



Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 5, 2026

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** January 29, 2026
From: Councillor Matt Dell and Councillor Jeremy Caradonna
Subject: Advocacy to the Federal Government on Environmental Regulations related to Large Marine Vessels around Victoria

Background

The environmental impacts from large marine vessels are significant and contribute over 1 billion tonnes of carbon pollution annually. In addition to impacts on air, large vessels also release scrubber wash discharge into marine environments that include harmful polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and particulate matter.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has taken steps to introduce emission reduction strategies, which initially target a 40% cut in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 compared to the 2008 emission level. In addition, the cruise ship industry has committed to net zero emissions by 2050.

For context, it is important to understand that cruise ships account for only 0.2% of all commercial ship emissions, and that the lion's share of emissions come from long-distance marine shipping, including those that transit past Victoria in the Salish Sea. Although wash water discharge is not occurring directly in Victoria harbour, cruise ships account for nearly 46% of the total on Canada's Pacific Coast in 2022, according to Environment Canada, and the balance attributed to marine shipping vessels.

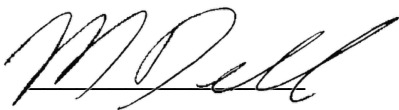
The marine shipping and transportation industries remain dependent on scrubbers to manage emissions, while continuing to burn bunker fuel. The impacts of scrubber effluent discharge can be severe on marine ecosystems. Many countries and ports have banned scrubber discharge inside their territorial waters. In Canada, five out of seventeen port authorities have implemented regulations to ban scrubber wash water discharges either at berth, or at anchorage or within their harbour, including Vancouver and Prince Rupert.

The cruise industry contributes to the vibrant tourism industry in Victoria, with benefits to the City, First Nations, and businesses across the region. It is crucial that the marine shipping and transportation industries continue to green themselves, and for the Federal government to play an active partnership role in reducing the environmental impacts of these industries on coastal communities.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council directs the Mayor to write to the Federal Minister of Transport, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, and the local Member of Parliament for Victoria, and request the following:

- That the Federal government mandate the phase-in of low-sulphur fuel by large marine vessels in Canadian territorial waters;
- That the Federal government develop regulations to prevent the discharge of scrubber wash water within Canadian territorial waters;
- That the Federal government ensure that all regulatory emissions requirements are being followed by large marine vessels;
- And that the Federal government work collaboratively with the marine shipping and transportation industry and related stakeholders, including local communities and First Nations, to ensure that the industry meets both its own decarbonization and environmental objectives and those of Canada.



Councillor Matt Dell



Coun. Jeremy Caradonna