

ON THE WATER

The Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board Newsletter

Fall 2009

“LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION” - SAFETY VIDEO READY TO ROLL

There are indications that Newfoundland & Labrador is making positive steps toward a safer fishing industry. Vessels are better equipped, crews are better trained, and safety on board is becoming more and more of a priority. In the past decade approximately 10,000 NL fish harvesters have completed Marine Emergency Duties (MED) training, and thousands more have completed various operator competency courses such as Fishing Masters. More importantly, the statistics indicate that this investment of time and money is paying dividends! Fatalities and injuries in the NL fishery are showing an optimistic downward trend.

So, if we are making such progress, why would we need to produce a NL fisheries safety video? First of all, for many years fish harvesters and instructors alike have voiced concerns that videos being used in safety training are outdated. Also, many of the videos being used are produced

outside the province, and do not adequately reflect or address aspects of the NL industry. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we want to ensure that we “keep the ball rolling in the right direction”.

With all this in mind, the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, and the Workplace Health Safety & Compensation Commission have agreed to fund the production of a NL Fisheries Safety Video. The 30-40 minute video is being produced by Memorial University (Marine Institute School of Fisheries & the Department of Distance Education and Learning Technologies). The project is being administered through the Canadian Centre for Fisheries Innovation.

Development and production work on the video has been ongoing throughout the 2009 fishing

season, and the final product is due to be completed in December 2009. The video will cover a broad range of safety topics, and will be representative of a variety of our fleet sectors, communities, and fisheries. It will be used as an instructional aid for fisheries safety training, but it will also be made available to any NL fish harvester who would like a copy. The goal is to have it viewed as often as possible, by as many individuals, crews, and families as possible!

For more information, feel free to contact the PFHCB office at 709-722-8170.



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OUR OFFICE IS MOVING

The Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB) will be moving from its current location at 15 Hallett Crescent in the spring of 2010. The Board, in partnership with the Fish Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW), has made arrangements to purchase and renovate a 15,000 sq/ft building at 368 Hamilton Avenue near downtown St. John's.

The PFHCB Board of Directors approved the move after receiving notification of a 50% increase in rent at our current location. Executive Director

Mark Dolomount says the new location will provide a new, more convenient location for staff and visitors and, perhaps most notably, in the long-run it will be less expensive than renting.

Once the renovation is complete, the FFAW will be occupying the upper floor of the two-story building, and the PFHCB office will be located on the lower level. Remaining space will be sublet. We look forward to the move, and will be notifying all professional fish harvesters of our new mailing address and directions on how to find us.

REMEMBERING THE “FATHER OF PROFESSIONALIZATION”



Father Des McGrath, who passed away in July 2009, was an advocate for fisheries education throughout his career.

Earlier this year, the fish harvesters of Newfoundland & Labrador lost a great friend and leader. Rev. Desmond McGrath - or “Fr. Des”, as he was affectionately known throughout the province - passed away at the age of 74. He did more to improve the lives and working conditions of “the people of the fishery” than any other individual in our province’s history, and he will be sorely missed!

Fr. Des is widely recognized for helping shape the social, economic, and political landscape of the province through the founding the Fishermen’s Union in the early 1970’s. In his early days as a parish priest on the Northern Peninsula, he united fishermen in an effort to increase the landed value of their catch.

However, what few people know is that Fr. Des’ true passion was education. He had a vision of empowering workers in the fishing industry through education, and having fish harvesters recognized for their vast knowledge and skill. For many years he worked as the FFAW

education officer, during which time he set up 16 adult learning centres throughout the province for fisheries workers and their families. Throughout his career he was a strong advocate for adult education, and worked tirelessly to give fish harvesters access to training, especially health and safety training.

Fr. Des played an instrumental role in the establishment of the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters (CCPFH), and the formation of provincial certification boards, including our Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB). He is an honorary member of the CCPFH, and is known amongst fish harvester groups across the country as the “Father of Professionalization”. He was a founding Board member of the PFHCB, and remained on our Board of Directors until his passing in July.

His guidance and leadership will be missed, but his legacy will not be forgotten.

AND THE SURVEY SAYS...

