



Heiltsuk Horizon welcomes trade tribunal determination calling for a review of tender process for emergency towing vessels on Canada's West Coast

Bella Bella, British Columbia (January 8, 2019) – Heiltsuk Horizon Maritime Services Limited is pleased the Canadian International Trade Tribunal (CITT) has responded to a company complaint by recommending a review of a key performance requirement in the process to procure two emergency towing vessels for the protection of Canada's West Coast.

As a bid participant, [Heiltsuk Horizon](#) – a partnership of majority partner Heiltsuk Nation of Bella Bella, British Columbia and Horizon Maritime Services Limited, a Canadian marine services company – registered a complaint last August that the winning supplier did not meet important safety requirements of the tender process. The vessels are funded through Canada's \$1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan.

"Heiltsuk Horizon is pleased the Tribunal has found merit in part of our complaint and we are waiting to assess the written reasons to follow," said Chief Councillor Marilyn Slett, Heiltsuk Nation, Bella Bella, BC. "From day one, we stated the procurement process was flawed and that the vessels awarded are older and far less powerful than the newer, state-of-the-art vessels Heiltsuk Horizon has proposed."

In a letter to Heiltsuk Horizon, the Tribunal recommends the Department of Public Works and Government Services Canada reevaluate the "bollard pull" (towing power) of the vessels in all bids received and also awards Heiltsuk Horizon costs incurred in submitting the complaint.

"The contract was awarded in the absence of the required proof that the vessels met the mandated towing power," said Chief Operating Officer Steven Widmeyer, Horizon Maritime Services Limited. "We hope this recommendation leads to a reconsideration of our Heiltsuk Horizon vessels, which are in accordance with recommendations of the 2018 [Emergency Towing Vessel Needs Assessment](#) by the Clear Seas Centre for Responsible Marine Shipping."

The CITT letter recommends no further expenditures be made on the awarded contract until a review is complete and also lays out potential actions to be taken post-review, including cancellation of the existing contract.

Chief Slett expressed Heiltsuk Horizon's disappointment that the process failed to recognize commitments made to engage First Nations' communities in coastal protection at the outset of Canada's Oceans Protection Plan. "The Heiltsuk are a seafaring community, we are the first responders when emergencies happen on the coast and we are the first to suffer the impacts. We have a vision for coastal protection in our territories and we want to see it done right."



Heiltsuk Hereditary Chief Harvey Humchitt urged the Government of Canada to seize this opportunity to demonstrate a stronger commitment to reconciliation. “Heiltsuk Horizon has the right vessels and the right West Coast team to keep our coastlines safe. It is time for *Haitcistut* – time for Canada to turn things around and make things right.”

The Heiltsuk Nation, currently in reconciliation discussions with Canada, teamed up with Horizon Maritime to form Heiltsuk Horizon, following the devastating *Nathan E. Stewart* oil spill in its territory in October 2016.

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Heiltsuk Horizon Maritime Services Limited is a partnership that brings together the millennia-old stewardship and seafaring heritage of the Heiltsuk Nation with the offshore and marine industry expertise of Horizon Maritime. This partnership came together to supply government with two world-class emergency towing vessels and to build regional incident prevention and emergency response capacity through the Indigenous Marine Response Centre, (IMRC). Both partners are committed to pursuing additional opportunities to protect our coastal marine environment as we look to build a sustainable future together. www.heiltsukhorizon.ca

The Canadian International Trade Tribunal, or CITT, provides Canadian international businesses with access to fair, transparent and timely processes for the investigation of trade remedy cases and complaints concerning federal government procurement and for the adjudication of appeals on customs and excise matters. At the request of the Government, the Tribunal provides advice in Tariff, trade, commercial and economic matters. www.citt.gc.ca

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