



# SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

Bulletin No.: 01/2025  
RDIMS No.: 20705738  
Date: 2025-02-04  
Y - M - D

We issue Ship Safety Bulletins for the marine community. Visit our Website at [www.tc.gc.ca/ssb-bsn](http://www.tc.gc.ca/ssb-bsn) to view existing bulletins and to sign up to receive e-mail notices of new ones.



**Subject:** Updated National Places of Refuge Contingency Plan

## Purpose

This bulletin explains recent updates to Transport Canada’s National Places of Refuge Contingency Plan.

## Scope

This bulletin applies to:

- All vessels in, or near, Canadian waters
- Port authorities
- Pilotage authorities
- Indigenous partners
- Territorial, provincial, municipal departments
- Shipowners, Charterers, Cargoes interest
- Salvors
- Any other relevant parties specializing in incident management

## Background

A “place of refuge” is a location where a vessel that needs help can stabilize its condition, reduce the risks to navigation, protect human life and the environment. A place of refuge could be

- a port
- a place of shelter near the coast
- an inlet
- a lee shore
- a cove
- a fjord
- a bay, or
- a beaching site.

### Keywords:

1. National Places of Refuge Contingency Plan

### Questions concerning this Bulletin should be addressed to:

AMSEC  
 Transport Canada  
 Marine Safety and Security  
 Tower C, Place de Ville  
 330 Sparks Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N8

Contact us at: [marinesafety-securitemaritime@tc.gc.ca](mailto:marinesafety-securitemaritime@tc.gc.ca) or 1-855-859-3123 (Toll Free).



### *What you need to know*

Transport Canada worked with the Canadian Coast Guard and other stakeholders to develop this edition of the National Places of Refuge Contingency Plan which was published in 2024.

This plan applies mainly to situations where large commercial vessels need help and require a place of refuge in Canada. It doesn't address rescuing people at sea. The plan sets a consistent process for managing places of refuge while also respecting regional differences across the country.

### *Why did Transport Canada update the plan?*

- To comply with the International Maritime Organization's Assembly Resolution on Places of Refuge, A.1184 (33) which was updated December 2023
- Improve how Transport Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard work together to respond to a place of refuge request
- Improve the plan's environmental and navigation safety considerations

### *What's changed in the plan?*

- This edition is designed to help us respond more quickly to places of refuge requests.
- We've clarified the scope of "places of refuge" based on guidelines from the International Maritime Organization.
  - The plan applies to "large commercial vessels."
  - Determination of "low" and "high" risk incidents assessment
- We've added a new step where the management and leadership structure between Transport Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard is defined.
- Risk Assessment Team will discuss and determine the best course of action for granting or denying a place of refuge request
- We've developed a decision support tool that will be used alongside Transport Canada's Enhanced Maritime Situational Awareness web platform.
- We've replaced regional plans with new regional annexes to the national plan (Work is in progress and each regional annex will be published as it is finalized).
  - Regional Annexes include reviews and characteristics of pre-identified places of refuge, emergency resources, incident notification processes, regional specifics, and key maps for each pre-identified place of refuge.

### *Contact*

If you have questions about the contingency plan, please contact your regional Transport Canada representatives.

### *Related links*

- [TP 14707E - National Places of Refuge Contingency Plan \(PORCP\)](#)