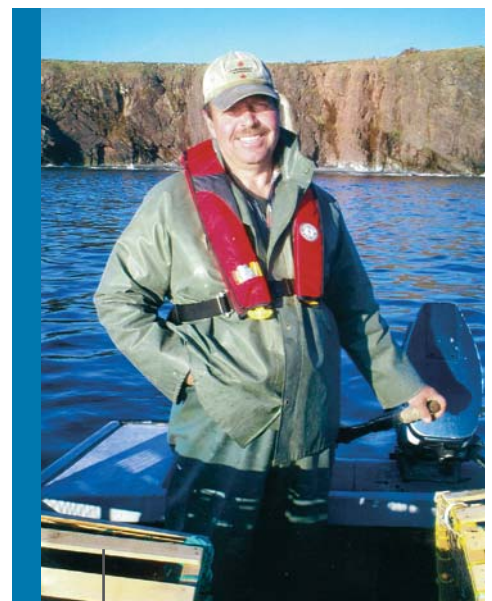
As part of the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board’s (PFHCB) ongoing communications and public relations work, two large-scale surveys were completed in the spring of 2009. In total, more than 1,200 individuals were contacted and the surveys were statistically accurate, with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of +/-5%.

The public survey was meant to measure the knowledge and opinions that the public have about commercial fish harvesters. The results were quite positive, with more than 90% of respondents agreeing that “Commercial fish harvesting is a professional occupation”, and 87% agreeing that “Commercial fish harvesters require a high level of skill”. However, only about 60% knew that NL fish harvesters were required to hold professional certification. The results of the survey will assist the PFHCB in keeping the

public better informed about professional fish harvesters and their industry.

The PFHCB also conducted a membership survey, aimed at measuring fish harvester knowledge and understanding of the Board and the work we do on your behalf. The results of this survey were also very positive, and will help direct our communication priorities over the coming years. For example, 95% of respondents agreed that “it is important that fish harvesters have an organization like the PFHCB that represents their interests as a professional group.” However, ironically, less than 40% have read this newsletter, “*On The Water*”.

Both surveys, including all questions and responses can be found on the PFHCB webpage at www.pfhcb.com.



Edwin Power, of Lower Island Cove, wearing the inflatable PFD he received from the PFHCB. 600 harvesters who participated in our membership survey were entered in a draw to win one of five PFD’s or Immersion Suits.



SHIP SAFETY BULLETINS

If you are a vessel owner, you have probably received a Ship Safety Bulletin in the mail from Transport Canada (TC) in the past. Have you ever taken the time to read one? If the answer is “no” or “not often”, then you might want to reconsider.

Ship Safety Bulletins are a great source of accurate and up-to-date ship safety information, paramount to the safety of life at sea. They are TC’s primary



mechanism for conveying timely information pertaining to safeguards against identified risks. They can include anything from changes to training requirements/regulations, to advisories about faulty or unsafe equipment. Ship Safety Bulletins consist of a brief statement, summary of official notification, and/or direction to industry issued by the Marine Safety Directorate of TC. They are short and to the point (usually a page or two) - and they are worth taking the time to read!

Whether you are a crewmember or a vessel owner, Ship Safety Bulletins include valuable safety related information for all seafarers, and are a great way to ensure that you are well informed on safety related matters. All Bulletins, including those dating back to 1977, can be found on Transport Canada’s webpage at www.tc.gc.ca/marinesafety/Bulletins.

TSB REPORTS - NOT ALWAYS POPULAR, BUT WORTH READING

The Transportation Safety Board (TSB) - not to be confused with Transport Canada - is an independent federal government agency with a mandate to advance safety in all modes of transportation.

When fishing vessel accidents occur, particularly if there is loss of life, the TSB will often conduct an investigation into the occurrence. These in-depth investigations are for the purposes of: making findings as to the causes and contributing factors; identifying any safety deficiencies; and making recommendations designed to eliminate or reduce future incidents.

The TSB has, over the years, conducted numerous investigations into fishing vessel occurrences. As part of its ongoing investigations, the TSB also reviews developments in fishing vessel safety and identifies safety risks that it believes government and the industry should address in order to reduce injury and loss of life.

These TSB reports, despite receiving some criticism from fish harvester organizations for being too critical of the industry’s lack of “safety culture”, are in fact well worth taking the time to read. By reading the details of a fishing vessel incident, the causes and contributing factors, and recommendations as to how such incidents could be prevented in future, the TSB reports allow us to learn from past experiences. Regardless of whether or not you agree with the findings and/or recommendation, TSB reports can help us understand the dangers of fishing vessel operations, and possibly help save a life in future.

All TSB reports dating back to 1991 can be found online at www.tsb.gc.ca.



