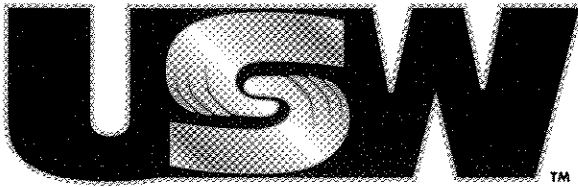


UNITED STEELWORKERS



UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS

District 3

Western Provinces and Territories

Stephen Hunt

District Director

October 6, 2009

Honourable Mr. John Baird
Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities
Tower C – 330 Sparks Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N5

Dear Mr. Baird,

It has come to my attention that your Ministry plans to eliminate four manned lighthouses by early next spring and to eliminate the remaining 27 manned lighthouses over the next five years.

Our union represents many workers in the resource sector, many who travel to remote locations by crew boat or float plane. In fact, over the last few years transportation into these remote locations has been one of the leading causes of forest industry deaths on the coast of British Columbia. There have been 14 transportation work deaths in the last five years. Eliminating manned lighthouses will only make things worse.

Our members tell us that lighthouses are essential for coastal navigation in BC, especially in northern and coastal BC where help is a long way away in time and distance.

An un-manned lighthouse cannot see what a keeper can. Many times it is the lighthouse keeper who organizes rescue efforts when for example, a logging crew is reported overdue. There is a reason that those lighthouses were built in those locations in the first place.

In a 1990 report of a safety study on VFR flight into adverse weather it was recommended that the Department of Transport examine its policy for the contracting of manned weather observation services with a view to expanding the service in remote locations of highest risk, particularly in British Columbia.

Although, the navigation technology has advanced by leaps and bounds; what has not changed is the weather conditions, which seem to be getting worse with "climate change". There is no doubt that lighthouses help our members get to and from work safely and they surely assist countless recreational boaters every year.

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Prior to any planned changes to our current system, I ask you to seek input from all those that rely on lighthouses as part of their safety network. This should include, but is not limited to coastal logging and other resource workers and their union, the USW.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Hunt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Stephen Hunt
Director – District 3

SH/rg
uswlu2009

cc: Pat Bell – Minister of Forests and Range
Reynold Hert – President Western Forest Products
David Anderson – WCB
Kirsten Stevens
Ron Corbeil – District 3 Health Safety & Environment Coordinator