



House of Commons  
CANADA

## **Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans**

---

FOPO • NUMBER 004 • 2nd SESSION • 39th PARLIAMENT

---

**EVIDENCE**

**Monday, November 26, 2007**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. Fabian Manning**

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address:

**<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

## Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

Monday, November 26, 2007

• (1535)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Fabian Manning (Avalon, CPC)):** I call the meeting to order, and I welcome our guests.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are continuing our study on the operation and maintenance of small craft harbours.

We are pleased today to welcome as our witnesses James Boland, regional director of strategic initiatives, Pacific region—welcome, Mr. Boland—and Jackey Richard, acting regional director of small craft harbours, Maritimes and gulf region.

Just to inform our witnesses, we give the opportunity for a 10-minute opening statement or presentation by you, and then we open the floor for questions from our members.

So if one of you would like to start, you now have the opportunity to do so.

**Ms. Jackey Richard (Acting Regional Director, Small Craft Harbours, Maritimes and Gulf Region, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** Thank you. I'll begin.

My name is Jackey Richard, and I'm the acting regional director of the small craft harbours program for both the Maritimes and the gulf regions. My jurisdiction covers all three maritime provinces. I'll just take a few minutes to basically give you a snapshot of the program within the region, starting with our asset base.

Historically, we managed 557 harbours across the entire region. Through a strong divestiture push in the mid-nineties we reduced that inventory to today's harbour base of 322 harbours. Of these, we consider 284 to be core. One hundred percent of these harbours are managed by harbour authorities. I think you might have received a handout that shows you visually the distribution of harbours.

As far as our harbour authority base is concerned, we have 242 harbour authorities that oversee the day-to-day operations and management of our facilities. We rely on the work of over 2,000 volunteer board members who support our programs. We have many harbour authorities that have been around for some time. Some date back 20 years, but the bulk of the harbour authority groups have been in operation for about 10 years.

As far as the industry the Maritimes and gulf represents, as we all know, harbours are an important link between the land and the sea and are the heart of many coastal communities. In the Maritimes and gulf regions, many of our harbours are diversified and support an expanded client base. Regional harbours provide access and basic services for the commercial fishery. They integrate increased

participation of aboriginal communities and are making a place for aquaculture business that relies on our facilities.

The small craft harbours Maritimes and gulf infrastructure supports a significant commercial fishery, with landings valued at more than \$1 billion. Aquaculture has also evolved, recording a value of about \$300 million in landings.

Touching on our resources, money, and workforce, our average funding per annum is about \$38 million for the entire region. During any fiscal year, we manage, on average, about 80 major projects.

From an organizational standpoint, considering that we cover all three maritime provinces, we are decentralized. Our organizational culture promotes working with the people, being resourceful, and ensuring the best value, in money and results, overall in delivering our program.

You've heard from previous small craft harbour witnesses that we face significant pressures. We face the same pressures already identified, which I'll recap. We are dealing with significant infrastructure safety and capacity issues, life-cycle management issues, funding shortfalls, and harbour authority vulnerabilities. Also, we still have some harbour authorities that we consider to be non-core and that we therefore need to divest.

In addition, we have program delivery challenges. We are dealing with increased complexities in getting our work done, increased project costs, and international competition for human material resources to deliver on our programs. Something that is not unique to small craft harbours is that we have a rapid workforce transition occurring within the small craft harbours program, not just regionally but nationally.

This ends my overview, and I'll turn it over to my counterpart, James.

**Mr. James Boland (Regional Director, Strategic Initiatives, Pacific Region, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** Thank you, Jackey.

Good afternoon, gentlemen.

B.C. has 27,000 kilometres of coastline. As the little handout demonstrates, we have a total of 157 scheduled sites, of which 78 of those are harbours, core harbours. We have 54 harbour authorities who manage those 78 core sites. Jackey alluded to our volunteer workforce of between 550 and 600 people, which includes our harbour directors and those volunteers from the community who assist in harbour operations. All but two of our harbours have paid staff to support their initiatives.

The fishing industry in British Columbia has approximately 3,000 commercial fishing vessels, and in 2005, the landed value of B.C. commercial fishing was in the neighbourhood of \$365 million. The aquaculture industry generates another \$340 million, so the commercial fishing industry and aquaculture are over \$700 million annually.

We have a solid partnership with harbour authorities. Our major concerns are enhancing their viability skills so they can raise enough revenues to keep themselves going, to keep themselves independent.

A second issue is that we find a growing pressure on our waterfront. A lot of people want to move to British Columbia. The communities that support the harbours want to look at waterfront land as a better tax base, so they're looking at different kinds of opportunities on the waterfront. And one of the big pushes, from our perspective, is to get our harbour authorities more involved in community integrated planning to generate better strategic planning over time, so they don't get overrun by interests selling land and building condos right next door to a bustling harbour.

We also have first nations issues unique to British Columbia. We're involved with the B.C. treaty process in Indian Affairs to have them consider the 15 harbours that front first nations communities. These communities are not just commercial fishing harbours, they are often the ingress and egress of the community. There are no roads, so the only way in and out is by the harbour. So they particularly want treaties to understand that we don't want to be the last federal department standing by first nations when Indian Affairs settles a treaty with them. We think the harbour is an economic opportunity for first nations, so it should be part of the treaty process.

Jackey alluded to many problems. We'd like to have our people get more involved in how the community is changing around them, so we need design capability, engineering support, that kind of thing.

Climate change is having an impact on our harbours, so we need funding to take a look at how to better design or facilitate the changes of our commercial fishing fleet as they move from fishing for salmon to other species such as tuna, mackerel, sardines, and those types of fisheries that require larger boats.

It's a changing dynamic in British Columbia. We have solid partnerships with our HAs and see our business making them more viable and integrating them better with community aspirations.

Thank you.

• (1540)

**The Chair:** Thank you to our guests.

I forgot at the beginning, but I now want to apologize for the shifting of schedule last week. I know it was short notice, but we had the national harbour authority people here and we thought it would

be a good time to hear from those people. So we certainly thank you for your assistance in agreeing to being moved around.

**Mr. James Boland:** It was a long weekend in Ottawa, so it was good. Thank you.

**The Chair:** As they say in Newfoundland, it's a bad wind that doesn't blow fair for someone.

Mr. Simms is going to be our first questioner.

**Mr. Scott Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor, Lib.):** On the heels of calling it a bad wind, yes, here I am.

Mr. Chair, thank you very much, and I'd also like to thank our guests for coming.

There are several issues I'd like to touch upon, but just very briefly, I'll go directly to your comments.

Madame Richard, I will start with you. We've heard testimony in the past few weeks, and this number keeps being thrown out, about a \$475 million shortfall just to keep up what we have in harbour authorities. You said \$38 million for your region. Could you give a timeframe to that? Is that \$38 million right now in total?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Actually, the \$38 million I referred to is our annual allocation.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Yes.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** So that's what we manage annually as a budget.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Which begs the question, what do you feel is the shortfall in your neck of the woods?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** I believe, going back to previous presentations where we've identified a national gap of \$32 million to \$35 million, the Maritimes and gulf split of that would be about \$18 million.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** So that's per year?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Per year, yes.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** You mentioned divestiture where necessary. Can you explain what constitutes a necessary divestiture in your opinion?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Historically we had 557 harbours; therefore, we've reduced by 220-some odd to our current portfolio of 330. The difference between the 330 and the 284 is what we consider to be non-required harbours. Some of them are facilities, just pieces of infrastructure that are out there not being used, so it would be a straight removal. Some of them have "not significant" activity, therefore fishers could be adequately serviced at other harbours. Those facilities we consider divestitures.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** We hear this term "core activities" being thrown about. Could you describe those for me in your assessment of all this? What is a core activity when it comes to a harbour authority?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** The reference is to core harbours, and core harbours are harbours that support significant activity and are key to the commercial fishery to support operations locally. Those facilities, to be core, are managed by harbour authority groups, being the not-for-profit groups that are formed to take on the day-to-day management of the facilities on behalf of small craft harbours via a lease.

• (1545)

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Revenue generation is always the key word, and I know that's what leads to a lot of volunteer fatigue. I know some of the numbers being thrown out about the number of volunteers. You're talking about 2,000 volunteer board members. I would assume that number is going down instead of up, and most of that, I would assume, would be because of volunteer fatigue. A lot of them are frustrated. A lot of them are at their wit's end, as it were.

What advice would you give them—and I guess you normally do—as to revenue generation? And where do you think these 2,000 volunteers in harbour authorities are falling down when it comes to revenue generation?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** I mentioned that we have many harbour authorities that have been around for some time. Oftentimes what happens is the original board seems to have maintained itself over time, so there's not much renewal, and that causes some fatigue. Harbour authorities are also facing increased fatigue because of the fact that they feel the infrastructure is deteriorating rapidly.

