

THEMATIC EVALUATION OF THE SMALL CRAFT HARBOUR PROGRAM AND DFO'S JETTIES AND WHARVES

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

The objective of the evaluation is to provide senior management with evidence-based information to support decision-making and the optimization of departmental resources related to small craft harbours, jetties and wharves. The evaluation examined the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of activities related to DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves between 2016-17 to 2020-21. This includes elements of DFO's Small Craft Harbour (SCH) program and the departmental management of jetties and wharves by Real Property (RP). Perspectives from key departmental users were also included in the scope of the evaluation, such as the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG). Evidence was gathered through multiple lines of evidence including interviews, document and literature reviews, financial and administrative data analyses, documented examples and three surveys of SCH and RP staff, departmental users and harbour authorities.

ABOUT DFO'S MANAGEMENT OF SMALL CRAFT HARBOURS, JETTIES AND WHARVES

DFO's networks of small craft harbours, jetties and wharves are operated across unique departmental contexts, meaning they serve distinct purposes and are managed by distinct departmental custodians: the **Small Craft Harbours Program** and **Real Property**. For this reason, custodial objectives and service delivery models differ with regards to custodian's asset portfolios, mandates, results, activities, users and partners, legislative obligations and funding and governance mechanisms. Small craft harbours, jetties and wharves nevertheless have similar engineering components that give rise to similarities with regards to the asset management processes and terminology that are used. These similarities provide an opportunity to share good practices and lessons learned among departmental custodians, where relevant, for their management.



The SCH program is a national program managed by DFO



RP is corporate real estate organization that manages jetties and wharves on behalf of DFO

MANDATES

The SCH program maintains a critical and affordable national network of safe and accessible harbours that meets the principal needs of the commercial fishing industry.

RP ensures the accommodation of departmental programs through the provision of the department's real property (including jetties and wharves among other assets) in each region.

USERS

Small craft harbours serve the commercial fishing & marine industry as well as the CCG. Services are delivered in partnership with Harbour Authorities.

Jetties and wharves serve CCG programs (i.e., Fleet and Maritime Services, Search and Rescue) and DFO programs (i.e., Science; Conservation and Protection).

RESULTS

SCH program is an established program in DFO's Departmental Results Framework (DRF) and aligns directly departmental result that "The commercial fishing industry has access to safe harbours" under the Fisheries core responsibility.

As a corporate real estate organization that provides internal services, RP is not tied to a specific core responsibility or result in DFO's DRF. Rather, RP supports the results and objectives of their departmental clients as an internal service.



Blanc-Sablon small craft harbour
DFO Photobank



RP wharf at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography
DFO Photo Bank



KEY FINDINGS

- **Small craft harbour, jetty and wharf services are generally delivering services that are reliable. The degree of reliability varies among target user groups.**

Overall, the SCH program delivers services that are mostly reliable, meaning that key informants and survey respondents indicated they were mostly timely, accessible, and current.¹

Overall, RP delivers jetty and wharf services that are somewhat reliable, meaning that key informants and survey respondents indicated they were somewhat timely, mostly accessible, and somewhat current.¹

- **There are ongoing needs for small craft harbours, jetties and wharves which are evolving as the needs of target user groups and Government of Canada (GoC) priorities evolve. The management of DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves is aligned with DFO, CCG, and GoC priorities.**

Ongoing needs among the SCH program's target user groups are being met; however, the demand for harbour services is increasing and creating pressures on the program that lie outside its mandate as a result of:

- diverse fisheries and aquaculture needs;
- recreational needs;
- increasing Indigenous participation in the SCH program; and
- needs for harbour development in the North.

Ongoing needs for DFO's jetties and wharves are driven by the operational requirements of departmental clients and user groups whose needs are evolving as a result of:

- increasing infrastructure needs as the number and size of vessels increases;
- increasing infrastructure needs related to fleet modularity; and
- needs for climate resilient infrastructure.

Harbour Authority respondents indicated the ongoing needs of the following groups were met to a moderate and great extent:



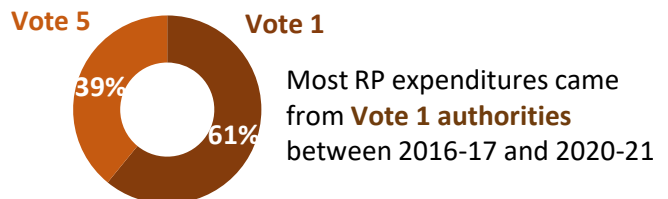
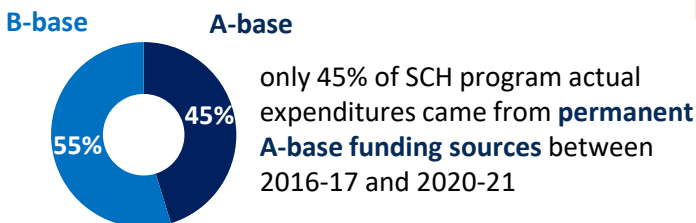
CCG survey respondents indicated that their operational needs are evolving as a result of:



- **Departmental funding mechanisms face a number of hindering factors, both now and into the future. These include, but are not limited to, changing regulatory requirements, increased maintenance expenses and challenges with procurement. They are therefore not considered to be sustainable in the future.**

The SCH program's reliance on temporary B-base funding creates significant challenges for planning lifecycle management in the long term. The program faces long-term funding shortfalls that will hinder future service delivery.

