

THE EVALUATION OF PORTS ASSET TRANSFER PROGRAM

Evaluation Summary, March 2022



The evaluation, which covered the period from 2015-2016 to 2019-2020, focused only on the Ports Asset Transfer Program (PATP) divestiture activities; port operations and maintenance were excluded, as they were deemed peripheral to the main program objectives. In addition, because TC programming to divest ports was previously evaluated and the PATP was not being renewed when planning the evaluation, a calibrated evaluation approach was adopted. This meant the evaluation methods were limited to a document review and interviewing HQ and some regional staff.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Origins

Launched in 2015 as a successor to the Port Divestiture Program (PDP)

- Through PDP, 499 out of an inventory of 549 TC-owned local ports were transferred or had their public harbour status terminated
- PATP created to divest the remaining 50 ports

How PATP is delivered

Implemented jointly by TC headquarters (HQ) and regional offices (Regions)

- TC's Air, Marine and Environmental Programs at HQ has the overall responsibility for PATP
- Regions deliver the Program and are also responsible for on-going operations of the ports remaining in the inventory

Objective

To reduce TC's outstanding inventory of 50 ports

Activities

- Transfer, demolition or closure of ports
- Maintenance of the ports remaining in inventory while divestiture activities are carried out

Budget

Initial total funding for PATP was \$248.3 million and covered the period from 2015 to 2020

Funding was renewed in 2020 and included:

- \$35.2 million in operating funds until 2025 to operate and maintain the remaining ports
- \$70 million in grants and contributions until 2022 to support the transfer of three installations

FINDINGS



Since its launch in 2015, the PATP has reduced TC's outstanding inventory by 15 ports i.e. from 50 to 35. Given these ports' attributes made it challenging to attract interested stakeholders, a reduction of the inventory by roughly one-third could be regarded as successful. The availability of financial support and the flexibility in the use of contribution funding proved important factors for drawing stakeholder interest and engaging in transfer discussions.



The PATP is consistent with the National Marine Policy and aligns with TC's Core Responsibility of Efficient Transportation System.

CONCLUSION

The PATP took over an inventory of 50 ports from the previous PDP. Many of the ports that the PATP inherited faced decades-old issues that were not conducive to transfer. Taking advantage of a more flexible approach and the ability to use incentives, the program successfully removed 15 ports from TC's inventory. Since the PATP renewal in 2020, one more port has been transferred and two ports are in the process of transfer negotiations. Overall, the policy objectives of promoting local ownership while reducing the federal government's liability have been furthered through the PATP. Given the challenges associated with the remaining ports, there is also recognition that a number of them will continue to remain in TC's inventory for the foreseeable future.

Given the PATP has been renewed until 2022 with a narrow mandate to support the transfer of three ports only, **no recommendations are included** in this evaluation.