So far as revenue generation goes, what we've asked—and we encourage—from harbour authorities is an effective planning process so they can look at the harbours and the infrastructure to determine what the long-term requirements are, understanding that to be able to work with their client base to look at what services they require at that facility to sustain their businesses.

That being said, they're able to structure a fee system that will allow them to generate adequate revenue to minimally cover their operating costs and put some in the bank to be able to do some of the other critical work. That's what we encourage.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Right now in our province what we have—and I'm sure the chair will agree with me—is that we're getting more activity regarding pleasure craft. We're getting larger boats, spending more money, coming from farther afield.

Would you suggest to a harbour authority that maybe they should tap into that source of revenue as a tourism initiative, or is that something you would steer clear of?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Well, I think when there's an opportunity for a harbour authority to consider broad community interest and other activities to diversify, it should be encouraged as a means of generating extra revenue. However, most of our facilities in the Maritimes and gulf region are at their capacity, with the expanded client base and whatnot, and there are not that many opportunities to look at diversification unless there's upland that they could use for other ecotourism-type operations or—

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I'm sorry to interrupt you, but I don't have a lot of time.

One of the complaints that a lot of harbour authorities have is they get approached on an ecotourism basis and they feel the opportunity is being diminished, I guess, by DFO or by small craft harbours as something they just don't want to get into. Therefore, in regard to that, there's a lack of funding. In other words, whenever they want to approach the government about getting funding, they're always told not to mention anything about diversifying.

Would you agree with that?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Well, I understand that the program faces a funding shortfall. We're tapped already to support our priority infrastructure needs; therefore, investing in another commercial endeavour that's not necessarily related to the fishery would not be smart. However, we encourage harbour authorities to seek other funding partners if there is an opportunity to diversify. And if in planning our harbours we can build that into the long-term planning requirement for the facility, in consultation with the harbour authority and the community at large, that's what we try to do.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Mr. Boland, you mentioned that the harbour authority should be a part of the treaty process. Did I get this right when you say you're always the last piece of the puzzle, or do you hope you are not the last piece of the puzzle during these treaty negotiations?

**Mr. James Boland:** Hopefully we're not. I think Indian Affairs in the treaty process should recognize that these harbours are valuable assets to the first nations community, and they should be part of the process, rather than their understanding or their hope that DFO will continue to maintain and update them after the treaty process is settled.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** There are 15 harbours, you said, involved in the process right now. How different is it for one of these harbours... and this is primarily, exclusively, run by first nations groups?

**Mr. James Boland:** Some of them are run by first nations groups. Some of them are supported by the small craft harbours program. But when you get involved in a treaty process, it's our belief that they should be considered part of the whole asset that the natives are negotiating for or that the crown is negotiating with them for.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** So how different are these 15 harbours from another regular harbour, like Steveston, which is the biggest one, isn't it?

**Mr. James Boland:** They don't have any other way to support them. They're on the water, and there are no roads into them, so the harbour is an integral part of their community.

•(1550)

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I want to go back to aquaculture for just a moment, because you mentioned it's like a piece of the puzzle that doesn't have much of a historical record because it's a come-lately sort of thing, I would assume. I have in my area a lot of blue mussel farms, and they have problems trying to use the current infrastructure that is out there. So how much of the investment of the \$38 million goes towards aquaculture when it comes to small craft harbours? In other words, how much do they have to change to take in some of these interests for aquaculture?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** As I mentioned in my opening remarks, we cater to an expanded client base, including aboriginals entering the fishery as well as aquaculture business relying on our sites for service and access. We don't divvy up the budget based on the type of fishery. The way we allocate our funds is we have a priority rating system that considers every project submission independent of each other and it is weighted against criteria.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Does aquaculture then figure prominently in that weighted system?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Not as a weight, no. What happens is we have safety considerations, and obviously if you're dealing with overcrowded facilities and congestion, if aquaculture is part of that client mix, it does add to the pressures and the traffic at a facility.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Certainly you would give it emphasis and a weight because of that reason alone. In other words, if there's a massive influx of activity on any particular harbour because they recently started an aquaculture initiative, would they be in line to receive more funding or be a larger priority as a result of that?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** We don't provide facilities that are exclusive to aquaculture interests, but obviously if you're dealing with a congested facility, then you're adding to the pressure there, and the pressures come from aquaculture business. Obviously it is adding to your safety rating in the priority rating system.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Speak to me about this priority rating system.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Simms. I'm sorry.

Mr. Blais.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raynald Blais (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon.

Are there differences in the management of the Small Craft Harbour Program in the Maritimes and in the Gulf, for example? Do the differences in management stem from the geography of the area, the way things are done, or is it more fundamental? Do you operate on the same basis in terms of eligibility criteria: who gets money first, how the work is done, the speed with which they are done? Are there differences among the regions?

Ms. Richard.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Our office in Ottawa is making a big effort to try to develop a program that is consistent from one region to another. On the question of funds, our system is based on eight criteria and it applies in all regions. So it is a common system. On the question of the management of our harbour administration program,

we take the same approach, to use leases. We establish our responsibilities with the harbour committees. That is also a common system. The harbour committees handle everyday questions and minor work.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** You said that your region covered three provinces: New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. There are differences in those provinces or territories, if only geographical differences. One place may be more exposed to the wind and to strong tides. I am thinking about Nova Scotia, in particular, or southern New Brunswick. I imagine that this has an effect on infrastructures or structures.

How do you deal with the big differences between one area and another?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** We do planning. We are in the process of preparing a long-term facilities plan with the harbour committees and communities. The climate that an area is facing has to be taken into consideration. Some places in the region have more need for dredging, for example. As well, the construction of wharves on the Bay of Fundy will be different from construction in other places in the Gulf region.

•(1555)

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** How is the construction of wharves different in a place where there are stronger tides?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** In the Bay of Fundy, there are more pile structures.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** More what?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Pile structures. I don't know the term in French.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Could you describe it?

[*English*]

We have 35-foot tides in the Bay of Fundy; therefore, the infrastructure is set up on piles.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** They are on pillars.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** That's right. It is not constructed in the same way. I am not an engineer, I can't really describe how ...

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** So some differences are attributable to the different weather or geographical phenomena, and particularly to high tides.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Each wharf is unique. A separate plan is prepared for each wharf, taking into account the climate and other factors that may have an impact on the long-term development of the wharf.

[English]

There's no one-size-fits-all type of approach.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Could we say that wharves may deteriorate more in some places? As a result, when the government or the department estimates that restoring wharves will call for \$475 million, priority should be given to places where the infrastructures deteriorate more rapidly.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** I can't really talk about how fast the infrastructure deteriorates in different regions. The infrastructure as a whole has deteriorated considerably. That is what has to be recognized. I can't know the details of why the infrastructure in a particular region deteriorates faster than in another. I don't have those figures at hand, and so I can't speak to the differences.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Has the department done studies to determine that in a particular place the life of a wharf is 15 years, and that in another it is 20 years or 26 years, and that based on the geography, more breakwaters should be installed, with this or that? Does the department do studies like this?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** I am sure that studies have been done, but I am not the one who has requested them. If I am not mistaken, from 2001 to 2004 the infrastructure was reviewed, an asset-based review was done. Studies were done in each region. However, I can't say exactly what initiatives and what conclusions came out of them.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** How much time do I have left, Mr. Chair?

[English]

**The Chair:** You have one minute and 20 seconds.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** I would first like to address the subject of climate change. We should perhaps give Mr. Boland an opportunity to express himself on that question.

Ms. Richard, you undoubtedly have an opinion on the subject. I think that climate change, higher tides and storms are resulting in rapid deterioration of infrastructure and wharves. In fact there have recently been storms in the Maritimes at Christmas, over the holiday period.

Do you agree?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Absolutely. We have had three storms in the last four or five years: the one at Christmas, another one at Christmas two years ago in the Gulf region, and Hurricane Juan, a few years earlier. Those storms had a greater impact because of the serious state of disrepair of the infrastructure.

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Thank you.

Mr. Boland, is the same thing happening where you are?

[English]

**Mr. James Boland:** I would agree. There is another consideration, though. Climate change is changing the impact on the fisheries, so the fishing vessels are changing. In some cases they're getting much larger, so we need more space for them to be housed at the harbour. As the resources change on climate change impacts, they're going after different types of species.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Blais.

Mr. Stoffer.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our guests for coming today.

You both mentioned the aquaculture and commercial fishery use of the wharves, but you didn't mention the sports fishery. Mr. Boland, the sports fishery is a huge industry on the west coast but not so much on the east coast, although we do have some of it. What is the impact of the sports fishery on these wharves? Do you have a figure for that?