RP faces significant funding shortfalls that hinder their ability to manage the lifecycle of jetties and wharves. In part, this is due to the design of RP's national portfolio strategy relative to the Vote 5 capital funds and long-term planning needed to maintain engineered assets of this kind.



1. Definitions of timely, accessible and current can be found on page 3 of the evaluation report.

KEY FINDINGS

● The availability of operational data that is specific to DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves can be improved to better support decision-making.

SCH's information management capacity could be strengthened to meet evolving program needs for information to support decision-making. The program's capacity in information management is challenged because:

- historical data cannot be easily accessed to support decision-making;
- accurate program data is not readily available; and
- responding to increasingly frequent requests is a challenge.

There is a gap in jetty and wharf specific information available to support decision making. Jetty and wharf specific data is not collected because:

- condition assessment data is collected by functional area/site;
- marine infrastructure assessment expertise is lacking;
- methodologies for assessing marine infrastructure are under development; and
- specialized assessments for marine engineered infrastructure are costly.

● Performance data for the SCH program indicates that performance targets are being met. However, there is a need for program results and indicators that can tell an accurate performance story with regards to the SCH asset portfolio in the long-term.

Performance data for the SCH program indicates that the program is on track to achieve performance targets. However, there is a need for program results and indicators that can tell an accurate performance story with regards to the SCH asset portfolio in the long-term.

Performance data related to jetties and wharves is not collected by the department.



RP and SCH custodians indicated that improvements could be made to centralized databases, data-management systems, and performance indicators.

● Governance structures are generally appropriate to support the management of small craft harbours, jetties and wharves.

● There are internal and external factors affecting custodians' ability to prioritize the asset management of DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves.

There are pressures on the SCH program that affect its ability to plan and prioritize projects for lifecycle management. These include:

- challenges with SCH staff retention; and
- challenges ensuring HA continuity planning.

Strategic and operational communication challenges exist between RP and departmental user groups that could be addressed to improve the prioritization process for jetties and wharves.

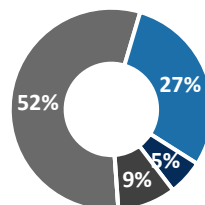
- There are opportunities to improve collaboration and communication with departmental user groups during planning and prioritization processes.

● There are varying degrees of disposal of DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves within and across custodians. Disposal of DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves is challenging due to their prohibitive cost.

SCH's divestiture program advances the removal of non-core harbours from the program inventory. However, more than half of non-core harbours slated for divestiture have yet to commence.

RP rarely divests and/or disposes of DFO's jetties and wharves due to their prohibitive cost.

Proportion of SCH assets at each stage of divestiture



Stage 1: Divestiture yet to commence

Stage 2: In negotiation

Stage 3: Waiting for repairs

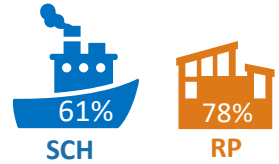
Stage 4: In administrative and legal process

Stage 5: Divestiture completed

KEY FINDINGS

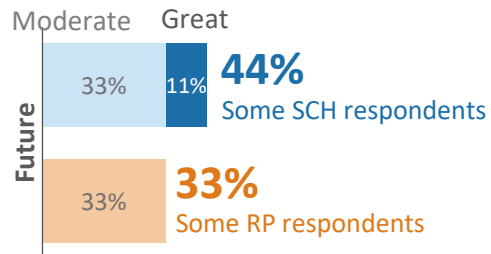
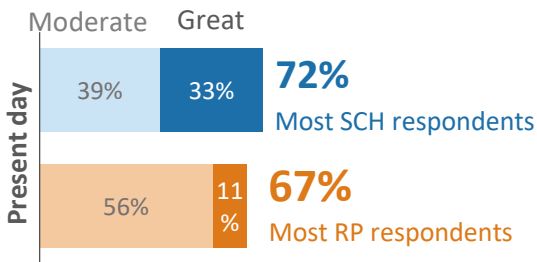
- **SCH and RP custodians incorporate environmental considerations in the planning, activities, structures, and processes that support service delivery. There are opportunities to increase awareness of how GBA+ principles apply to custodial functions.**

Most **SCH (61%)** and a majority of **RP (78%)** survey respondents indicated that they either did not know how GBA+ considerations apply to the service delivery of small craft harbours, jetties and wharves, or that they were not applicable.



- **Custodians indicated that planning processes are somewhat appropriate to ensure service delivery in the present day but will be less so in the future. There are opportunities to further develop areas of mutual work between the custodian groups.**

The appropriateness of custodial planning processes was rated to a moderate and great extent as follows:



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Develop a strategic, transformative, and proactive approach to address user's evolving needs for DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves

- It is recommended that the department adapts to the evolving needs for small craft harbours, jetties and wharves, including the development of an inclusive, forward-thinking strategy across clients and users.

Recommendation 2: Strengthen custodial approaches to operational data management specific to DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves

- It is recommended that departmental approaches to operational information management related to small craft harbours, jetties and wharves are strengthened to support current and future decision-making.

Recommendation 3: Develop a forward-looking strategy for client and user engagement

- It is recommended that custodians explore different avenues for engaging and collaborating with key stakeholders, clients and partners on whom the management of DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves depends.

Recommendation 4: Seek opportunities to share departmental management tools as well as lessons learned to support decision-making

- It is recommended that custodians seek opportunities to share departmental management tools (i.e., related to disposal and divestiture activities and the application of GBA+ principles) to support the management of DFO's small craft harbours, jetties and wharves, including sharing lessons learned across custodial groups as appropriate.



Bradore Bay small craft harbour
DFO Photo Bank