

CANADIAN COALITION FOR  
**Maritime Security**

**News Release**  
**March 23, 2004**

**Maritime industry presses Ottawa for detailed port security funding**

**Vancouver, BC**—The Canadian Coalition for Maritime Security is encouraged by today's budget commitment of \$605 million over 5 years for security funding, including marine security, but will continue to press the federal government for a specific budget line for port security funding.

"Maritime operators are on the front-line of border defense. We're encouraged by today's funding announcement, but we need to ensure that Ottawa will sufficiently cover the costs of federally-mandated port security improvements," said Onkar Athwal, a spokesperson for the Canadian Coalition for Maritime Security. "Port security is a part of border security, and that requires federal financial support."

"We anxiously anticipate in the days ahead how the federal government will break down its security budget for ports and maritime operators," said Athwal.

The Coalition estimates that the cost of compliance to Transport Canada's 600-plus port security regulations could cost Canada's maritime operators well over \$100 million, a fraction of the funding the US government has dedicated to improving security at US ports.

"The federal government is on the right track to emphasize national security, but it should not ignore the competitive pressures from heavily-funded U.S. port operators who, as a result, are becoming more cost-effective gateways for North American trade," said Athwal.

New federal port security regulations require a heavy investment by port operators in surveillance equipment and more security patrols, along with other facility upgrades. Many operators are already incurring significant costs to meet these security measures.

The Canadian Coalition for Maritime Security represents private-sector maritime operators from British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia, in addition to maritime associations from across Canada on the issue of security at Canada's ports.

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