

## *A Document for Discussion – Working Copy Number 5*

### **The Establishment of a Vancouver based Pacific Maritime Policy Institute**

Canadian Pacific maritime policy formulation is largely derived from various West Coast maritime networks feeding into agencies, boards and commissions that are established and managed by federal government officials in Ottawa. The information collected through these channels contributes to policies in support of a national maritime framework. The primary purpose of such a framework is to establish uniform regulatory and policy requirements that apply to the marine industry on the west and east coasts of Canada as well as the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway. These processes are critical in establishing regulatory and policy initiatives that are required to administer all aspects of the federal government's mandate.

The federal government has a critical role to play in ensuring that Canada's marine policy and regulatory requirements are uniformly managed within the jurisdictional responsibilities of its Departments of Transportation, Fishing, National Defense, RCMP, Health and Border Services. The federal government has less responsibility for ensuring that businesses and people engaged in the marine industry enjoy the benefits of being part of a world-class maritime community. Provincial and municipal governments do not hold specific mandates affecting marine policy. The entity resulting from the merger of ports in the Lower Mainland will inherit civic responsibilities comparable with a large municipal government. Canadian communities benefit when all levels of government collaborate on policies that complement each other's roles and responsibilities. The Gateway Project is an example of such collaboration, the absence of federal support in the areas of marine policing and dredging are examples of where there is less collaboration.

Life on Canada's West Coast holds historic ties with marine businesses. The fish that rely on its tributaries, rivers and lakes to survive, accommodation of First Nations rights, the coastal short sea shipping, international shipping, and shipbuilding all speaks to the need for formulation of Pacific maritime policy that reflects the values and traditions of the region. Given the changes that BC maritime communities and BC in general can expect over the next five decades as a consequence of expansion in BC's port facilities and shipping, plus the exponential population growth expected within such timeframe public policy options need to be conceived, assessed and refined locally prior to implementation.

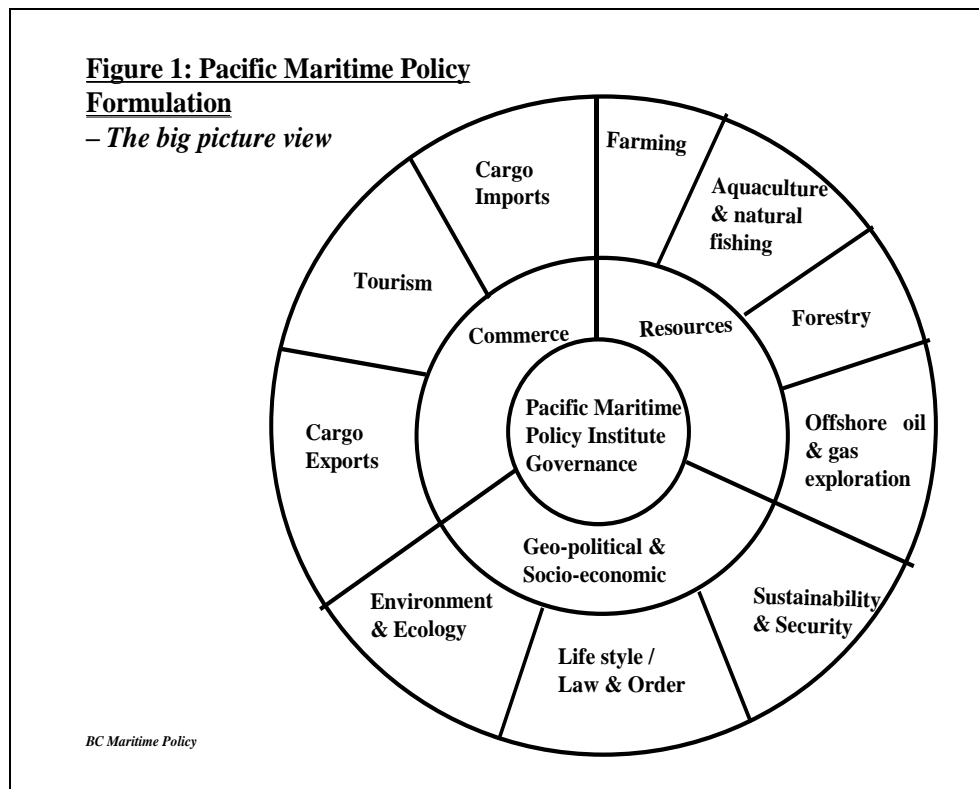
The new Vancouver Fraser Port is the largest and fastest growing port in Canada. It is recognized as one of the major Pacific gateways to North America that serves the increasingly expanding markets of Asia. These global trends are creating geo-political and socio-economic changes in the way of doing maritime business on Canada's West Coast. Furthermore, they are significantly affecting lifestyle choices for West Coast Canadians in terms of employment, housing, transportation, recreation, education, healthcare and security.

An independent entity dedicated to defining and refining public policy in the context of local challenges occurring within BC maritime communities is urgently needed. Such an entity would serve to identify, protect and enhance West Coast social and commercial maritime values. In order to operate successfully this entity would need to be part of, and have access to, the maritime community stakeholder while at the same time be independent of any single political, commercial or social issue interests in BC. While it may serve to analyze directions being taken by government, such an entity would not be obligated to support any particular agenda. The goal would be credible maritime public policy analysis and formulation.

It is recommended that a Pacific Maritime Policy Institute be created that is dedicated to formulation of Pacific maritime policy. This institute would serve to define and protect West Coast maritime values in terms of social and commercial advancement. It would provide credible independent advice and guidance to government, private sector and communities on issues affecting maritime matters on Canada's West Coast.

