

HORIZONTAL EVALUATION OF THE WORLD CLASS TANKER SAFETY SYSTEM: LESSONS LEARNED

Evaluation Summary, December 2021



The Horizontal Evaluation of the World Class Tanker Safety System (WCTSS): Lessons Learned covers the five-year period from 2015-16 to 2019-20. The scope includes all activities/initiatives of the WCTSS partner departments. The evaluation was conducted to address commitments made in the 2013 WCTSS funding document. In addition, as the WCTSS was the predecessor to the Oceans Protection Plan (OPP), this report will provide context for the upcoming OPP horizontal evaluation.

Given that the WCTSS has already sunset, no recommendations are made and a Management Response and Action Plan is not required.

FINDINGS

Successes and challenges were noted under the following three themes:

#1 Program management & results delivery

The WCTSS contributed to stronger marine safety measures and protections through actions such as increased surveillance and bolstering pollution prevention requirements. The WCTSS enhanced Canada's response capacity by expanding key programs. Challenges included resource capacity, time delays, and monitoring resource use and performance.

#2 Collaboration within government

Through the WCTSS, federal partners communicated on shared priorities related to marine safety. International collaborations on oil spill science were also initiated, enhancing Canada's science/research reputation internationally. However, governance was an ongoing challenge, with the distinct roles and responsibilities of partners not always clear. Further coordination would have been valuable.

#3 Stakeholder engagement, communication & inclusiveness

Although GBA+ was not a requirement when the WCTSS was designed, engagement activities did involve diverse populations. Importantly, through the WCTSS, the federal government began engaging Indigenous groups in conversations about marine safety. In addition, WCTSS supported the integration of science and policy in the context of ship-source oil spills. Inconsistencies in communication and engagement practices contributed to engagement fatigue and confusion amongst stakeholders.

LESSONS LEARNED

The implementation of the WCTSS was the federal government's first horizontal undertaking aimed at creating a world-class regime for the prevention of, and preparedness and response to, ship-source oil spills. The WCTSS was key in establishing the relationships and governance protocols that were ultimately leveraged by subsequent horizontal initiatives, like the OPP, and has facilitated the development and implementation of certain marine safety interventions and activities. It is within this context that the WCTSS lessons learned are presented:

#1 Program management & results delivery

1. The intended results of the WCTSS were not well understood during program design, which ultimately made it difficult to assess effectiveness.
2. The implementation of the WCTSS suffered due to challenges with staffing, the underestimation of the time required to draft key policy/funding documents, and the volume of distinct projects.

#2 Collaboration within government

1. Collaboration within the federal government for WCTSS initiatives could have been strengthened through a shared lexicon and an enhanced strategic perspective.
2. The design and implementation of the WCTSS could have been improved by the continuous and active involvement of interdepartmental groups from regions and national headquarters, to ensure that multiple perspectives were incorporated and key issues addressed.

#3 Stakeholder engagement, communication & inclusiveness

1. Partnerships with Indigenous communities could have been improved through a more coordinated and strategic approach to ensure meaningful engagement.
2. Partnerships with industry could have been improved through formalized engagement practices and clear communication on plans and relevant changes.
3. Some of the factors highlighted to foster an effective partnership include having a common understanding of (1) shared objectives and alignment with individual organizational objectives, (2) decision-making processes, and (3) the roles of each partner.