

2010 B30 DERELICT & ABANDONED VESSELS,
BARGES & DOCKS

AVICC Executive

WHEREAS UBCM has previously endorsed a resolution on the topic of derelict vessels in 2005 and the issue of derelict and abandoned vessels, barges, and docks continues to be of significant concern and cost for local governments and harbour authorities in British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS there are many derelict and abandoned vessels, barges and docks that pose safety hazards, risks of environmental contamination and visual pollution:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM petition the provincial and federal governments to develop a coordinated approach to the timely and adequate removal of all types of derelict and abandoned vessels, barges and docks in all situations and consider the following strategies:

- funding mechanisms such as a fee on vessel registrations or a surcharge on marine fuel to fund the removal of derelict and abandoned vessels, barges and docks;
- designated disposal areas where owners can take their unwanted boats and structures to provide an alternative to abandonment on public property; and
- education and vessel product stewardship programs, for example fibreglass boat recycling centres.

CONVENTION DECISION: ENDORSED

PROVINCIAL RESPONSE

Ministry of Natural Resource Operations

The Province of BC has been engaged in regular, collaborative discussions with the agencies mandated to address derelict and abandoned vessels since 2009. The Ministry recognizes that the multi-jurisdictional nature of managing abandoned vessels is a key challenge when resolving these issues. The Minister communicated with former Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities Canada, John Baird, former Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Jim Prentice, and former Minister of Environment Canada, Gail Shea, seeking support to establish a senior-level working group to address the very concerns raised by the AVICC and UBCM.

At a regional level, the Ministry of Natural Resource Operations (MNRO) is working with the Navigable Waters Protection Division (Transportation and Infrastructure Canada), Environment Canada and the Harbour Authority Association of British Columbia to explore options to efficiently manage concerns raised by abandoned vessels. There exists a cooperative spirit in the work done at the regional level, and suggestions to resource the removal of abandoned vessels is a primary topic of discussion.

The BC Ministry of Environment has investigated the potential to include fibreglass boats in a recycle scheme known as Extended Producer Responsibility (e.g., surcharges to recycle batteries and tires). It was determined that the volume of material to be included and the lack of potential for marketing the recycled product makes this option cost prohibitive. Currently, vessel owners are able to dispose of derelicts at a private operation in Richmond and at landfill sites subject to the terms and conditions imposed by local governments.

In January 2011, a Joint Working Group for the Removal of Derelict Vessels (JWG) was established to explore options and address this issue. NRO, the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), Transport Canada's Navigable Waters Protection Division (NRPD) and Islands Trust are represented on the JWG. The JWG has met in January and March of this year to discuss possible short- and long-term solutions and explore options to defray costs associated with disposing of vessels abandoned on public land. MNRO staff are preparing a submission to ELUC for the creation of an interim derelict vessel fund in partnership with the Ministry of Finance.

Transport Canada has the authority to dispose of derelict and abandoned vessels considered to be a hazard to navigation or a source of pollution. Transport Canada assesses each incident and has a record of taking action on priority cases. The NRPD has the authority to intervene when a derelict or abandoned vessel poses an impediment to navigation. NRPD assesses each incident and also has a record of taking action on priority cases.