• (1600)

**Mr. James Boland:** I don't have an exact figure, but we do have strategies that the harbour authorities put in place. As the fishing fleet moves out for the summer and the recreational boat traffic comes in, they'll rent the same strip out. So they're getting double booking for the same slip to improve their revenue base.

They would like to have more recreational opportunities, but in most cases they're fixed with the space they have available. Their primary use is for the commercial fishery, but they do very creatively try to address the needs of the recreational fishery as well.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Are there no figures at all that are compiled as to what the use is by the sports fishery of the wharves in B.C., such as you have for aquaculture and commercial?

**Mr. James Boland:** I can get those for you. I don't have them with me today.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** That would be greatly appreciated.

Also, as you know, the situation at Digby has grown. The Digby situation in Nova Scotia was an ugly affair, but not necessarily with the small craft harbours, because Transport Canada was involved in this as well.

One of the issues back home is the grey area between where DFO and the small craft harbours program has responsibility and where Transport Canada has responsibility. It's always a bit of a confusing issue, especially when it comes to breakwater repair. I was up in the high Arctic, and they're very concerned about breakwater issues. But I know that's not for you to address.

In Nova Scotia, as you know, with the increasing stormy weather we're getting, the demand for breakwaters is increasing. Does breakwater repair or additions or deletions fall upon the small craft harbours program, or is it a Transport Canada responsibility?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** The small craft harbours program does have breakwaters within its inventory. Therefore, if the breakwater is instrumental in protecting and providing shelter to our harbour, that is part of our long-term planning process, and we will be spending money, as priorities are determined, to repair and develop as needed.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Adding new ones would be your responsibility as well, is that right?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** If it's within the harbour and it is deemed to be a requirement as part of the long-term plan for that harbour, yes.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Who determines that, Madam? What role would Transport play in any of that?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Transport Canada does not play a role. They have breakwaters that they use for their own purposes, but when we determine the requirement for breakwaters within the harbour, that's determined by the engineers, in consultation oftentimes with the harbour authorities, with the community, and with Public Works and other experts in that area. And there are studies undertaken to understand what the requirement is, as well as the tidal action and the breakwater requirement for that harbour.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** This is my last question. Are there still some harbours you're going to divest yourself of? Is that list public, and if it is, is it possible to get a copy for our committee for the maritime region?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** I'm not sure if it is a public list, but that's something I can bring to my Ottawa counterparts and ask them if we can make that information known.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** It would be helpful for the MPs of those areas that are affected. They could at least advise their community groups that this is coming down the pipe and they may wish to either participate in HAs or sort of defend their interest in keeping it a core project.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** As far as the divestitures I referred to, those are the harbours that right now are not harbour authority managed. They're harbours that are pretty well known locally. But I will follow up and see if I can make a list available.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Do you have a ballpark figure of how many the DFO is looking at for further divestiture?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Well, to complete what we view as reducing to a core, we have thirty; so there are thirty harbours that are not managed by harbour authorities, that are either just pieces of infrastructure that have to be removed or have such low activity that we'll look at transfer options or removal.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Stoffer.

Mr. Kamp.

**Mr. Randy Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for coming. I appreciate your testimony.

I will try to be brief and leave some time, if I can, for Mr. Allen, and maybe even Mr. Calkins.

I want to return briefly, if I can, to the whole issue of revenue generation. The reason I'm curious is a conversation I had with an employee of a harbour authority from B.C. He indicated that of all the revenue generation that goes on in small craft harbours across Canada—and I don't know if this is true—80% of that revenue comes from B.C., despite it having only 78 core harbours, as opposed to hundreds elsewhere.

So my first question is, do you track all of that? I guess you would know how much each core harbour, or harbour authority, under your

jurisdiction generates in other activities. Does it tend to be true that some regions are better than others in getting revenues besides what they get from the small craft harbours program?

● (1605)

**Mr. James Boland:** I can't tell you specifically what other regions do, but I know from a study we've just done on our own that they've raised close to \$9.2 million. I think that's very significant. I don't know if it's 80%, but it might be in the neighbourhood of 50% or 55% of the national total. So it's a very significant amount of money they've raised to support their initiatives on the harbour.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Jackey, do you know the number in your region?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** The numbers a couple of years ago suggested it was about \$4.5 million to \$5 million.

I think what we have to take into account with the fee structures established by harbour authorities is that we encourage them to charge market fees. I guess not all opportunities are equal from one location to the next, insofar as some of our harbours have processing plants or subleases from which they can pick up more money, versus other harbour authorities who might be more dependent on berthage, versus other harbour authorities who might have a restaurant business on their upland. So all locations are somewhat different.

To go back to answering your question, it was about \$4.5 million to \$5 million a couple of years back.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Mr. Boland, do you think B.C. harbours are doing more creative things to have doubled their revenue-generating capacity, versus, say, this other region with about one-quarter of the harbours?

**Mr. James Boland:** My personal thought is that they're more entrepreneurial.

As you know, Randy, the B.C. spirit is such that if the government isn't going to do it, we'll try to do it as much as we can ourselves.

They have been very creative in developing other resource revenue operations—building washrooms, laundry facilities, parking lots, and those kinds of things, for which they charge in order to increase their revenues and the services of their clients at the same time. They're very creative in raising funds to pour back into the maintenance of the harbours.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Does the small craft harbours program provide any training or ideas to these harbour authorities on how they might do this?

**Mr. James Boland:** We provide engineering expertise to help them with their buildings. We've done some environmental work on special parking lots so that those are environmentally sound. We do assist them in a variety of ways. That's what I meant in my earlier remarks, that we encourage entrepreneurship. We provide training courses in marketing and those types of things, so the folks at least have an understanding of how to go about seeking different funds from different institutions or agencies, or in trying to raise money themselves.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** I just have one other question.

Both of you are well experienced. Have you given any thought to whether there would be some value in becoming a special operating agency for the small craft harbours program? If there were some value to that, what might it be?

**Mr. James Boland:** It's my understanding that it was looked at briefly when the coast guard was going through a similar process a number of years ago. I wasn't with the program at the time, but when you look at the rationale for SOAs, it seems to have a good application to small craft harbours.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** As James said, it was something that was considered a few years back. I think the concept behind special operating agencies is to give more flexibility and authority in operations in general, but at the time, it was viewed as not being opportune for small craft harbours; therefore, it was just parked.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Mr. Allen.

**Mr. Mike Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have a couple of quick questions. The first one is, in the previous incarnation of the committee there was about \$400 million that was put out as a requirement for the infrastructure side. There have been a lot of discussions on aquaculture, and we had a big meeting with the aquaculture people here last week. Whether it's \$400 million, \$500 million, whatever it is, has anticipated growth in aquaculture been factored into those numbers in the future?

The second thing is, we heard—I think it was last week—that Quebec was spending around 60% of their budget on dredging. Has that ramping up of dredging been reflected in the numbers you're looking for from a budget? I'd like it if both of you could comment on that.

•(1610)

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** I believe the \$400 million you refer to comes from the long-term list of projects that would very well take into account the dredging requirement. Whether they added requirements to accommodate an expanded client base, I can't really speak to, because I wasn't part of coming up with those numbers.

**Mr. James Boland:** I'll mention two things. The numbers reflected a point in time and they're evolutionary. No one expected we were going to have a better rate on the U.S. dollar when those numbers were being done two or three years ago. So things change economically. To me, it's like a number up in the air; it's an aspiration. It's a need today.

The dredging situation I think is included. I think dredging is a conundrum for the program because we can only dredge within our own water lots. But a lot of our harbours are within other channels or other jurisdictions. So our harbour might be fine, but getting to it is quite difficult. We're not talking about numbers that are our responsibility. For instance, in British Columbia, I could spend about \$2 million a year on dredging; I can afford to spend about \$400,000. It gives you an idea of the risk we take just to maintain what we have.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** Mr. Chair, how much time do I have left?

**The Chair:** Two minutes and 22 seconds.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** This is my last question. You commented, Ms. Richard, on the HR issues and going forward. What are some of the challenges realistically, considering the HR challenges and all the infrastructure work we're trying to get done across Canada and everything else in all the different areas? How practical is it? Do we face HR challenges to even be able to get the work done in a timely fashion? How reasonable is it? Should we be planning this workload? How many years out?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** HR is a challenge. I think insofar as our project delivery, we look at tapping into a mix of resources. In the Maritimes, we don't have an engineering base as the Pacific does. But we do have a strong relationship with Public Works in that we depend on their marine engineering expertise. We also look to the private sector and to harbour authorities that do have built-up capacity to contribute to project delivery. We try to get the best resource mix for getting the work done, to allow the work to get done in the most cost-effective and timely manner. That's one point.

