



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate release

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Marine Atlantic announcement welcomed

Recognition of the Marine Atlantic ferry service as a vital trade link is welcomed by the St. John's Board of Trade, according to its Chair, Derek Sullivan. Today's announcement that Marine Atlantic will be chartering two vessels and retiring the Caribou and Joseph and Clara Smallwood will help address critical capacity issues while enhancing fuel efficiency.

"We welcome fleet renewal on Marine Atlantic because of the key role it plays in maintaining our \$10 billion trade corridor between the mainland and our province," said Mr. Sullivan. "This announcement will help businesses here in terms of planning and cost controls, but will also provide mainland companies with better access to our strong economy, which is good for all of Canada."

The Board has been very active in lobbying for enhancements to the Marine Atlantic service, expressing on many occasions directly to federal officials that the service supports all of Canada economically. In 2009, the Board brought forward a resolution to enhance the service to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, a group which represents 175,000 businesses across Canada, which was unanimously accepted.

"The Board is looking forward to a service which has increased capacity, particularly for cargo, but also one that is going to perform better on environmental, safety and reliability targets," said Mr. Sullivan. "That said, we are looking forward to more information from the upcoming five year plan for Marine Atlantic, as we do have questions regarding how fuel surcharges, user fees and other specific items will be addressed. This is a vital time for a vital service; we want to ensure that such a major enhancement is a positive move forward for years to come."

The St. John's Board of Trade is a non-partisan, business advocacy organization that is the principal voice of business for over 750 members in the St. John's area. Its mission is to improve the local business climate, enhancing its members' ability to do business through advocacy and member services.

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