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Tidings: Stories from Canada's Oceans Protection Plan

Since 2016, the Government of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan has brought together Indigenous and coastal communities, industry, academia, and government to keep our coasts safe, clean, and thriving. By working together, we're finding new ways to protect our environment and support good jobs from coast to coast to coast.

In this edition of Tidings, we highlight how community partnerships are building Arctic readiness, celebrate permanent global leadership for Inuit at the International Maritime Organization, and share resources to help communities access compensation after oil spills. You'll also find opportunities to have your say on marine emergency services and proposed changes under the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act*.

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- [Strengthening Arctic readiness through community-led response](#)
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Strengthening Arctic readiness through community-led response

An important Arctic safety initiative is strengthening how communities respond to marine pollution incidents by expanding Environmental Response Community Caches in Arctic regions across Canada. The Canadian Coast Guard project reflects a practical, community-driven approach to preparedness in Arctic waters, where time, distance, and conditions can make all the difference.

By pre-positioning spill response equipment directly in communities, the initiative builds local capacity to act quickly while larger response assets are mobilized. It is a model grounded in partnership, preparedness, and respect for Indigenous knowledge and local realities.

[Read more](#)



Increasing access to marine emergency services and improving pollution response

We want your input on potential rules to improve access to marine emergency services and strengthen marine pollution response.

Your views will help us understand the potential impacts on communities and businesses related to three proposed measures:

1. Requiring certain vessel types to have arrangements in place to access marine emergency services, such as marine firefighting and disabled vessel assistance
2. Improving how vessels and handling facilities prepare for and respond to marine incidents that involve hazardous and noxious substances
3. Introducing a new vessel response coordination role to improve response to all types of pollution incidents

Your feedback will help us refine our proposed changes, so they are effective, practical, and aligned with real-world marine operations.

Share your perspective by April 17. [Read the discussion paper.](#)



A step forward for Inuit leadership in global maritime policy

The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) has achieved an important and long-awaited milestone by securing permanent consultative status at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations (UN) body responsible for setting global standards on safety and security at sea and preventing pollution from ships. Having initially received provisional consultative status in 2021, the IMO Assembly's decision to approve permanent status in December 2025 reflects years of dedicated advocacy that has resulted in the ICC being the first and currently the only Indigenous Peoples' Organization with formal consultative standing at the IMO.

For Inuit communities across the Arctic, where the ocean is central to daily life, culture, and livelihoods, this status ensures Inuit perspectives will continue to inform global decisions on marine safety, environmental protection, and pollution prevention. It is also a meaningful recognition of the value of Indigenous leadership and lived experience in ocean governance.

This achievement closely aligns with the goals of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan, which aims to make shipping safer, protect marine ecosystems, and strengthen partnerships with Indigenous Peoples. When working with Inuit in Canada, referring to the [Inuit Nunangat Policy](#) is the starting point. This achievement also aligns with Canada's approach to foreign policy in the Arctic region that seeks to support opportunities for ICC to represent Inuit Knowledge in international fora. By supporting Inuit participation in international maritime decision-making, this milestone helps ensure that policies affecting Arctic waters are shaped by those who know them best.

[Read more](#)



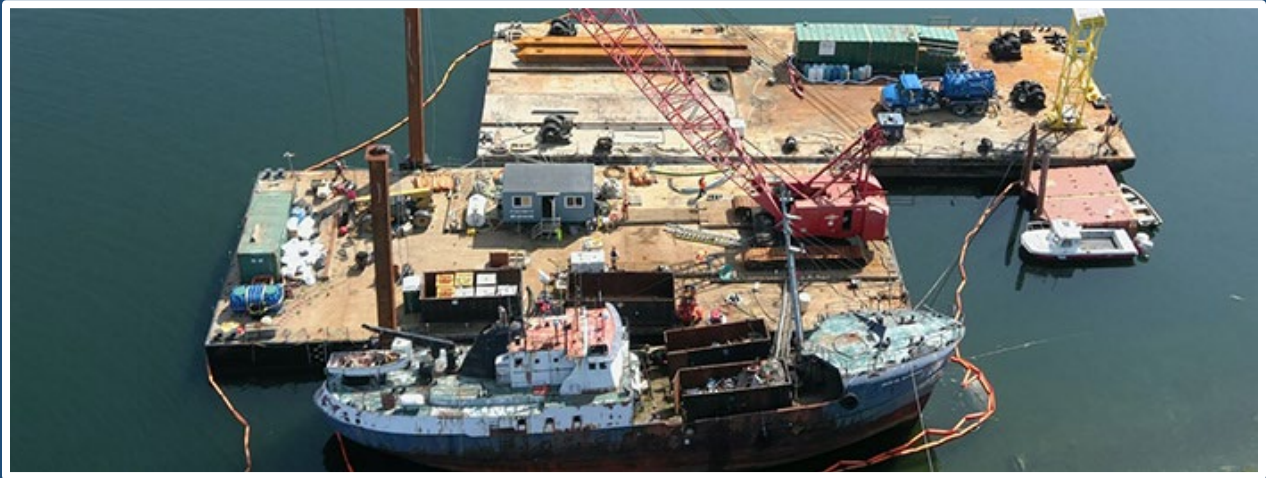
Expanding the Minor Works Order under the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act*

Transport Canada is proposing changes to the Minor Works Order under the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act* (CNWA) — and we want your input.

The proposed changes would allow more classes of works to proceed without formal CNWA approval, helping reduce the red tape for small, routine projects where interference with navigation is slight.

Read the discussion paper and share your views by **April 3**.

[Have your say](#)



Demystifying the Ship Fund to improve access to compensation in the event of an oil spill

After an oil spill from a ship or boat, those affected often wonder who is going to pay for the costs and damages. For many, the way to financial recovery remains unclear. The team at the [Ship and Rail Compensation Canada – Ship Fund](#) often hear misconceptions of how the Ship Fund works. As a result, those impacted by oil spills are not benefiting from the compensation they are eligible for.

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