbia that were associated with the Study of the Extent of Abandoned and Derelict Vessels in Canada. This information will provide more details on the type and locations of vessels of concern and will be used to develop a comprehensive plan related to recycling and disposal cost. These studies are also being done in other regions of Canada.

Again, thank you for writing and providing me with your comments.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Lisa Raitt, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Transport

c.c. The Honourable John Duncan, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of State and Chief Government Whip

Ms. Elizabeth May, M.P.  
Saanich–Gulf Islands

Ms. Jean Crowder, M.P.  
Nanaimo–Cowichan

Mr. James Lunney, M.P.  
Nanaimo–Alberni

Mr. John Weston, M.P.  
West Vancouver–Sunshine Coast–Sea to Sky Country

The Honourable Steve Thomson, M.L.A.  
Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations  
Government of British Columbia