

# fish SAFE

ANNUAL REPORT 2010/2011

April 1, 2010—March 31, 2011

## Herring Drills Day

On March 3, 2011 the BC herring fishery participated in the first ever fleet wide safety drill. This event was coordinated by Fish SAFE in collaboration with and the full support of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Pacific Region, fishing companies and fishermen. With fishing vessels spread from Comox to French Creek, and the herring fishery seemingly imminent, the logistics to pull off such an event required a bit of creativity. Fisheries and Oceans was contacted to provide the announcement to the fleet and to show their support of the activity. Fishing company managers on the grounds as well as some fishermen were also asked to spread the word and garner support for the fleet wide drill. Brenda Spence and the crew of the Atlin Post took on an important role in advising the fleet by way of the official Department of Fisheries and Oceans (“DFO”) announcements the day before and on the day of the event. After doing the preliminary ground work Fish SAFE Program Manager, Gina McKay, and Program Coordinator, John Krgovich, headed to Deep Bay to coordinate the logistics of the fleet wide drill. Canadian Fish’s Senior Director of Fishing Operations, Chris Cue’s, support was integral to the success of the event. Chris provided the Western Rainbow as the platform for Fish SAFE to conduct the drill event and also transport on Waldo to the event winners.

*“Over a week later we continue to get calls from the guys on the grounds as they reflect on what they learned from their drill activity”*



### Winners:

**Fastest Drill:** Al Marsden and Crew of the Snow Drift (vessel with more than 3 crew members)

**Fastest Drill:** Neil and Chris Remmen of the Chaser (vessel with under 3 crew members)



### The Event:

The herring vessels that participated in this 1<sup>st</sup> ever Herring Drills event are to be commended for taking the lead and making safety part of their operation. The uptake of twenty vessels and 103 fishermen participating in a drill event is proof of a fishing industry taking ownership of safety. Fishermen were very appreciative for the opportunity to practice their skills. Some were just happy to still fit into their suits while others took the opportunity to do a full check of all their safety equipment with their crew. Others jumped overboard and Bobby on the Pacific Quest felt he should have won as he put his suit on while drinking a cup of coffee. It was a great day and we look forward to more opportunities to coordinate on grounds drills to set the tone for safe fishing.

Questions around the age of immersion suits and their fit are at the fore. Fish SAFE will be calling suppliers to get updates on availability of suits and sizing and the question of custom fitting as well. Thanks to Chris Cue, Brenda Spence, fishing company managers and fishermen for taking the lead and recognizing the importance of safety in the herring fishery.

**Participating Vessels:** Atlin Post, Belina, Canadian No. 1, Chaser II, Franciscan, Island Spirit II, Northern Cloud, Ocean Cloud, Ocean Destiny, Ocean Marauder, Pachena I, Pacific Aggressor, Pacific Quest, Pender Isle, Prosperity, Silver Dawn, Snow Drift, Snow Queen, Vampy I, Western Ranger











# REGULATORY UPDATE

## Transport Canada (TC)

Members of the Fish SAFE Advisory Committee formed both a Transport Canada Inspections Working Group and a Marine Personnel Working Group this year to deal with on going issues with inspections and certification.

An inspections survey was done to document specific areas of concern to provide some evidence and direction to TC. As a result of several meetings with TC directors in the region and the survey there were some positive changes made to address the issues.

On the Marine Personnel front, the inability to move forward on the Officer of the Watch certification requirement prompted letters to Minister Strahl which was followed up by a visit from the Director General, Donald Roussel, in March. At this meeting the industry was directed to collect information on the ability of fishermen to comply with existing regulations and formulate a west coast compliance plan to mitigate risk. This was completed and forwarded to the Director General. The Director General replied by directing his staff to coordinate outreach sessions with fishermen to “demonstrate that there is ability for the fishing industry to comply with the regulations and it will prove that many fishermen do possess the necessary training and experience to obtain a certificate”.

We will support TC in their outreach efforts as we hope it will assist fishermen in getting consistent information on regulatory and training requirements. DG Roussel did also indicate that following the outcome of the outreach sessions they would review the need to amend the regulations.

## WorkSafeBC

WorkSafeBC continues to regularly inspect all BC fishing vessels focusing on the prevention of fatalities. This year safety inspections on fishing vessels continued and was expanded to on grounds inspections. We understand the prime focus of these inspections is to ensure that the master and crew have procedures in place to prevent capsizing, falls overboard, work safely and implement emergency procedures when things go wrong. This is ultimately what the fishing industry is working towards with the Safest Catch program and other initiatives such as the Fish SAFE Stability Program. This does not happen overnight. Unfortunately, even though we have seen significant progress in the wearing of PFDs on-board, we have suffered fatalities. As with most falls overboard the outcome could have been much more positive with the use of a PFD especially when working alone.

The Industry Services group, with Ellen Hanson taking the lead, collected Fishermen’s Tips to include in the re-working of the Gearing Up for Safety Manual which is expected to be going to print this fall. This manual covers regulatory requirements and recommended practices for staying safe on-board.