Insofar as planning out our work, I think we're apt to get better delivery and cost-effective work if it's planned out over a longer period of time. So when we can go beyond those fiscal boundaries and try to extend the construction season, we can stimulate the market and increase the bidding for our work. So we're not trying to get it done by jamming it all into the same period. I think those are two means of trying to get our work done and completed in the most timely and cost-effective manner.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** Could you answer the same question?

**Mr. James Boland:** It's always been a challenge to have a legitimate window to do the work, so planning is the key. We'd like better, more relaxed regulations within our own department to assist us in that regard. But we're stuck with the regulatory requirements from Treasury Board, so that's a little bit of inflexibility for us. Planning is critical. We, as well as Jackey's group, do five-year plans. We work with the harbour authorities to get them to initiate other kinds of funding sources so that they can either do preparatory work or things in place of the crown's work. It's a mixture, depending on the project, the capability of the harbour authority you're working with, and the season you have in which you can do the work that you need to do.

•(1615)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Allen.

Mr. Valley.

**Mr. Roger Valley (Kenora, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses.

You probably noticed I have just been subbed into the committee. I'm a long way from a harbour. My riding is almost in the dead centre of Canada. Just a few kilometres outside of it is actually the dead centre of Canada. In my riding of Kenora we do have lots of infrastructure that at one time was under DFO control, but it's probably part of a lot of the facilities that have been gotten rid of or deleted.

My colleague asked a couple of questions about core harbours, non-core harbours. I wrote down an east coast example, but the west coast is similar. Of 557 harbours, now there are 284 core facilities on the east coast.

We know you're under budget challenges and so on, when decisions are made and when you take an existing facility out of a category like being a harbour you support, or a core harbour.... I think you said now there are 322 on the east coast and 284 are core, meaning that the rest of them will be gotten rid of or removed from that. I'm not sure what term you want to use.

How are those decisions made? When you have a harbour situation that's not going to fit into your core categories, your core business plans, or whatever you want, how is that decision arrived at? Is it arrived at with the communities?

If I were a small town and facing something being removed, can you tell me how you would bring about that discussion on either coast?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Going way back when, we created our first harbour authorities 20 years ago. Most of our harbour authorities were formed in the early nineties, after the freeze was lifted. It was a long process, and decisions weren't made overnight.

It's a matter of consulting with the community, not just once but on many occasions, to look at harbours within the broader area, to look at the fishing activity, and to try to determine what is best, not from a government standpoint but from a community standpoint, insofar as where there are concentrated activities and how we can best support the critical needs of the fishery with the infrastructure available.

As time has moved on, fast forward 20 years later, we've been operating with our core for the past 10 years, if you will. It was a long process—a lot of consultation, and frequent consultation. At the end of it, I like to believe it was a community decision.

**Mr. Roger Valley:** Mr. Boland, do you have any similar thoughts?

**Mr. James Boland:** Divestiture, to me, means that if it's principally a recreational harbour, the mandate is to look after the commercial fishing industry, so we will divest. That's what's been happening in Ontario. The majority of those harbours have been recreational harbours.

The second step is that we seek interests in the community, if someone wants to take it over as part of a harbour authority process. So it's up to the community to decide whether they want to manage that on behalf of the crown or recognize that if no one wants to step in and manage it, we're going to divest it. The question is given to

the community and they have ample opportunity to decide what they want to do with that harbour.

**Mr. Roger Valley:** From my own experience, the question isn't always quite that clear. The question is this: we're backing out of it; is anybody going to pick it up?

As an inland commercial fisherman myself, I've held licences for 35 years, and I know it's not in either one of your jurisdictions, but support even for the inland fisherman has gone totally. Facilities we normally would have used in the past are no longer around. That's not a question to you. That's just a statement from somebody who was involved for many years.

Again, I'll go to the east coast, because I wrote down your numbers, but of 322 existing harbours, 284 are core harbours. So there is a list that is going to be taken out of support. Are you waiting for some local entity to step up to the plate? I'm not sure if I got that correctly.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** As to the difference between the portfolio and the core, some of the 30 or 40-odd sites are actually being de-scheduled. There is no infrastructure there, so it's an administrative process and it's just a matter of getting them off the books. For some of them, it's just a matter of taking out the dead infrastructure. For the most part in those facilities, there is no activity.

When you go back historically, when we divested the 200-odd for those harbours, there were harbours with a strong recreational component and very little fishing component. So those were transferred to community groups and whatnot, and some were transferred to local fisher associations where there was interest.

Insofar as what we have left to get off the books is concerned, there is not significant activity there.

• (1620)

**Mr. Roger Valley:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Valley.

Mr. Lévesque.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In its 2001 report, the Committee noted that fishing harbours had been allowed to deteriorate and required immediate repair to the point that many had been barricaded or were subject to various kinds of usage restrictions. This seems to be still the case today.

How many harbours in each of your regions are subject to either partial or complete restrictions on use because of inadequate maintenance? I would also appreciate it if you would identify those ports for us.

I would also like to know what the proportion is of the obligations you have to the Aboriginal harbours in each of your regions, in percentage terms. I believe that in the Maritimes, you also manage the Lower North Shore. We know that there are no roads to serve those regions. Mr. Boland also mentioned that on the Pacific coast there are essential harbours that have no road services. I would like to know the proportion.

That is all for the moment.

[English]

**Mr. James Boland:** From British Columbia, I'm pleased to say that all our ports are either in fair or good condition. So we don't have any that are barricaded. We don't have any that are not being utilized.

[Translation]

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** With respect to Aboriginal communities, 44 percent of our infrastructure supports that clientele. These are not just traditional fishers. There are also Aboriginal communities that fish, as well as aquaculture in the areas around our wharves, as I mentioned at the beginning.

With respect to our infrastructures, 66 percent of our infrastructure base is at the end of its useful lifespan, of its sustainability.

We have barricades. We believe that about 26 percent of our infrastructure is not in good repair and presents us with major challenges. While the situation has not improved since 2001, I believe it has probably stayed the same. But since that time there has in fact been further deterioration and more pressure.

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** Are there any where you have had to suspend activities because of disrepair?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** Barricades? Yes. I don't have the figures in front of me, but I can find them in my papers. We have a lot of structures where the barricades are causing more pressure on the other facilities there.

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** What is the economic contribution of small craft harbours to local communities in each of your regions?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** That is a somewhat difficult question to answer. There are \$1.1 billion in goods landed in the Maritimes and the Gulf as a whole. There are also \$300 million in goods that come from aquaculture. The amount of revenue, including the contribution from processing plants and local employment, is not something I have at my fingertips, but the contribution to communities where we have facilities is quite significant.

• (1625)

[English]

**Mr. James Boland:** We've provided to the clerk seven studies that you folks have asked for, economic generation studies that we've done in British Columbia. The most impressive one that I have seen suggests that for every dollar the crown invests in a harbour, there's \$50 in spinoff benefits throughout the local community. So they are economic generators.

We're just updating the regional report we did in 2004. We're signing the contract when I get back tomorrow, and we'll be doing an updated economic report on that for the end of the year.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Lévesque and Mr. Boland.

Mr. Stoffer, please.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** I just want to reiterate. You said that for every dollar the small craft harbours program has invested, you get \$50 in return. Is that correct?

**Mr. James Boland:** It was that \$50 is generated within the economic base of the community.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** It seems rather strange, then, that you would divest yourself of that. It's a hell of a money maker for the government, isn't it?

**Mr. James Boland:** Yes.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Okay, thank you.

Sir, I want to thank our researcher for this following question. This is for you, Madam Richard.

The department has indicated that harbour authorities have access to other federal sources for funding. Is ACOA part of that aspect of funding for harbour authorities?

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** ACOA invests in economic development locally. We have had harbour authorities that have been able to access ACOA funding. It goes to the point that when we work out the long-term plans for our harbours, if there are opportunities for diversification it is also considered. Sometimes we've had ACOA come to the table and provide funding to harbour authorities looking to expand or diversify their harbour to satisfy other needs—not necessarily supportive of the fisheries but of other development wants.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** It seems rather to be duplicating the work, doesn't it? DFO spends a lot of time divesting themselves of a harbour to an authority and that authority then goes to another branch of government looking for funding to do work on the harbour, or whatever aspect of it.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** There are two situations in your question, two scenarios. It has happened in the region that we've had harbour authorities that have been part of our core harbour base that have chosen to go off on their own and have naturally volunteered to be divested. Those harbour authorities have proven successful in diversifying themselves and accessing ACOA funding.