PFHCB DIRECTOR CO-CHAIRS NATIONAL (CMAC) SAFETY COMMITTEE

Twice per year, spring and fall, the Canadian Marine Advisory Council (CMAC) meets in Ottawa. This week-long series of meetings is Transport Canada’s national consultative body for “all things marine”, including fishing vessel safety.

It is attended by hundreds of marine industry representatives, from all sectors, including dozens of fishing industry representatives from all regions of the country. They attend these meetings in an effort to have their voices heard and to stay abreast of federal policies and regulations - such as the recent regulatory changes under the new *Canada Shipping Act*.

In addition to numerous working groups, the fishing industry has its own Standing Committee on Fishing Vessel Safety (one of seven national CMAC standing committees). Fishing industry representatives lobbied for

many years to have their own Standing Committee, which has since become a permanent fixture at CMAC, and is co-chaired by an industry representative elected by his/her peers. The current co-chair is Mark Dolomount, Executive Director of the PFHCB, who was re-elected to his second two-year term last fall.

If you have specific issues related to current or proposed Transport Canada regulations, feel free to contact Mark Dolomount at the PFHCB office to discuss how your concerns might be addressed through the regional or national CMAC process.



CREWFINDER CONNECTS OWNERS & CREWMEMBERS

Prior to the 2009 fishing season, the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB) introduced a new web-based crew database called **CrewFinder**. The PFHCB recognized that assembling an experienced and certified crew is becoming increasingly difficult, so this free user-friendly service was designed and added to the PFHCB webpage at www.pfhcb.com. **CrewFinder** assists vessel owners find available crewmembers, and assists available crewmembers find open crew positions.

During the season, there were as many as fifty postings of available crewmembers and crew positions. All those who used the **CrewFinder** service were sent a questionnaire at the end of the fishing season, and the feedback we received was extremely positive. In fact, about 75% of respondents reported that they received responses to their **CrewFinder** posting, and more than 50%

were successful in finding/filling a crew position. Some of the responses we received included:

"I thought it was a great idea. I had lots of calls for positions as captain or mate, with the Fishing Masters ticket I have".

"CrewFinder was very useful to me, I had three different calls for a position as captain. I would definitely use CrewFinder again".

"I was very successful in finding a good group of people to fish with".

CrewFinder is now a permanent feature on the PFHCB webpage. It is a free service for any commercial fish harvester to use, and we look forward to helping connect owners and crewmembers for the 2010 fishing season. Visit us any time at www.pfhcb.com.

PFHCB SCHOLARSHIP NEWS



Mark Dolomount (right), PFHCB, and Glen Blackwood (left), MI, present the annual PFHCB scholarship to Matthew Doyle of Grates Cove.

Congratulations to Matthew Doyle of Grates Cove, Trinity Bay, recipient of the PFHCB Scholarship for the 2008/2009 academic year. Matthew received the \$1,000 academic award during the Fall 2008 scholarship presentation at Marine Institute (MI), as he entered his final year of Nautical Science. He graduated from the program this past June, and has been working casually with the Canadian Coast Guard. Matthew is the son of Wendy and David Doyle, a Core enterprise owner from Grates Cove.

The PFHCB Academic Scholarship was established in 2006, and is awarded annually to an eligible certified professional fish harvester, or dependant, who is enrolled in a diploma granting program at MI. For more information please contact the Board office or the MI Student Affairs Office at 709-778-0310.



FISH FACTS

- There are more species of fish than all the species of amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals combined.
- On December 30, 1972 a wave height of 26.2m (about 86 feet) was recorded in the North Atlantic at 50°N, 19°W. This is the highest instrumentally recorded wave in history.
- At its peak (1990), the total biomass of the main capelin stock in our waters, in NAFO area 3L, was estimated at 7 million tons. That's about 15.4 billion (15,400,000,000) pounds.
- British physicist Robert Watson-Watt is credited with producing the first practical radar (radio detection and ranging) system in 1935. It was used to locate objects beyond the range of vision by projecting radio waves against them.
- Lobster blood is a clear fluid. When boiled, the blood turns to an opaque whitish gel. It has no distinct flavor and is perfectly safe to eat.
- The term "bedlamer" (immature harp seals) comes from the Basque and Breton settlers who took up residence along the Strait of Belle Isle in the 15th & 16th centuries. They were fascinated by the curiosity of the young seals and called them *Betes de la mer* (Animals of the Sea).