## Governance

The critical building block of the Pacific Maritime Policy Institute would be the guiding vision and leadership that would emanate from its governance structure. Governors of the institute would be responsible for guiding the conduct of public policy analysis on a broad "big picture" level. Governors, selected from a broad cross section of BC Maritime society, would serve to collectively define maritime public policy parameters independent of any self interest. These Governors would be selected from the current leaders in marine operations such as the Vancouver Port, BC Chamber of Shipping, Council of Marine Carriers, BC Ferries, Vancouver shipyards and BCIT Marine Campus. Their expertise in regulatory policy issues, together with their marine mandates would be the key to the success of such an Institute. Figure 1 provides a model illustrating the kinds of broad policy fields affecting maritime environment and commerce as well as West Coast lifestyle that Governors may define.



The identification of Commerce, Resources, as well as Geo-political & Socio-economics in Figure 1 indicate the kind of societal value areas where coordinated, made in BC policy initiatives are required. The outer circle is intended to illustrate further the policy fields that could be explored in the context of establishing policy directives that are intended to serve, over the long term, all BC communities. Such functions performed within government are usually part of a short term political agenda. Generally governments formulate policies and then look for information to fit their policies. The operation of a policy

institute that is dedicated to analysing maritime issues and concerns on Canada's Pacific Coast should be data driven within recognized scientific disciplines. Consideration would be given to defining the degree to which such an Institute should adopt an advocacy role relative to relying on its findings to lead the way.

## Agenda setting

The setting of agenda for conducting public policy research is a complex but critically important process. The process has to demonstrate credibility in choice of topics, their relevance and the interdisciplinary nature of the task that is being conducted. Figure 2 offers a frame of reference for constituting such a process acknowledging the multi-disciplinary nature of maritime policy formulation.

**Figure 2: Setting a Maritime Policy Research Agenda**

Disciplines Policy field interests	Law	Economics	Political Science	Social Sciences	Information Technology	Architecture	Geography	Marine sciences	Real estate & taxes
Domestic shipping									
Foreign shipping									
Port Authorities									
Gateway Transportation									
First Nations									
Neighboring maritime countries									
Fishing									
National Security / Law Enforcement									

*BC Maritime Policy*

Figure 2 is intended to provide an initial frame of reference for discussion purposes. Further work would be needed to refine and define policy fields and how they may be prioritized. Some thought would be needed to defining the core body of knowledge that persons called upon to conduct analysis would be expected to contribute and share with the community being served by such an institute. The value of such an entity is in the intangible equity it can accumulate in the form of a core body of knowledge pertaining to maritime activities in the context of the Canada's Pacific Coastline. Such a body of knowledge is currently shared by practitioners in the field at an operational level. The proposed Institute would serve to conceptualize the obstacles, opportunities, pitfalls and challenges facing West Coast maritime life and commerce in Canada. This insight and understanding would form the basis of sound, made in BC, maritime public policy.

## **National Defence and Law Enforcement**

Discussion about maritime policy in our post 9/11 world must include consideration of the relationships between law enforcement, National Defence and the preservation of Canadian societal values that are threatened by criminal and subversive forces. The degree to which a Pacific Maritime Policy Institute includes national security and law enforcement policy concerns needs to be addressed. Such considerations may require military and law enforcement appointments on the Board of the proposed Institute.

## **Funding options**

The critical factor associated with funding is the degree of independence between the source of the funds and products produced by the Institute. An outright donation from a benevolent source with acceptable ideals and expectations is the preferred option. It should be possible to set up the Institute so that both tax receipts for charitable donations by individuals can be issued, as well as enabling corporations to claim business expense deductions for their funding support. Governments have programs where grants can be accessed to provide seed money for such an entity until a funding base is achieved. When it is established, the Institute may generate revenues from consulting and educational / conference activities. Whatever the source of funding will be, it has to be understood that the Institute will not be beholden to any external maritime or government interests.

## **Other Pacific Maritime Policy Institutes**

A web search for words such as: pacific, maritime, policy, research, reveals a plethora of entities, many housed in Asian countries, dedicated to understanding how their maritime communities are affected by global sea trade and how their countries contribute towards world peace and free trade. In the conception of this document questions were asked by foreign mariners, via email, about benchmarking best practices in maritime and port administration. In the course of these communications it was suggested that, given Canada's perceived neutrality in the world, there are many opportunities for Canada to take a leadership role, particularly with respect to Asia Pacific maritime benchmarking and best practices.

## **The Genesis of this Concept and Follow-up**

The concept of a Pacific Maritime Policy Institute arose around discussions about a series of west coast maritime policy articles that I published as a freelance journalist, [www.infolyнк.ca/bcmaritimepolicy.html](http://www.infolyнк.ca/bcmaritimepolicy.html)

In developing this Document for Discussion I have been guided by advice provided from:

Captain Phillip Nelson, Council of Marine Carriers,  
 Captain John Clarkson, Marine Programs Transportation, BCIT,  
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 Commander Rick Gerbrecht, (Retd. Canadian Forces)  
 Jim Crawford, Editor Fisherman Life, Anchor Publishing

In support of establishing a follow-up action plan for creating such an Institute it is necessary to determine some appreciation of the degree of interest in such an initiative among BC maritime stakeholders. Please send comments and suggestions to Tim Lynch Email, [tim@infolyнк.ca](mailto:tim@infolyнк.ca) or telephone 604.916. 9302.

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