Whether that makes sense or not, I think harbour authorities, in the example I speak to, have been able to open the door to more creative opportunities in working with local development commissions and ACOA in seeking alternate means of funding. Whether it be through HRSDC or otherwise, they can become creative-resourceful. But it has also been the case on a few occasions that we've had ACOA participate with harbour authorities to invest in initiatives at harbours whose ownership has not been transferred.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Would it be the same for the west coast? Would they have access to the western diversification fund?

**Mr. James Boland:** Yes, they have, and they have access to provincial funds. Most recently there's been a \$50 million fund that the province has developed or is marketing to generate economic development on the coast, and some harbour authorities have applied for that kind of funding. It's principally for waterfront development, so it's not simply for the harbours, but fortunately those harbours are the central point for that harbour development. Some of the money will flow through them and improve their capacity and improve transportation in terms of roads and access to the facility. I was alluding earlier to their being very creative in seeking moneys that might be available from other institutions.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** This is my last question for you.

When a volunteer group such as a harbour authority decides...if a couple of them have moved away and they're down to three members and those members are burned out—they can't handle the management or operation of the harbour any more—what happens to that harbour when it's still deemed necessary for commercial or aquaculture activities? What happens to that harbour then?

• (1630)

**Mr. James Boland:** Personally, I haven't experienced that yet.

**Ms. Jackey Richard:** It has happened in a few cases in the region. In a few of them, the harbour authority was renewed insofar as we were able to get another board to take on the operations. In other cases, the harbour authority that had fatigue to that point was able to work with a harbour authority within the greater area and they amalgamated, with two harbours being managed by one harbour authority.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Would there be plans in place in the event that it couldn't happen? If it's just divestiture, except for the ones you're talking about for 20 years....

**The Chair:** Give a very quick answer, if you would like to do so.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Would DFO take one back?

**The Chair:** I said thank you, Mr. Simms.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** I mean, Mr. Stoffer. Sorry.

I'm just waiting for an answer. If you want to provide a short answer, you can, but I have to move on.

It has already been answered. Good.

It's Mr. Calkins, is it?

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We certainly appreciate the information you've brought forward so far.

At a committee meeting a couple of weeks back, I believe Mr. Hegge and Mr. Bergeron, the director general for small craft harbours, were here. I didn't get a chance to ask this question during the committee meeting, so I'll ask you in the hopes of getting some clarification on this. The deck they brought that day outlined the small craft harbours vision, and the first sentence read, "The existence of a critical national network of harbours, in good working

condition, capable of meeting the principal needs of the commercial fishing industry...". Then it went on to talk about the harbour authorities and so on.

It's my understanding that this vision is being re-evaluated right now. I would just like either of you to share with this committee, first of all, whether it's true that this vision is being looked at. It seems to be outdated, given the fact that we've talked about incorporating or looking at, with regard to small craft harbours, first nations issues and those of the aquaculture industry and those of the commercial sport fishing industry, which my colleague, Mr. Stoffer, brought up. I'm just wondering where that process is right now. Could you describe to me how that process is happening in terms of formulating a new vision for small craft harbours?

**Mr. James Boland:** As I alluded to in my opening remarks, we're in the process of developing a strategic plan. The program is 20 years old, or will be in 2008, so in our minds it has evolved over the 20 years. We want to take a look at the best practices that have been determined over the past 20 years and develop a framework and a new vision, possibly, to take us into the next 20 years. So that whole process is under review. It's not complete. We are taking a look at whether we should or shouldn't expand and at what kinds of things we have learned in the past that we want to enhance or eliminate so we can have a much more efficient program in the future.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Who's involved in that process?

**Mr. James Boland:** There is a small craft harbours management committee.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Are there consultations with the broader industry, or is it basically within the department?

**Mr. James Boland:** Right now it's in the department.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Would it be fair to say, then, that when a new small craft harbours vision statement comes out it will be a product of the department with the approval of the minister? Or will it be a product of the department in consultation with industry? How would that process play out? Would it be brought forward as a draft with some consultation with stakeholders in small craft harbours, or is it basically going to stay within the department?

**Mr. James Boland:** I couldn't give you the specifics. At this point in time we're just talking among ourselves about what we could do. I would imagine, and you can't hold me to this, that the minister would be involved in verifying that kind of change, if it is a change. We'd certainly talk to our advisory processes about the changes as well.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** When it comes to divestiture, I know there will be some other people coming before this committee to testify about some of the impact of divestiture. I'd like to talk about sport fishing a little bit, if I may.

When it comes to taking a look at the value, we've thrown some numbers out there, and you brought some numbers. About \$1 invested by the government has a \$50 return in economic spinoffs and so on. I'm just concerned that sometimes, when it comes to divestiture of some of these harbours, we seem to be divesting recreational harbours, and I'm wondering if there's some confusion about what's a recreational harbour, what's recreational sport fishing, and what's commercial recreational sport fishing.

When I was in Prince Edward Island this summer, I went out a few times on some lobster boats. When they took us out for two hours of fishing, they took out about 14 people at \$35 a head. That's about \$1,500 for two hours of work. They did that three times a day, so that's \$4,500 a day for that boat to go out. At any point in time, on the two trips I went on, if we were lucky we caught 20 pounds of fish. If you divide that out, that's \$75 a pound, not to mention all the money we spent on accommodations and what have you. It seems to me that if commercial sport fishing isn't recognized as being an essential part of the small craft harbour study, we could be missing out on a very important aspect of our fishing industry and economy. I would like to get some assurance from you here today that commercial sport fishing will be included in that vision statement or will at least be discussed or talked about within the department.

• (1635)

**Mr. James Boland:** You're asking the wrong people here. That's one that could have been directed to Mr. Hegge last week. The deputy will be here next week, so I'd rather you direct those questions to her.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Calkins, for the questions. Thank you, Mr. Boland and Madam Richard, for your interest and assistance to us here today as we proceed with our study on small craft harbours.

Committee members, we will take a short break now until our next witness is prepared.

• \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

•

• (1640)

**The Chair:** We shall reconvene and welcome Ms. Geraldine Nickerson.

Did I get it right, Ms. Nickerson?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson (Harbour Manager, Harbour Authority of Woods Harbour):** You did. Thank you.

**The Chair:** She's the harbour manager for Woods Harbour.

Welcome to our committee. Thank you for taking the time to come to present your views to us and answer questions from the committee.

You may give your opening remarks.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Thank you to the committee for the invitation and the chance to be here.

I am Geraldine Nickerson and I'm the manager of the harbour authority of Woods Harbour in southwestern Nova Scotia.

The harbour authority was incorporated in October 1995 but didn't commence business operations until January 1996. Our mandate is to provide safe berthage for all vessels within harbour authority waters and to provide a safe service area to all harbour users in the administration of their business while in our harbour.

We have three wharves, and we're rather unique in that we have one wharf of each classification. Our Falls Point wharf is a class A wharf—of course, our largest one—and this facility provides berthage to 82 commercial and recreational vessels. The Lower Woods Harbour wharf is our class B wharf, and it provides berthage and services to 32 commercial and recreational vessels. The Forbes Point wharf is our class C wharf, and it provides service and berthage to 11 commercial and recreational vessels.

We have a very lucrative fishery in our area. All three of our harbours are very busy. We're year-round, we're ice-free, and we are located strategically to the prominent fisheries: lobster, groundfish, herring, tuna, swordfish, and we also have an aquaculture venture going on.

Now, on the day-to-day management, I assume that.... In fact, I have to tell you I don't know why I'm here. Nobody gave me a "this is what we want to hear", so I decided for myself.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** You know what? I have that luxury.

In terms of my day-to-day management, as I said, I am the manager of the harbour authority. I was elected by the fishermen. We had 182 eligible voters and I got 168 of the votes. We had a 100% turnout, and I'm happy to say that we did it, because I know it doesn't happen often.

I have a 20-hour-a-week contract, or my contract states that I will work 20 hours a week. I usually work between 40 and 60 hours. I maintain an office on the site at our class A wharf. I take directions from a 15-member board...sometimes I take directions from a 15-member board.

Speaking of our board, I heard someone mention boards and burnout. We renew our board. As I said, we have three wharves; we have a 15-member board, and each wharf has equal representation. We make it like a "you have to serve this year" type of thing, so we change folks around, and it seems to work quite well for us.

I manage the facilities at all three of the wharves. I collect the fees. I assign berthages or work with my board on berthing plans, storage, and landings. I develop, or help to develop with our board, policies, regulations, fee schedules, and we look at rules and regulations that would help to ensure the safe usage of our facility.

I inspect our facility and report any required repairs. I try very hard to ensure compliance—and I'll get to more about that later.

I do just about everything. I manage repair and maintenance contracts. We have now started, just in the last couple of years, providing technological access/computer access to our fishermen in our office, so we're working hard on that. We also try to act as liaison between our fishermen and fisheries-related resources and all three levels of government.

