

Workshop on Fishing Vessel Safety

Fisheries and Aquaculture Management (DFO)
Canadian Coast Guard (DFO)
Transport Canada, Marine Safety (TCMS)
Transportation Safety Board (TSB)

Robert Fecteau / RDIMS #6470017



Date: September 28, 2010

Location: Quebec

Objectives:

- Study various topics related to fishing vessel safety

Issues raised by certain fishers at the TSB workshops held in Rimouski in February 2010

- Discuss certain points related to communications and cooperation between TC and DFO



Length Restriction for Fishing Vessels

Certain fishers report that length restrictions imposed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Fisheries and Aquaculture Management prevent them from using larger vessels that would provide greater safety.

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Analysis

- Larger vessels offer better protection against the sea (greater freeboard)
- Larger vessel → Fishers will be tempted to defy the elements → Therefore fishers will be exposed to greater danger
- In Quebec, the length restriction policy does not force any group of fishers to venture large distances from the coast

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Analysis

- Length restrictions have a direct effect on monitoring the fishing effort
- Length restrictions limit access to the resource and ensure fair access for all fishers

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Solutions

DFO's FAM is presently reviewing its policies, in particular the one concerning fishing vessels replacement:

- DFO in Ottawa is responsible for the review of the national policies
- However, DFO's FAM remains open to receiving and studying requests to modify the rules that concern a regional policy and a given fleet
- Individual requests are inadmissible

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Follow-up

- Wait for the new DFO's FAM Fishing Vessels Replacement Policy
- Fishers will be consulted

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Restriction on Time Allocated for Removing Fishing Gears after a Fisheries Closure

Certain fishers report that the time limitation imposed by DFO's FAM for removing their fishing gears sometimes forces them to go at sea in adverse weather conditions, thereby jeopardizing their safety.