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**TO:** CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2015 April 22

**FROM:** DIRECTOR ENGINEERING  
FIRE CHIEF

**SUBJECT:** OIL SPILL IN ENGLISH BAY, VANCOUVER – MV MARATHASSA

**PURPOSE:** To provide Council with information on the recent oil spill in English Bay from MV Marathassa and provide information on potential implications to Burnaby for any similar occurrences within Burrard Inlet in the future.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** this report be received for information; and
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Burnaby MLA's, Burnaby MP's and the Environment Committee.

**REPORT**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Under the New Business portion of the Open Council meeting held on 2015 April 13, members of Council expressed concern regarding notification procedures and response to the recent oil spill in Vancouver. Arising from the discussion, Council requested staff to prepare a report to provide information on potential implications to Burnaby for any similar occurrences within Burrard Inlet in the future.

The following report provides information on the recent oil spill in English Bay from MV Marathassa and provides information on potential implications to Burnaby for any similar occurrences within Burrard Inlet in future.

**2.0 OIL SPILL IN ENGLISH BAY, VANCOUVER – MV MARATHASSA**

At approximately 5:00 pm on 2015 April 08, Port Metro Vancouver Operations Centre and the Canadian Coast Guard received calls regarding an oil sheen observed in English Bay. In response to the calls, a Port Metro Harbour boat was dispatched shortly thereafter to investigate the area where the oil sheen was observed. At approximately 8:00 pm, the Canadian Coast Guard called Western Canada Marine Response Corporation (WCMRC) to respond to the oil spill.

To: City Manager  
From: DIRECTOR ENGINEERING & FIRE CHIEF  
Re: OIL SPILL IN ENGLISH BAY, VANCOUVER – MV  
MARATHASSA  
2015 April 22 ..... Page 2

WCMRC clean-up crews arrived at the site at approximately 9:25 pm, undertook skimming activities and upon confirmation of the source at approximately 4:00 am on 2015 April 09, placed a boom around MV Marathassa. The City of Vancouver was notified about the oil spill at approximately 5:00 am and staff received incident notification from WCMRC at 7:14 am.

MV Marathassa is a panamax sized bulk grain carrier managed by Alassia NewShips Management Inc. and commissioned in 2015. The oil spill from this vessel, later identified to be Bunker C, has resulted in closure of a number of beaches in Vancouver and North Shore, and impacted wildlife. Approximately 30 birds were found to be oiled. According to Transport Canada, approximately 2,700 L of oil (approximately 17 barrels) had been spilled from MV Marathassa. WCMRC claims to have recovered four-fifths of the reported release amount. The exact amount of oil released is unavailable at present and the cause of the oil spill is still under investigation. Currently, the majority of the beaches impacted by oil have been cleaned-up and re-opened.

For Council's information, WCMRC is a private company formed from a small oil spill response co-operative known as Burrard Clean Operations in 1976. Its five shareholders include the four major oil companies (Imperial Oil, Shell Canada, Chevron and Suncor) and Trans Mountain Pipeline. Trans Mountain currently owns 50.9 percent of the shares in WCMRC. These five companies also sit on WCMRC's Board. WCMRC is certified as a Response Organization by Transport Canada – Marine Safety and its geographic area of response includes the BC coast extending to the 200 nautical mile limit as well as all inland navigable waters in the province. WCMRC has three main offices/warehouses to cover the North Coast, South Coast and the Vancouver Island. The South Coast office/warehouse is located at the former Shell Refinery site in Burnaby.

### **3.0 POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS TO BURNABY FOR SIMILAR OCCURRENCES IN BURRARD INLET IN FUTURE**

The oil spill incident in English Bay from MV Marathassa on 2015 April 08 has clearly identified the need for a more co-ordinated and effective spill recovery response and an improved notification process. This incident also raises questions regarding the capacity and capability of responders (responsible parties, agencies and contractors) to effectively respond to larger oil spills from an oil tanker within Burrard Inlet.

For Council's information, in the event that a marine vessel spills oil while in transit within Burrard Inlet, the vessel owner would be responsible for the costs relating to the clean-up. The Canadian Coast Guard, as in the above case, would be the lead agency and the City along with other regulatory agencies would be part of the unified command. For marine vessel docked at a terminal during a spill event from the vessel or from the equipment loading fuel or product to the vessel, the owner of the vessel would be responsible for all its legal liabilities arising from spill caused by the vessel and the terminal owner/operator would be responsible for all its legal liabilities arising from the spill caused by its facilities. The lead response agency will depend on whether the spill is contained on land or has migrated to or occurs in the marine environment.

To: City Manager  
From: DIRECTOR ENGINEERING & FIRE CHIEF  
Re: OIL SPILL IN ENGLISH BAY, VANCOUVER – MV  
MARATHASSA  
2015 April 22 ..... Page 3

In case of the proposed Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project, Council has raised a number of questions to the National Energy Board relating to oil spill and related impacts from oil tankers arriving at the Westridge Marine Terminal. The incident in English Bay just confirms the concerns which have been previously expressed by Council.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The recent oil spill in English Bay from MV Marathassa on 2015 April 08 has clearly identified the need for a more co-ordinated and effective spill recovery response and an improved notification process. This incident also raises questions regarding the capacity and capability of responders (responsible parties, agencies and contractors) to effectively respond to larger oil spills in a timely manner from an oil tanker within Burrard Inlet. In the case of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, Council has raised a number of questions to the National Energy Board relating to oil spill and related impacts from oil tankers arriving at the Westridge Marine Terminal. The incident in English Bay just confirms the concerns which have been previously expressed by Council.



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Copied to: Deputy City Managers  
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