That's a basic outline of what I do.

• (1645)

On the financial responsibilities of our harbour authority, I don't know how familiar everyone is with exactly what we pay. The harbour authority is responsible for the financial end of our operation. We have seven electric light bills. We take care of those. A big thing that's happened lately with our financial responsibility and our electric light bills or our electricity is that now Nova Scotia Power doesn't come on our wharves to repair any of their street lights and whatever, so we have to pay that. We pay for jimmy lifts, for our own electrician to come and do the work, and in the last year that particular area has really skyrocketed in the amount we pay.

On oil disposal, with all of my vessels, there are usually two to three times a year that we do a really major...when everybody's changing their oil and everybody's cleaning up. We consider it very important to do this within environmental parameters, so we have oil disposal buildings. Our oily containers and rags, things like that, are in one spot; our used oil is in another. It's very costly to have this properly disposed of, although within the last two years we were able to identify a source to which we could sell our used oil. So instead of our having to pay to have it removed, we are having it removed and generating a small amount of income.

On garbage disposal, you may not think garbage disposal on three wharves of the size we have is much, but it is a lot. In fact, it probably is costing us about \$1,300 a month for garbage disposal.

Snow and ice removal is another factor.

Legal fees have come up just recently. We now have a lawyer who is retained by the harbour authority. There have been several incidents in the last two years for which we've had to use her services, and unfortunately, the number of times we need to use our lawyer is increasing.

Then there is a contribution to funded projects. We do that, of course. As you all probably know, we have a 20-80 split with the small crafts and harbours program on most of our small maintenance projects, our minor works projects, and we also cost share with the provincial government.

One thing that is a financial responsibility of ours is payment for projects while we're waiting for funding. That uses up a huge amount of what little money we have.

Next is revenue generation. I had this down, and I was sitting over there listening and I heard it come up over and over again, and I said, wow, it's good that I included it in what I had to say today, because apparently you're all interested in it.

How do we generate revenue? We're very lucky, in a way, at the harbour authority in Woods Harbour because we have a very lucrative fishery, a large number of boats, and the three different wharves. It's not as if we have one little wharf and six vessels. We generate our revenue through user fees, and that includes berthage fees. That's what each vessel pays, of course, to dock at the wharf. We have licence fees, which include unloading licences, truck access licences, lobster cars. That's about it for the licences. Oh, I also have reefer licences this year, and we have subleases.

We have in the past couple of years endeavoured to increase our revenue generation. When I came on board, it was about three years ago. I don't think anyone had really looked at generating revenue before. But I look at the harbour authority as a business and that perhaps we should be running it as a business to the best of our ability. So I started pushing for increasing revenue. In the last years, we've increased the number of private hoists on the wharves by two and we have also started licensing reefers on the facility—we're unable to increase our subleases—and we will be able to do more as time goes on.

The revenue we generate by user fees is adequate to cover our operational expenses and our minor repairs. We are, however, still entirely dependent on the government for major repair and expansion.

• (1650)

I should say, before stopping there—and this is just my opinion and something we talk a lot about on the board—as far as major repairs and expansions and being dependent on the government is concerned, we don't feel that we should be constantly going to the government with our hand out. It isn't the right way to do business. If we're going to be looking at operating as a business, then we should be taking some responsibility for generating our own revenue.

If I come to you with my hand out and it's empty, you're going to look at me and say too bad for you; you want me to fill it. But if I come to you with two hands and I have something in this one, saying, I can contribute this, but what I need is some help from you in this hand, then I think we're able to do business a little better.

That said, when I talked to Stephen, I asked him what I should talk about. He said to talk about what I do, and about some challenges and problems. So here we are at the problems.

Our number one problem at my harbour authority is overcrowding, lack of space, and I want to talk about that at length.

• (1655)

**The Chair:** Ms. Nickerson, I'd ask you, if I could, to cue up some of your remarks and maybe answer some during questions.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Yes, certainly.

Overcrowding is an issue with us because of the increased size of vessels. The government, to my knowledge, looks at how many vessels we had 10 years ago and how many we have now. They ask why we don't have room. The thing of it is that the vessel size has increased significantly in all harbours, and the wharves weren't built for the size of vessels we have.

The next problem is obstacles to increasing our revenue, and that all comes back to, again, the size of our wharf, the overcrowding, and we're unable to provide additional services that would, in turn, increase our revenue.

The third challenge that we look at is funding, and I'm sure every harbour authority shares that. It's twofold: understanding the process, and the timeframe related to funding and to acquiring it.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Nickerson.

Before we go to Mr. Simms, I'd just like to say, with 168 out of 182 votes, you're living the politician's dream. We can only dream about it.

You have 10 minutes, Mr. Simms.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I'd like to thank you for coming. I think that was incredible testimony. You may be puzzled as to why you're here, but we are certainly not. I think that was very good, given the size and the activities you monitor. It's well diversified, one that a lot of harbours can only dream of. I'm simply going to ask you to expand on your problems.

Before I do that, I have a quick question. Is there a role for small craft harbours program involvement in the operational expenses you have? Can you quickly answer that and then go ahead and expand on your problems?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** The role of the small craft harbours program in the operational expense is up in your face. I couldn't do it if it weren't for the small craft harbours program. I have a good relationship with my business manager. What we do, basically, is identify an operational problem and discuss it. Again, I'd go with something in this hand and say, okay, this is what we are thinking and this is what we can do in order to facilitate, resolve, or address the issue; what can you do for me? Nine times out of ten, I receive assistance and it works well.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** On the issue of timing of funding announcements on capital projects and maintenance, could you expand on that as well?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** I'm sorry, could you clarify that for me?

**Mr. Scott Simms:** Basically, if there's an announcement for funding, if you're on a priority list and you get funding to expand your harbour from the small craft harbours program, what are the problems experienced in the timing of the funding announcements and the process?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** We have never done a capital project as yet. With non-capital projects that we have done, I didn't really see any problem, to tell you the honest-to-goodness truth. We're very involved with the entire process. We're lucky that we can be that

involved, but we push to be that involved. So we're involved and we understand the timeframe. As far as when we'll get the money is concerned, we understand the bid process, and we have input into that. We have input into the design. We have input into just about every area. We're pleased so far with that. The only issue we have is if we had to pay while waiting for funding, we would not be able to do that.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** You mentioned that earlier.

How much time do I have left?

**The Chair:** You have seven and a half minutes.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I would just throw out to you, if you wish to touch on those problems.... No, forget it.

Could you just touch on solutions in the short term and long term?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Solutions to what problem?

**Mr. Scott Simms:** The ones you brought up, the three priorities.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** All right.

Our solution to our overcrowding is very self-explanatory. We need a larger facility.

Our wharves are all basically crib structures. When they were built they were built to accommodate a vessel that was 36 feet in length and 10 to 12 feet in width. I don't know if any of you can picture this, but we berth our boats abreast of each other, so when the wharf was built, we had two fingers coming out—the main wharf and the fingers. I brought you some pictures, but we'll pass them around later. We would be able to put perhaps four or five vessels on this finger and four or five vessels on another finger, and that still allowed safe navigation in and out of the berth.

The boats did increase to where they could be less than 40 feet. Generally, they were less than 40 feet in length and maybe 17 feet in width. That was considered a good-sized vessel. It stayed that way for a long time, until perhaps four or five years ago. Then all of a sudden we started seeing vessels come in that were 50 feet in length and starting at 24 feet in width. And they are getting wider. I haven't seen it myself, but I hear there's one coming off the slip that's about 25 or 26 feet wide. They're going to be square pretty soon.

If you just think about it and do the math, now we have a 24-foot vessel that we have to berth and put beside another 24-foot vessel, so that is 48 feet. Those two boats are taking up basically three to four berths that would have been used with smaller vessels. So our numbers are coming down, but we're becoming overcrowded because of the size of the boats.

Stop and think, too, of those two fingers. I have two vessels over here that are 24 feet wide, and I need some water in there for them to move around. Then over there I have to put a small boat and a big boat, so maybe I'll go with a 17 foot and a 24 foot. It's not only tying them up; it's navigating in and out. It takes about 60 feet to turn a boat that's 50 feet long and 25 feet wide, and when you're trying to do it in 20 feet, it just doesn't work. It depends a lot on the captain too, and whatever. It all looks easy in perfect conditions, but if you get a little weather going and you try to get those boats in and out, it is just not working.

In 1968 the average vessel cost about \$5,500. That was about 36 feet by 12 feet. Now we're looking at upwards of \$200,000 per vessel—and that's your livelihood. You're trying to put that into a facility where it's getting banged to pieces every time you do it. You're losing equipment. You're losing the sides of your boat, your ribbing, your windows, everything else. The wharves were not built to accommodate the newer vessels.

