

INTERIM PROTOCOL FOR THE USE OF SOUTHERN B.C. COMMERCIAL ANCHORAGES

Report #8 – Summary of Activities for September & October 2018

The Interim Anchorages Protocol for southern British Columbia commercial anchorages is a voluntary change of procedure and applies to all cargo vessels who request to anchor at one of the 33 identified locations along the south coast of B.C. It came into effect on February 8, 2018 for an initial trial period of six (6) months, and was extended in August for a further period of 12 months while the national Anchorages Initiative project completes its studies and makes recommendations for change. The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (VFPA) manages the assignment of anchorage locations along the south coast in order to balance use more equitably and ensure that no one location is overused. The protocol also includes voluntary guidelines for noise and light emissions from ships between 1900 and 0700 hours

1. HIGHLIGHTS for September

Transport Canada's National Aerial Surveillance Program (NASP) continued with its overflight inspections of coastal areas – in September, completing 17 flights along coastal British Columbia and 3 in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, for a total of 1036 ship inspections. In October, the group completed 22 coastal flights, for a total of 753 inspections. No pollution was observed from the commercial ships at anchor.

We continue to receive e-mails and letters from coastal residents asking us to discontinue the use of an anchorage, or to take additional follow up action when the lights or noise from a ship at anchor are not reduced. Readers are advised that in Canada, as in many other countries of the world, the right to navigate including anchoring, is a common law right, regardless of the ownership of the bed of the water body. Unless a vessel is violating a Canadian law, at this time Transport Canada does not have the authority to compel a ship to move, nor to change its behavior. Additional information on laws and regulations that apply to commercial ships in Canada is available at:

<https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/marinesafety/menu.htm>

However, all comments about specific sites (e.g. distance from shore, ecological impact, etc.) have been recorded and shared with the national Anchorages Initiative Project lead.

2. USAGE DATA and SUMMARIES

As mentioned in bulletin #7, and in response to many inquiries about how ships are assigned to anchorages, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority has provided us with a short summary of their assignment process. This is available for download at our Pacific Region engagement website for registered organizational representatives. If you are not a subscriber, but would like to a copy, please contact us at TC.PacificAnchorages-Ancragesdupacifique.TC@tc.gc.ca

In response to letters asking why a ship is assigned to a specific location when another is available, our data summary with this bulletin includes some new graphs showing the usage of anchorages by size of sites, showing the balancing among locations of similar size. When VFPA assign a ship to a specific location, they make every effort to match the size of the ships as closely as possible to the anchorage, so that the large sites which can only accommodate the largest vessels, are not in constant use.

We've also been reviewing data for all ships arriving to southern B.C. and share the following observations:

- Overall, the average days at anchor per stop in Vancouver from Jan 2013 – Aug 2018 was 3.5 days, whereas in the Southern Gulf Islands it was 9.2
- Roughly 42% of vessels that visited the South Coast of BC spent time anchored as part of their voyages; however, only 4.5% of all vessels anchor in the Southern Gulf Islands (SGI).

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- Vessels that anchor in SGI tend to have longer stays than those that anchor in Vancouver. SGI anchorages accounted for 16% of anchor time but only 7.1% of anchor events. The average anchor days per stay in the SGI is increasing.
 - Coal/Potash accounted for 50% of anchor days in the SGI and Grain for about 35%. These two commodities take the opposite roles when you consider overall anchorage days per voyage, where Grain accounts for about 49% and Coal/Potash for 32%. It's not clear at this time why Coal/Potash vessels account for more SGI anchor time than Grain.
 - Vancouver and SGI anchorages are similar when it comes to vessel arrival and departure times. Roughly 63-64% of ships arrive between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

The updated data set with detail on September and October has been posted on our regional engagement website, and is also available on request with an e-mail to our Pacific Anchorages desk.

3. CHANGES TO THE PROTOCOL

- Effective December 1st, anchorage Plumper D, which is a designated material offloading (MOA) site will be included in the protocol. Assignments will be made by VFPA, and restricted to transloading only. Transport Canada will be initiating discussions with industry to explore options for use of other locations.

- Please also note the following update when contacting VFPA about noise and light:

For noise and light concerns related to vessels using Southern B.C. anchorages, please contact the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority Operations Center and provide details by completing the [online form](#) or go to <https://www.portvancouver.com/southern-b-c-anchorage-noise-and-light-concerns/>

4. NEXT STEPS – National Anchorages Review

The national Anchorages Project Lead has recently initiated a series of studies to:

- Compare and assess industry best practices for the management of anchorages outside public ports similar in nature to Canada's major ports.
- Analyze past, current, and future data to determine demand trends for freighters anchoring inside and outside public ports jurisdiction, and identify demand drivers.
- Identify best practices, technologies, or incentives that can change behavior of ships so as to mitigate their impact on communities and the environment.

If you have additional comments or suggestions about anchorages, write to the Pacific Region team at TC.PacificAnchorages-Ancragesdupacifique.TC@tc.gc.ca, or join the national conversation at the Oceans Protection Plan Let's Talk Website at <https://letstalktransportation.ca/OPP>. An anchorages portal is being launched in the weeks ahead.