WATCHKEEPING REQUIREMENTS (15-150GT)

Over the last couple of seasons vessel owners have been finding it increasingly difficult to find crewmembers with the required Transport Canada (TC) certification. In addition to a certified master, the *Marine Personnel Regulations* of the *Canada Shipping Act* will now require vessels greater than 15 gross tonnage(GT)/12 metres(m) to carry a certified watchkeeper.

In response to an industry-wide shortage of certified masters and watchkeepers, fishing industry groups (including the PFHCB) have been pressuring TC officials in Ottawa to recognize this problem and implement short-term and long-term solutions to help vessel owners meet the regulatory requirements. To this end, TC has recently made several noteworthy announcements.

a) Vessels from 100-150GT

Fishing vessels in this category currently require a certified officer of the watch with a minimum of a Fish Master IV. However, TC has committed to implementing a new *Certificate of Competency as Officer of the Watch of a Fishing Vessel*. Holders of this certificate would be able to fulfill the watchkeeping requirements on a fishing vessel up to 150GT. This will relieve the pressure of having to find a watchkeeper with a Fishing Master IV. As proposed, crewmembers with their MED A1 and ROC-MC could acquire this certificate with approximately one month of training. More information will be made available as soon as the final details are approved by TC.

b) Vessels from 60-100GT

Fishing vessels in this category also require a certified officer of the watch. This requirement has been enforced more rigorously by TC in recent years, which has added to the shortage of Fishing Master IV certificate holders in this fleet. TC has recently released a Ship Safety Bulletin outlining the availability of a new *Certificate of Service as Watchkeeping Mate of a Fishing Vessel less than 100GT*. This certificate will be available to experienced fish harvesters with a minimum of seven years experience as officer in charge of the watch on one or more fishing vessels, and who hold a MED A1 (and in most cases an ROC-MC). Harvesters with less than seven years experience may also be eligible, but will be required to complete additional training.

The new proposed Certificate of Competency described in the “Vessels from 100-150GT” section will also fulfill the watchkeeping requirements in this fleet. Combined, these two options will significantly reduce the number of Fishing Master IV currently required in this fleet.

c) Vessels less than 60GT (greater than 15GT/12m)

Until last year, the only fishing vessels that required a certified officer of the watch were vessels over 60GT. Now, many vessels less than 60 GT (down to vessels more than 15GT/12m) will also be required to have a certified officer of the watch. Implementation of this requirement is being phased in gradually, based on vessel length, between November 7, 2008 and November 7, 2012. (See “*Is Your Vessel Less Than 14m?*” article for specific phase-in dates.)

Vessels under 60GT (greater than 15GT/12m) that require a certified officer of the watch will have the same options as the 60-100GT fleet. That is, in addition to a Fishing Master certificate, officers of the watch will be able to hold the new *Certificate of Service as Watchkeeping Mate of a Fishing Vessel less than 100GT* or the new proposed *Certificate of Competency as Officer of the Watch of a Fishing Vessel*.

d) Delay related to enforcement (less than 100GT)

On September 30, 2009, Transport Canada issued a Ship Safety Bulletin stating that “In order to allow for sufficient time for the fishing industry to comply with the *Marine Personnel Regulations (MPR)*, Transport Canada Marine Safety agrees not to take any enforcement action until November 7, 2010, against a fishing vessel of less than 100GT or against an individual, where the person in charge of the deck watch does not hold the certificate required by subparagraph 216.(2)(a)(i) of the *MPR*, as long as the master on board the vessel holds the required Certificate of Competency.”

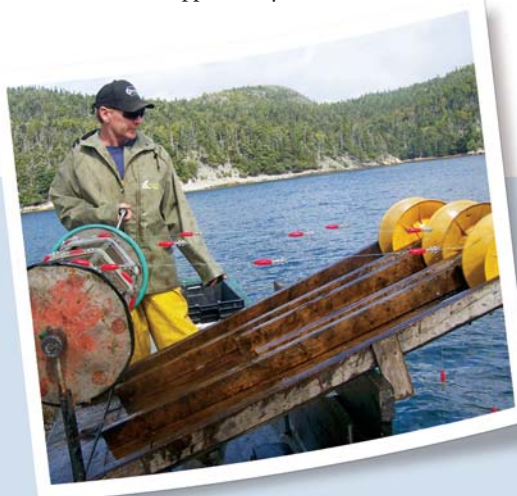
Despite this policy, owners and masters are strongly advised to consider the liability and insurance implications of non-compliance with the *MPR*, and to judge their decisions accordingly.