That's an issue for us.

How do we solve it? We need more room. When we look at designing or building a new facility, we have to look at the reality of what the men who bring those boats in and out are going to be dealing with. We looked at some plans that came down to Woods Harbour for a proposed expansion to the Falls Point facility. It had a basin of  $x$  number of feet. The engineers who designed it, with every good intention, were saying, okay, this is what we should do and this will work. They unrolled it, and I think they thought we were going to say yes, okay. Fortunately, we looked at it and said no, that won't work. We have to be very careful when we build or expand, in whatever we do from now on, that it's going to be built to accommodate the vessels that are in place now.

I'm sorry I got a little bit carried away.

Did I answer your question on that one?

• (1700)

**Mr. Scott Simms:** I only requested that you give an answer, so you go ahead.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** All right.

On obstacles in generating revenue, again, it's the size of your facility and what you have in place. Now, I have 315 registered fishers. If I had a larger facility or if we were more up to par, we could definitely take more. With the divestiture happening, we need to be planning, as you said, where we are going to put those other vessels. And those newer vessels, additional vessels, are going to generate more revenue.

I have three subleases, and there are processors and whatever. I can't see where we would ever get more subleases, but we have those subleases and our processors have unloading licences. Is everyone

familiar with what an unloading licence is? It's a permit for my buyers and my processors to come on the wharf.

As I said, we put two new hoists on this year to accommodate two more unloading licences and two more of our processors. What this does is not only generate revenue for our harbour authority, but it contributes to the economic stability of our community, it supports small business, and it simply is a win-win situation.

We don't have the room to do that anymore. It's not that I look at a chart and say we can't do that. We go down on the wharf and we walk it through. We have to think of how we can turn a truck, where can we safely put a hoist and unload, how can we swing a boom so it's not going to hit the boat, that type of thing. We don't have the capacity or the physical room to do that anymore. So that is an obstacle to increasing our revenue.

We have two—I guess we could call it an aquaculture operation. I have rockweed harvesters on site. Last year I had six, with their outboards. This year I had 11, and next year I'm hoping for upwards of 15 to 20. I need to have the space to accommodate them. What we did last year, which was really super, was to get some floating docks from the province and we used them. The men built them themselves, which was a great help. Then we put them parallel to the wharf. They're for our outboards. The men built a stairway going down to them, and they're lit. It's fantastic. When they're done with the rockweeding, we haul them down to Forbes Point and use them for our small lobster boats. So that's great. I'm hoping to get more of those. We'll increase our revenue.

• (1705)

**The Chair:** You'll have more time to answer after the next question.

Thank you, Mr. Simms.

I can see you're going to be a wealth of knowledge here, but we have to move along in the interest of time.

Mr. Blais.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** I just want to make sure—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Can you hear the translation?

[*English*]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Excuse me, sir, I don't hear you yet.

**The Chair:** Our capable assistant will help you.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** If you ever need a job, dear—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** I'll take résumés.

**The Chair:** He used to be a weatherman at one time.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon, Ms. Nickerson. I have several questions for you. I am going to try to do it quickly.

First, would you be prepared to provide us with a budget for the administration of your wharves? In other words, is it possible to obtain, in writing, what you have done in recent years? Can we see how you operate with the administrative workload that you have? Can we see the income column and the expense column? Would you be prepared to provide us with your budgets?

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** I couldn't and wouldn't answer that question without first taking it to my board. I'm not in the position to divulge anything at all about our organization without first taking it to our board. I will, however, do that, and upon their recommendation I will forward whatever they approve to you.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** I am now going to ask you some questions that will allow me to spend a little time on this subject.

What is the total amount of your budget for a year?

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Our annual budget varies, but I would say it's probably about \$108,000.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** What is the total for expenses?

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Our expenses are probably the same. We are a federally incorporated not-for-profit organization.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** You said at the beginning that expenses are rising. There are various situations. You tell me that your budget is \$108,000 this year. Has there been a gradual increase since past years? I am getting answers at the same time; no problem. Has there been a gradual increase in expenses?

• (1710)

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Yes, sometimes our increases, of course, would affect the standard of living. If electrical rates go up, of course our expenses go up. The gentleman who takes away our garbage... when fuel prices go up, our expense to him goes up. The only expense I can think of right now that went up significantly and abruptly was our financial responsibility for maintaining our lights. Whatever we formerly would be able to call on Nova Scotia Power for, we no longer can, and that was a drastic and an abrupt increase in our expenses.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** In your testimony, you said that there might have been work to do and that you were prepared to cover part of the costs. Would it be possible to illustrate that with a concrete example of work there was to do? How much money did you provide? How

much money did you get from other funding sources, such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the provincial government and local government?

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Yes, I can, sir. For example, when there are storms... The increased size of our vessels has also caused a problem with mooring. If we have a storm, it's not unusual that I will come down at night or in the morning and get a call that a mooring pile has been pulled off the wharf. It's essential that it be fixed immediately. We assume the cost, the financial responsibility, for doing that. We hire or call a local person, we have that mooring pile replaced, and we assume that cost. We wouldn't call the small craft harbours people and say we need that and then have to wait and go through the process. We take care of those things ourselves.

On the deck of the wharf, occasionally, we have had pothole types of things, which are dangerous to our forklifts and to our unloading procedures, so we'll fix those. We assume that type of thing.

I mentioned our floating docks. We needed or wanted to have them lit so they would be safer, more comfortable, for the men who may be coming after dark.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** What percentage do you have to provide and what percentage do the various levels of government provide?

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** In those instances, we're providing 100% for our minor repairs. Things we see that need to be done, and need to be done immediately, we pay for them 100%.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** When the repairs are more substantial, how much money do you provide?

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** For most significant repairs, such as our annual minor work types of things, where our facility is inspected and ladders, piles, fenders, and that type of thing are done, we pay 20% for the general repairs.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** Where exactly are you located in Nova Scotia?

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** We're on the southwest shore of Nova Scotia, halfway between the town of Yarmouth and the town of Shelburne.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** That is Gerald Keddy's riding.

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** That's correct.

[Translation]

**Mr. Raynald Blais:** If I have any time left, I am going to use it while the Chair is very busy.

Is it possible for you to tell us how much you know about other harbour administrations that are having major problems and suffering from underfunding? How do you see that?

[English]

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** I wouldn't presume to understand or report on the problems other harbour authorities are experiencing. However, I am aware, through some projects I have worked on, that there are problems with other harbour authorities.

Again, it is something that's up in your face. If you have a harbour authority that has perhaps 12 vessels, its ability to generate revenue is extremely limited.

I'm very fortunate in that I have a large facility and the ability to generate revenue. Therefore, I'm able to do things that other harbours can't.

• (1715)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Blais. You were on time. I was watching through one eye.

Mr. Stoffer.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Nickerson, welcome to Ottawa.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Thank you.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** With respect to insurance, what does yours cost per year?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** To tell you the truth, I really couldn't say right off the top of my head. Our insurance is paid for.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Paid for by whom?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** By the small craft harbours program.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** You talked about the business model, a 20-80 proposal, that if you had so much money in hand the government would come up with the remainder if you wanted specific work done. In most cases, businesses have to go to private lending institutions, such as a bank, to get that funding. Your business model involves government funding, either provincially or federally. It's nice to see that the federal government hasn't completely abandoned you yet.

I have noticed in Nova Scotia recently that there has been a rash of announcements for small craft harbours. Have any of those announcements positively affected your area as well?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** In terms of my harbour authority specifically, last year we successfully applied for a non-capital project. That resulted in the construction of a new block and span at the Falls Point facility and mattresses at our lower wharf, which now enables us to haul up seven vessels at a time, as opposed to three.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Excellent.

When you make repairs to the pilings or the decking of the wharves, and we'll say, for argument's sake, that it costs \$3,000, are you able to claim that from the small craft harbours program?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** We don't.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** You don't. Okay.

What was the cost for fishermen to use the wharves prior to divestiture? What did they have to pay?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Prior to divestiture? I'm not sure about your question.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** For example, your organization took over the management of that wharf, right?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Yes, we did.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Prior to that, it was run by the small craft harbours program.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** That's correct.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** What did the fishermen have to pay to use those harbours before your organization took over?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** I have only been associated with the harbour authority for the past three years, so I couldn't comment on that.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** If you're talking to the fishermen, would it be at all possible to send us what their costs were to use those wharves prior to your authority and what they are now? I'm asking for a comparison.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Of course. I will take all of your requests to my board, and with their approval, we'll look forward to sending you anything you request.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** That would be wonderful.