## “WEAR FLUORESCENT GREEN TO BE SEEN”

As an educational partner with Mustang Survival, Fish SAFE was invited to support and participate in a Hi Visibility in Water Study. “The purpose of the study was to distinguish and scientifically validate the most conspicuous colour for use on Personal Floatation Devices and Immersion Suits when viewed on the water. The most recent Canadian Standards are prescribing Pantone colours (orange, red and yellow) for immersion suits.” High visibility ANSI approved colours mandated for construction sites are not included in the Canadian Standard. It is hoped that the results of this study can guide the creation of future standards and regulations, aids in locating a floating victim and also be applied to other marine safety equipment. Research findings indicate fluorescent green followed by fluorescent orange were the most conspicuous colours for a floating target when compared to non-fluorescent yellow and non-fluorescent red. This result was found with simulated laboratory viewings and actual on-water experiments which both used human subjects. Lead Researcher for Mustang Survival, Wendell Uglene, also commented that he “would like to see the report go one step further, to look at the visibility of these colours from the air, so we could determine which ones were most effective in helicopter rescue missions”. Mustang accessed research funding through WorkSafeBC’s New Innovations funding program. If you would like a full copy of the report you can find it on [www.fishsafebc.com](http://www.fishsafebc.com)



# SAFEST CATCH

A review of this years activities and the Advisors logs from vessel visits leave a very positive impression of how the fishing industry is recognizing the value of this vessel specific safety program. The first year was spent mainly in development and training, the second year in outreach to as many vessels as possible. This year we are seeing the feedback and requests for follow visits up from industry. Most impressive are two first hand accounts from fishermen that attribute their participation in the program to saving their lives.



*The program continues to mature as we are seeing numerous changes throughout the fleet dealing with on-board safety. Perhaps the most exciting event this reporting season came from a return visit to Prince Rupert where we are really seeing the fruits of our labour. Here for the first time, the Safest Catch program has been credited with saving lives!*



The broad smiles from the faces of the crew spoke to their appreciation of the Advisor and the Safest Catch program. The industry and individual fishermen feedback speaks volumes about the value of this program to the fishing fleet. All of us that are involved appreciate the opportunity that this funding has afforded the fishing industry and although it is difficult to document, there is no doubt from those that are out on vessels that it has saved lives. As we go into the last year of this funded program we will be looking at enhancements to bring the program in line with ISO safety management system guidelines so as to streamline and make the work already accomplished on board more effective.

We heard last fall of a crab vessel that had capsized off the BC coast. When the vessel name was released we were very concerned, not only because it was a fellow fisherman, but also a participant in the initial stages of the Safest Catch program. When the Advisor who was working with the vessel called the skipper, who had managed to get himself and his crew of three off the vessel safely, the skipper asked if we could send the Advisor to Prince Rupert to work with him on his new vessel. On arrival in Prince Rupert this Spring the Advisor met the skipper and crew who told of a chain of events which lead to the compromised stability of the vessel that caused it to eventually capsize. The good news came when the skipper and crew told the Advisor how glad they were that the Advisor had made them aware of the life raft and showed them how to do an abandon ship drill which included how to launch the raft. They said, *“It all happened so fast....about 90 seconds and it capsized. We were so glad that you made us do that drill. I told my crew to get the life raft and they knew exactly how to get it into the water and we were able to step off the overturning boat and right into the raft.”*



Decal issued to fishermen wearing PFDs!

## Vessel Visit Summary and Highlights

Vessel Visit Requests - 216  
 Vessel Visits - 138  
 Fishermen - 737  
 Safety Orientation Completed - 123

Safety Drills Program - 101  
 Safe at Sea Procedures - 60  
 Safest Catch Decals Received - 63







# BC COMMERCIAL FISHING LABOUR MARKET INITIATIVE

Over two years of enquiries into the availability of funding for fishermen training landed at the BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation. It was discovered that this Ministry has a Labour Market Program initiative that assists sectors including fishing to determine the human resource issues at hand and also develop a strategy for dealing with them. This would be the first step in accessing the actual training funding needs. The BC Seafood Alliance drafted a terms of reference for the project

working with an industry committee. The four phases of the project include:



1. Labour Market Information Research / Communications Strategy
2. Training, Recruitment and Retention Strategy
3. Marketing Strategy / Materials / Website / Database Development
4. Sustainability Plan

We are underway with Phase I, documenting the demographics of the fishing industry and training needs. We have also linked this component of the BC Commercial Fishing Labour Initiative (so titled) with Transport Canada's need to certify all fishermen. It is expected that the information gathered will assist in making the case for the training funding needs and provide the evidence needed by Transport Canada to work with us on a more informed compliance plan. This will be an invaluable document for future planning whether you are investing in or leaving the fishing industry.

## REMEMBERING ON THE WEBSITE

A special feature was added to the Fish SAFE website to remember the importance of safety on board. If you would like to submit a dedication to someone lost at sea, please give us a call at 604.261.9700, make a submission on line at fishsafebc.com or complete this form and fax it in to Fish SAFE at 604.275.7140

Name of Person(s) and Vessel for Dedication:

Personal Comments:

Date or Year of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Email: \_\_\_\_\_



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