For more information on whether your vessel requires a certified officer of the watch, and/or the options available to you or your crewmembers, please contact your nearest Transport Canada Marine Safety office, or contact the PFHCB office at 709-722-8170.

FISHING FOR PHOTOS - FACES OF THE FISHERY

In response to our “Fishing for Photos” requests, Connie Smith of Chance Cove, Trinity Bay, sent us this shot of her husband Roland Smith jigging for squid, summer 2009.

Please keep the photos coming! Of particular interest are “up-close” photos of fish harvesters at work. If you have digital photos, they can be sent by email to pfh@pfhcb.com, or directly from the Photo Gallery section of our webpage at www.pfhcb.com. If you have 35mm prints, you can forward them by mail and we will return the originals at your request. Either way, we'll send you a hat or T-shirt for your submission. If we publish the photo you'll receive a PFHCB sweat-shirt.



Roland Smith of Chance Cove jigging squid in the waters of Trinity Bay. Summer 2009.

MI COMMUNITY-BASED COURSE OFFERINGS - WINTER 2010

The Marine Institute (MI) is still accepting applications for community-based delivery of Fishing Masters IV, Radio Operator (ROC-MC), Small Vessel Operator Proficiency (SVOP), Marine Emergency Duties (MED A1/A3), and Oil Spill Response.

With a minimum of 10/12 students MI will bring these training programs to any fishing community in the province. Tuition assistance is available for eligible harvesters through local Service Canada outreach offices.

The following courses have been tentatively scheduled, and still have seats available:

Fishing Master IV (11-13 weeks) - Beginning January 2010

Codroy Valley, Fermeuse, Carbonear/Bay De Verde, Northern Peninsula, Harbour Breton, New World Island, and Fortune.

Oil Spill Response (5 days) - November 2009 - March 2010

Eastport, Harbour Breton, Twillingate, Stephenville, Southern Labrador, Burin/Marystown, Grand Bank/Fortune, Port De Grave, and Fogo.

For applications or more information on MI's community-based training opportunities contact Ron Hyde at 709-778-0568 or Brenda Young at 709-778-0623.



MARINE INSTITUTE

MI TECHNICAL CERTIFICATE -

Seats Available



MI Instructor Roger Bath assists his class with chartwork. These Fishing Master IV students are participants in Term I of MI's Technical Certificate in Harvesting.

The Technical Certificate in Harvesting program now offered by the Marine Institute (MI) consists of two components: Term I includes a Fishing Master IV (offered during the fall) and Term II includes a combination of additional technical courses (offered during the winter). The program provides fish harvesters with a flexible opportunity to acquire all required education credits for Level II certification upgrading. The tuition cost is \$690/term.

If you already hold a FM IV, you can complete Term II this winter and receive the Technical Certificate in Harvesting. Alternatively, you can choose to complete Term II this winter and complete Term I, if you wish, at a later date.

MI currently has seats available for the winter 2010 offering of Term II (8 weeks) at the St. John's campus. For more information contact Ron Hyde at 709-778-0568.

IS YOUR VESSEL MORE THAN 14 METRES (45'11")? ...13 METRES? ...12 METRES?

If your fishing vessel is more than 14 metres (m), then there is a Transport Canada deadline that you should know about.

Until last year, only fishing vessels over 60 gross tonnage (GT) were required to have an operator with a Fishing Master certificate. Last year, under section 212(1) of the new federal *Marine Personnel Regulations*, that all started to change. Now, year by year, vessels less than 60GT (gradually down to all vessels more than 15GT/12m) will be required to have a certified master with a minimum Fishing Master IV or a Certificate of Service. Vessels more than 15m in length were required to have a certified master as of November 7, 2008.

As of November 7, 2009, vessels more than 14m in length are required to have a certified master with a minimum of a Fishing Master IV or Certificate of Service. On November 7, 2010, the requirement will include vessels more than 13m in length, and on November 7, 2012, the requirement will include vessels more than 12m in length.

Do I qualify for a Certificate of Service?

Transport Canada has introduced a "Certificate of Service as Master of a Fishing Vessel of less than 60GT". This certificate is available to existing experienced harvesters operating vessels less than 60GT, and will allow them to continue to operate these vessels without having to return to school

to complete a Fishing Master IV certificate.

Harvesters who have a minimum of seven years as master, who have the required MED certificate, and in most cases a radio operator certificate (ROC-MC), will be eligible to apply for this Certificate of Service.

For more information on Master Certification requirements for your vessel, or how to apply for this Certificate of Service, contact your nearest Transport Canada Marine Safety office.



