

# Substantial number of Canadian ports, facilities, ships ISPS compliant

By ALEX BINKLEY

**OTTAWA** – Buoyed by some impressive compliance numbers by ports, marine facilities and vessels, Transport Canada remains confident that the country will meet the July 1 deadline for the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS).

As of June 2, the department had approved the security plans of nearly two-thirds of the ports and terminals and almost all of the vessels that need ISPS approval. The names of these operators have been sent to the International Maritime Organization and they should be receiving their ISPS certification soon, said Transport Canada spokesman Bernard Pilon.

The July 1 deadline is just the start, however, of what will be a long string of incremental improvements in port security, Mr. Pilon added. "It really is just the starting point for maritime security. I like to compare it to what has happened in airport security."

Transport Canada has approved security plans for 263 of the 376 ports and terminals that require them along with 181 of the 193 vessels that must comply with the code. It expects the remainder to meet the final requirements before July 1.

"We're at the back-and-forth stage with most of them on what final steps have to be made," Mr. Pilon said. "They have been asked to make changes. We're on track to be in full compliance by the July 1 deadline."

A number of harbours that originally thought they would need ISPS certification were excused from the process because they don't get any international traffic, or what there is comes from vessels of less than 100 deadweight tons that are not covered by the ISPS, Mr. Pilon explained.

As well, some shipowners decided

to designate only some of their vessels for ISPS certification while keeping the rest in domestic-only operations.

There are 45 Canadian ships in the more than 500-deadweight-ton category that required ISPS certification and they have all had their security plans approved, while 136 of the 148 vessels in the 100- to 499-deadweight-ton class have had their plans okayed. The rest should be done soon, Mr. Pilon said.

The Port of Montreal was among the first to get its ISPS certification. It covers both the Montreal Port Authority and the port's terminal operators.

"The Port of Montreal was among the first 10 ports in the world to report its compliance with the ISPS Code to the International Association of Ports and Harbours," said Michel Turgeon, director of communications for the Montreal Port Authority.

Meanwhile, shipping lines and associations are poring over the final draft of ship security regulations that were issued by Transport Canada on June 2. The initial reaction from the shipping groups is that Ottawa accepted most of their objections to provisions in earlier drafts.

Don Morrison, president of the Canadian Shipowners Association, said shipowners were satisfied with the final regulations "although there may be some snags implementing them. But we were satisfied with the consultation process for developing them."

Michael Broad, president of the Shipping Federation of Canada, said that overall he was happy with his initial look at the regulations. "They have made some changes that we requested," he said. That includes accepting international ship security certificates

from foreign-flagged vessels rather than expecting them to undergo a Canadian security review. As well, ships won't have to start reporting any security incidents that happened on board until after the July 1 start-up of ISPS.