

For Immediate Release
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BC FERRIES RESPONDS TO TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD REPORT ON QUEEN OF THE NORTH SINKING

VICTORIA – BC Ferries’ President and CEO, David L. Hahn issued a statement today in response to a Transportation Safety Board (TSB) report into the sinking of the Queen of the North on March 22, 2006.

“BC Ferries welcomes the public release of the TSB report and its conclusions, which are consistent with our own investigation released in March of 2007,” said Hahn. BC Ferries’ Divisional Inquiry concluded that the Queen of the North failed to make a required course change at Sainty Point, and that the vessel proceeded on an incorrect course for four nautical miles over 14 minutes until its grounding on Gil Island.

“It is unfortunate that after two years of investigation, the TSB was unable to determine what occurred on the bridge in the final 14 minutes leading up to the vessel striking Gil Island,” stated Hahn.

Since the March 2006 sinking of the Queen of the North, BC Ferries has taken significant safety actions including:

- Commissioned former B.C. Auditor General George L. Morfitt to conduct a comprehensive safety review.
- Together with our Union, we’ve launched “SailSafe”, a program which builds on our current safety practices and reflects our common commitment to safety as an essential part of our business. This was a key recommendation of the Morfitt Safety Review.
- Implemented a new alcohol and drug policy that incorporates mandatory testing in certain circumstances.
- Instituted a new bridge resource management training program for masters and deck officers. Over 250 employees have had the training to date.
- Instituted an engine room resource management training program. To date more than 80 senior engineers have been trained and another 120 will be trained in the next year.
- Implemented a new Voyage Data Recorder program --- 17 vessels now have VDR’s installed and the remainder will be done by the end of this year.
- Implemented new sign off procedures to confirm that navigational watch officers have been fully familiarized with any newly installed or modified bridge equipment before taking over navigational duties.

- Issued a fleet directive requiring water tight doors be always closed at sea. This has been reinforced by management on ships and by internal inspections.
- Added two more navigational officers to each watch on our northern vessels, which exceeds Transport Canada requirements.
- Implemented a new reservations check-in policy for northern routes to ensure the company has an accurate manifest of passengers on these long voyages.
- Increased the level of risk assessment and accident prevention and incident investigation training.
- Implemented lead auditor safety management training
- Introduced four new Safety Officer positions in the fleet.
- Increased safety training days from 9,000 to over 14,000 per year.

In addition to the above actions, BC Ferries will be reviewing the TSB's final report in detail with the BC Ferry and Marine Workers Union (BCFMWU) as part of our joint "SailSafe" program.

Customer and employee safety is the number one priority of BC Ferries.

The final report of the Transportation Safety Board (March 12, 2008) may be viewed at <http://www.bst.gc.ca> and BC Ferries' Divisional Inquiry (March 26, 2007) may be viewed at http://www.bcferrys.com/about/divisional_inquiries.html.

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