

## **Federal help sought for port security measures: New regulations too costly for operators to bear alone**

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The province's maritime industry is calling on Ottawa to commit money to help fund new port security measures.

The B.C. Maritime Employers Association was responding to Transport Canada's draft security regulations released last week.

The association estimates the costs for B.C. port operators to come into compliance with new international security requirements could reach \$50 million. Nationally, that figure is expected to be \$100 million.

"Canada's maritime operators are ready and willing to protect our borders with new port security regulations, but we cannot be expected to foot the entire bill," said the association's chair, Tim Chapman.

The requirement for new border security measures follows the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States.

Delta-South Richmond MP John Cummins agrees the federal government needs to inject security funds. In the U.S., he noted, the government has committed over \$9 billion for border security, which includes ports.

"The bottom line is, Ottawa has responsibility for security in this country, whether it's the streets, airports or the ports," said the Canadian Alliance MP.

He said he wasn't surprised about recent revelations in the press and in this newspaper about the presence of organized crime on the waterfront.

But Cummins takes it a step further: "It's not just money needed. It's a dedicated security force, whether it be a special detachment of the RCMP or bringing back a ports police."

Delta Mayor Lois Jackson said ever since the disbandment of the Canada Ports Police in 1997 she's been concerned about port security and about the presence of organized crime on the waterfront.

She's equally concerned about how competitive the province's marine industry will be if it fails to meet international security standards. "We've been on this parade for a long time. If the ports can't tell the world that we're at least on par from a security standpoint with the Americans, ships may go elsewhere," she said.

Jackson, like Cummins, prefers a dedicated enforcement unit. "You need the intelligence on the ground on an ongoing basis," she said, adding it's not just a local concern with the presence of

the Deltaport container terminal, the largest within the Vancouver Port Authority, but it's really an international issue.

"I'd like to ask the prime minister elect, Paul Martin, 'You're a shipping man, what do you think?'"

The B.C. Maritime Employers Association, which represents ship owners, agents, stevedores and wharf and bulk terminal operators, says without financial support, the requirements will impact the bottom line because of a heavily-subsidized U.S. industry.

"The operations of some maritime businesses and jobs will be at risk if steps are not taken to compete with the U.S. on an even keel," Chapman said. "That requires a financial commitment from Ottawa to share the burden of security costs."

The new International Ship and Security Code comes into effect July 1, 2004.

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