**Transport
Canada**

**Transports
Canada**

FAQ's - PCOC - Do COMMERCIAL FISH HARVESTERS REQUIRE IT?

As of September 15th, 2009, Transport Canada (TC) requires that all operators of pleasure craft fitted with a motor and used for recreational purposes have proof of competency on board at all times. In most cases, this would be a Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC). The PFHCB office has received hundreds of calls from fish harvesters inquiring about PCOC, and whether or not they require it.

Do commercial fish harvesters require a PCOC?

Commercial fish harvesters require a proof of competency if and when they are operating a boat for recreational purposes. But what about fishing boats? According to *The Canada Shipping Act*, if and when you operate your commercial fishing vessel for pleasure, it is a pleasure craft for that trip. Some examples include: going to the cabin for the weekend; hunting; and recreational food fishing. In these situations, the operator must carry proof of competency and personal identification on board.

However, experienced fishing vessel operators, depending on their personal circumstances, **may not require PCOC**. Read the next two questions for details.

For more information on the Pleasure Craft Operator Competency requirements as it pertains to fishing vessels, contact your nearest Transport Canada Office of Boating Safety, or contact the PFHCB office at 709-722-8170.

What if I already hold an operator training certificate or certificate of competency?

Many harvesters have already earned a marine safety certificate of competency, training certificate, or other equivalency that will serve as a proof of competency when they are operating a pleasure craft. However, it must be a recognized TC equivalency, and a copy of the certificate/card must be carried on board the pleasure craft.

TC has compiled a list of recognized "proof of competency equivalencies". The list includes all recognized certificates of competency, training certificates and other equivalencies. For example, Fishing Master certificates; Certificate of Service as Master of a Fishing Vessel of less than 60GT; Small Vessel Operator Proficiency (SVOP); a boating safety training certificate from a course completed before April 1, 1999; the PFHCB Basic Safety for Fish Harvesters course; and more.

A complete list of proof of competency equivalencies can be obtained from TC at www.tc.gc.ca/marinesafety. If you hold one of the certificates on this list, and carry it with you while operating your pleasure craft, you DO NOT need to have a PCOC.

Is it possible that I am exempt from the requirement?

Technically speaking, there are no exemptions to the PCOC requirement. All pleasure craft operators must have some form of proof of competency. As mentioned in the previous question, certain certificates are recognized as proof of competency. However, there is another option for experienced harvesters, even if you do not hold a recognized training certificate.

Transport Canada allows for the significant experience of commercial fish harvesters to be recognized as proof of competency when operating a boat for recreational purposes. However, this experience must be documented with Transport Canada, as follows: *at least seven fishing seasons, with no two of those seasons occurring in the same year, as master of a fishing vessel of up to 15 gross tonnage or not more than 12 m in overall length, acquired before July 1, 2007.*



REMINDER TO APPRENTICES AND 2009 NEW ENTRANTS - MED TRAINING

The PFHCB would like to remind all Apprentices and 2009 New Entrants that they are required to complete a Basic Safety Training course (MED A1, A3 or equivalent) in order to register with the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board. This training must be completed before the start of the 2010 fishing season. 2010 certification renewals will not be issued until this training is complete.

Harvesters are also reminded that effective April 1st, 2008, in accordance with the *Marine Personnel Regulations of the Canada Shipping Act*, Transport Canada requires fish harvesters to complete Marine Emergency Duties (MED) training as a condition of participation in the commercial fishery. For more information contact the Board office at 709-722-8170.

PFHCB SAFETY COURSE RECOGNIZED

Transport Canada has recognized the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board's *Basic Safety for Fish Harvesters* course as an equivalent to the *Pleasure Craft Operator Card* (PCOC). So, if you are one of the 8,000 NL fish harvesters who completed the PFHCB basic safety course (including MED A3 and Marine First Aid) then you are not required to carry a PCOC while operating your pleasure craft. However, you must have a copy of your certificate with you on board.

Got a Question? Just ask! If you have a question about fisheries training requirements and opportunities, or certification criteria contact the PFHCB office any time. Call us at 709-722-8170, email us at pfh@pfhcb.com, or visit our website at www.pfhcb.com.

A sea of opportunities.



Whether you are looking to be a crew member, or you are looking for crew, visit **Crew Finder** at www.pfhcb.com.



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*Wishing all
Professional Fish Harvesters
and their families, a safe and
joyous holiday season.*

From the Staff and Board of Directors of...

Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board

