



Posted Tuesday, March 30, 2010

New Transport Canada Domestic Ferry Regulations take effect April 1st

New Transport Canada Domestic Ferry Regulations on Metro Transit's harbour ferry service will come into effect on Thursday, April 1st, 2010. Preparations have been underway for over a year to enhance security measures on the Halifax, Dartmouth and Woodside ferries, since the announcement that domestic ferries would be included in the Marine Transportation Security Program. However, the new ferry security enhancements should have minimal impact on ferry passengers' regular routines and are designed not to be intrusive.

In January 2009, HRM received a \$393,000 grant under Transport Canada's Marine Security Contribution Program to assist Canada's ports, marine facilities and ferries cover the cost for their mandated security programs and systems. The Municipality was responsible for the other 25% of the cost of the program, which included the introduction of an integrated Security Management system, with surveillance cameras having been installed around all three Ferry Terminals and on the ferry vessels; more perimeter security, including fencing installed around the terminals; and employee training including the addition of a Marine Security Training Officer.

Passengers will notice more decals and signs around the Ferry Terminals, which are designed to indicate the provision of a higher level of safety and security. In addition to the presence of surveillance cameras, passengers paying cash, who do not already have a valid transfer or pass, will now be provided with and must retain proof of payment while in the ferry passenger waiting areas. Also, by entering the passenger waiting areas, passengers are made aware that this action signifies their valid consent to be subject to a possible security screening and search. Notices are posted to this effect in the entrance to the waiting areas.

Under Transport Canada Domestic Ferry security regulations, the security system is implemented at three different levels. They are referred to as Marsec Levels One through Three, with Level One being day-to-day operations; and Level Three being the highest level of security possible. Signs are also posted throughout the terminals to indicate the Marsec Level under which the ferry is currently operating.