I want to ask, are they still serving those bay fish and chips in the restaurant down there?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** We certainly are, and we'd love for you to come down and have some.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** I've had them several times. They're quite good.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Thank you.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Mr. Kamp.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for coming. That was very impressive testimony. I appreciate that.

I know Mr. Keddy would have liked to have been here. He speaks highly of the work you do at Woods Harbour.

I have a few clarification questions. I'll leave it to my colleagues to ask the profound questions, if they have any.

You listed the three wharves. Are these wharves all in the same location or are they in different bays?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** I can see all of them. They're all in sight. I would say that from the main wharf, my lower wharf is probably about two kilometres to the east and Falls Point wharf is probably the same distance to the west.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Okay.

Between the three of them, I think there are 130 or 140 boats, or something like that.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** That's approximately right. It varies.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** For each of them you listed.... The largest one has 82 commercial and recreational boats, you said. What's the breakdown? Out of the total, how many are commercial and how many are recreational?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** The majority of them are commercial vessels. Of the 82, we have maybe 10 recreational vessels.

I should also mention that through the summer we occasionally have foreign vessels come in. Usually they're sailing vessels that have come in because of weather, because they're lost, or because they need fuel or water—that type of thing.

• (1720)

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Are the berthage fees the same, regardless of whether they're commercial or recreational?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** No. We like to be able to accommodate our senior citizens, so they berth their recreational vessels for free. As well, most of our recreational vessels are outboards, and our non-working outboards pay a significantly lower amount.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Is there any of what we call a commercial recreational fishery in your area? In other words, people who charge

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** No, not at the moment.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Do you see that in the future?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** We would like to, and they have seen it before on Cape Sable Island. Some folks gave it a try. Unfortunately...I think I won't say that.

It's very difficult to start a community-based small business and receive support from people, so no, it doesn't happen. People also mention that realistically, doing something like that is extremely expensive when you consider insurance and that type of thing.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** I have one final question, then.

You talk about minor repairs and major projects. How do you define those? What's the dividing line? Is it a cost amount?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** I would say it would be cost. Minor repairs would be something I could handle myself and be able to facilitate or resolve, something like piles, paving, that type of thing. In my opinion, a major repair would be something that would involve some sort of construction.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** In your three years, have you done major projects as well as minor?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** We did a non-capital project. It was funded, of course, and we are very involved in those projects from beginning to end.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** You called it a non-capital project; is that a major project?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Oh, yes. I would say it was major, yes.

**Mr. Randy Kamp:** Thanks.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** I have two quick questions. One is about aquaculture and the other is about infrastructure.

Did I hear you correctly when I thought you said you had two aquaculture operations?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** We had two, if you consider our rockweed enterprise to be aquaculture, which I think it is; I'm not sure.

We also had a salmon farm that was operating away from harbour authority waters, but they were using the facility. Unfortunately, it's no longer working. It basically had to do with access to the waterways. It was in a navigation path and it wasn't successful.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** Are you anticipating any growth in this? There seems to be a lot of interest in growth.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** It's up and coming. Aquaculture is up and coming. If we look at the downturn of the fisheries and changes in the fishery, then we're going to have to diversify, and aquaculture is the way to go.

I've worked a small amount with a researcher from Norway on lobster farming. I know that's something I would like to see happen.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** On the infrastructure, we have a number of meetings and live testimony with respect to the amount of money it would take to grow. Considering the problems with respect to overcrowding and the necessity to expand, as well as some of the obstacles, have you done any estimates as to what kinds of dollars from major capital it would require?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Of course, I have, yes.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** I'm not surprised.

Can you give us some idea of that, and of the length of a program you think it would take for you to get it done?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** I have to see how much time we have.

Realistically, why lock into  $x$  number of dollars if in 10 years' time it's going to result in your being in the same type of situation? I would like to see about \$10 million invested in planning and expanding, or creating, a facility that would be able to accommodate vessels and that we'd be able to expand to accommodate tourism.

We could look at wharves that may be divested; we could take them. Let's look at wharves that maybe are not in the best places; we could take them in. Why are n't we looking at sinking some good money into creating a facility that's going to address all the issues out in the surrounding area, that will still be there and working and viable in 25 years or whatever?

Another thing is that I would like to see it made so that it's easily expandable. Let's sink in however much money we have to and then look at maybe being able to put in \$2 million in 10 years' time to make it bigger, rather than another \$7 million to build another one.

That's probably more than you wanted to know, isn't it?

• (1725)

**Mr. Mike Allen:** No. I appreciate your candour, but I wouldn't have expected anything less.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** If you want to know about dollars and what I think about dollars, I'm going to tell you. We're looking at crib-structured wharves. They're all crib structures. None of them are new. So why aren't we looking at how we are going to maintain or improve upon or shore up existing crib structures before we build on them?

I think it's something that could happen. I really do. I think we should be looking at putting the money into how we are going to improve upon and/or guarantee the viability or usability of our existing crib structures and then build on them so that we have good, solid facilities in place and well-invested dollars.

**Mr. Mike Allen:** At least in your area, do you see a lot of degradation of the wharves?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Yes, I do. I have to say that my three wharves are in pretty darned good shape. The crib structure is in good shape and our decks are in good shape, but I would like to see them stay that way.

What happens, as I said when I was talking about replacing a mooring pile, is sometimes you're putting good wood onto bad. Let's look at not doing that anymore, putting a band-aid on things. Let's look at how we can improve upon the condition of our existing crib structures and then build on them to make good, solid facilities.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Allen.

Mr. Calkins.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Thank you. I just have one question—

**The Chair:** You have time for one.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** —and that's all I'm going to get anyway.

The question I have for you is this. Based on the dialogue we had here today and the questions you've had posed to you from this committee and the answers you've given back to us...have you had a similar dialogue with the small craft harbours people through DFO?

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** My local business manager and/or small craft harbours representatives, is that who you mean?

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Anybody from the department.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Of course.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Can you describe to us how often that happens and what that dialogue—

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Almost daily. And I mean that sincerely; I'm not being facetious.

**Mr. Scott Simms:** We believe you.

**Ms. Gerry Nickerson:** Good. I'm glad.

I have a really good relationship with my business manager. From the beginning we did that, with a “cards on the table, no holds barred” approach of saying, this is what I want, can you do it, and if not, then tell me why it won't work. Consequently, we trust each other now. We have a dynamite working relationship, and we're honest and open. I appreciate that tremendously, because I came into the job knowing very little. Because of that partnership, I've learned a lot, which brings me to another comment, if I have just one second.

A visible and equal partnership is what we should be looking at with harbour authorities and the small craft harbours program, and we do that. Just as one little, tiny example, we do the local exhibition—we actually have done two of them—where we rent the booth, we share the costs, and we present ourselves in a visible and equal partnership to the communities. And it's usually about 1,100 people who see us there. I think that's the way we should be going.

**The Chair:** Thank you, members.

We're coming up on time. If I could beg your indulgence for one moment, Ms. Nickerson, I'd just advise the committee that on Wednesday we'll be receiving, by video conference, the Sport Fishing Institute of British Columbia, and it should run for about an hour or so. We'll also be hearing from a group from the Magdalen Islands and the North Lake, P.E.I., group. They'll be making their presentation together and we'll be giving them about 10 minutes each because they're travelling here to do that. That will pretty well only give us the time for one round of questions on those two groups, so prepare your questions over the next couple of days.

Mr. Stoffer, a quick question.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** Mr. Chairman, I would like the committee to be aware that I would like to be able to propose, when possible, through teleconferencing, the ability of Arctic Bay, Resolute, and Grise Fiord to come in on a conference call to talk about their small craft and breakwater problems as well.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Stoffer. The clerk is making note of that and he'll get back to you on that.

**Mr. Peter Stoffer:** I can give you, if you prefer, the names of the people who would participate.

**The Chair:** You can pass them on to the clerk.

Ms. Nickerson, I want to thank you for your testimony here today. We've heard from many people throughout DFO and small crafts, and we wanted to hear from someone who was on the wharf, and we certainly did. Thank you for your openness and honesty here today.

The meeting is adjourned.







**Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons**

**Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes**

**Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address:  
Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à l'adresse suivante :  
<http://www.parl.gc.ca>**

---

**The Speaker of the House hereby grants permission to reproduce this document, in whole or in part, for use in schools and for other purposes such as private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary. Any commercial or other use or reproduction of this publication requires the express prior written authorization of the Speaker of the House of Commons.**

**Le Président de la Chambre des communes accorde, par la présente, l'autorisation de reproduire la totalité ou une partie de ce document à des fins éducatives et à des fins d'étude privée, de recherche, de critique, de compte rendu ou en vue d'en préparer un résumé de journal. Toute reproduction de ce document à des fins commerciales ou autres nécessite l'obtention au préalable d'une autorisation écrite du Président.**