

Marine Outlook

Highlights of the marine industry

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PORTS

Sept-Îles

Port of Sept-Îles retains 2002 Quebec leading port title

With a total of 21,1 Mt handled in 2002, the Port of Sept-Îles maintains its leading position in Quebec. This total represents a tonnage increase of 5 % compared with 2001. Sept-Îles is Quebec's leading port in terms of tonnage handled, ahead of Montreal, Quebec and Port-Cartier, but comes second in Canada after Vancouver (68,2 Mt in 2002).¹

Iron ore shipments which represent 90 % of the total volume handled, have reached 19,1 Mt in 2002, or 6 % more than in 2001. However, there was a slight drop in the transshipment of other bulk commodities. The number of vessel transits also decreased from 551 in 2001 to 525 in 2002. These vessels mainly carried iron ore, gas, fuel oil and sugar.²

In terms of real-estate investments, the Port of Sept-Îles will have to extend its facilities, but does not have the necessary funds, estimated between 15 and 20 M\$. The situation has become urgent since Alouette announced the completion of phase II, which will double the smelter's production by 2005. The expansion of the port's facilities calls for an extension of La Commune wharf which accommodates vessels carrying alumina. The wharf will quickly reach maximum capacity when traffic increases with the completion of Alouette's phase II.³

To secure returns on these investments, the Port will require a railway connection between La Relance wharf and also the new loading wharf, to the existing railway network. A feasibility study indicates that this 1,2 km railway line alone would cost 5 M\$. Briefly, time is short for the Port of Sept-Îles to gather the required capital, since inauguration of Alouette's phase II is only two years away.⁴

Alouette's expansion could also help materialise the rail ferry project between Sept-Îles, Port-Cartier and Matane. If Alouette wants to ship its additional production starting in 2005, COGEMA (Compagnie de gestion de Matane) has already indicated that it would be willing to add a second rail ferry ship to help out the *Georges-Alexandre-Lebel*, in operation between Baie-Comeau and Matane for the last 25 years⁵

Montreal⁶

Lower cereals and petroleum products tonnage

Although containerised commodities increased as a whole, the total volume handled at the Port of Montreal decreased in 2002 to 18,7 Mt, 2 % less than in 2001. This drop is attributed to a decline in the bulk sector, due to the harsh weather conditions of 2001-2002. Transport of cereals fell 500 000 tonnes or 27 %, to a total of 1,4 Mt. This is attributed to disastrous crops in Western Canada, where one of the worst drought in Canada's history has hit Alberta and Saskatchewan over the last two years. The production of cereals in the West was down 32 % on last year's and exports were the lowest since 1954. In addition, Quebec's milder 2001-2002 winter helped reduce household demand for petroleum products

¹ Tremblay, Stéphane, « Le port de Sept-Îles conserve son premier rang au Québec », *Le Soleil*, 11 January 2003, p. B-5.

² Ibid

³ Trudel, Jean-Sébastien, « Le port de Sept-Îles doit s'agrandir au plus tôt », *Les Affaires*, 25 January 2003, p. A-6.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Garneau, Louis, « Traversier-rail entre Sept-Îles, Port-Cartier et Matane », *Radio-Canada's WEB site*, 18 February 2003.

⁶ Port of Montreal – Press release, Record container traffic for the Port of Montreal, [decline in cereal and petroleum traffic due to severe drought and mild winter](#), 23 January 2003; Dupaul, Richard, « Pire année au port de Montréal depuis 1993 », *La Presse*, 18 December 2002; Dufour, Valérie, « Un trafic de 18,5 millions de tonnes de marchandise – Le port tire un bilan modeste de 2002 », *Le Devoir*, 4 January 2003; Frederick, Brent, « Port of Montreal back in one-million – TEU club », *Canadian Sailings*, 20 January 2003, pp. 18-19.

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as well as for energy produced by Tracy's Hydro-Québec power plant. Add to this a lower demand for kerosene from airlines, due to the September 11, 2001 events.

Bulk's poor performance cast a shadow over the containerised commodities sector, for which 2002 was exceptional. In fact, the Port of Montreal handled 1 054 603 TFE containers (twenty-foot equivalent units) in 2002, which is 65 176 more than last year and 40 455 more than the previous record high of 2000.

As a whole, traffic of various containerised commodities and non-containerised goods totalled 9,8 Mt in 2002, a rise of 8 % on the previous year. Non-containerised traffic was around 400 000 tonnes in 2002, down 4 % on 2001's total, which is attributed to lower shipments of iron and steel products.

According to Port authority, 2003 will likely be another record year for containerised traffic with a tonnage expected to exceed 10 Mt. As for the total tonnage of commodities handled by the port, a figure around 19,6 Mt is foreseen, on account of higher container traffic and a slight recovery of the petroleum products (colder winter this year) and cereals sectors.

Quebec

Port of Quebec catching up with Port of Montreal

Port of Quebec increased its tonnage by 17 % in 2002, from 15,3 Mt to 17,9 Mt. This is the highest rise of the last ten years. Tonnage growth in 2002 is attributed to new bulk traffic such as kerosene and metallurgical coke. With a tonnage of 18 Mt, Port of Quebec will soon catch up with Port of Montreal, a situation caused by the drop in total tonnage for Montreal in 2002.⁷

The volume of cereals handled remained stable in 2002 with 2,2 Mt. Other solid bulks increased by 56 % to 5,6 Mt in 2002, compared with 4,4 Mt in 2001. Petroleum products increased by 13 % to 11,9 Mt compared with 10,5 Mt in 2001.⁸

Some 14 M\$ were invested in 2002, mainly at Pointe-à-Carcy, on works related to international cruises, but also for the construction of wharves 103 and 49 located in the Anse-au-Foulon and Beauport sectors, respectively. Other investments of the order of 150 M\$ were made during the last years to develop partnerships with Falconbridge for copper and nickel ore transit shipments coming from Raglan mine (Deception Bay) and with Alcan for offloading alumina and bauxite.⁹

Port of Quebec recently confirmed its intention of transferring to the City of Quebec, 2 million sq. ft. of land in the Bay of Beauport for recreational use. The project's timetable is targeting Quebec's 400th anniversary celebrations in 2008 for inauguration. The development plan calls for the construction by the port, of two 300-metre wharves adjacent to, but at a fair distance from, the beach.¹⁰

Port-Cartier

Tonnage handled increases

With a total tonnage of 16,5 Mt in 2002, a rise of 10 % on 2001, Quebec Cartier Mining's port remained the most important private port facility in Canada. There were 391 ship transits this year, 40 more than in 2001.¹¹

Mining activities were stopped by an industrial dispute in 2001, which brought production down and consequently, the ore tonnage handled by the port. The dispute is now over and iron ore shipments increased in 2002. On the average, iron ore accounts for 75 % of the total tonnage handled each year by the port.¹²

World competition in the iron industry and the North-American steel crisis have hit QCM badly. Over the last two years, QCM went through four production stoppages and a six-week lock-out in 2001. QCM's concentrate and pellets sales have fallen considerably during the last years, resulting in yearly losses of 30 M\$ for the last two years.¹³

In February, the company proposed a 15-year mining plan calling for an annual 12 Mt ore production compared with the 14,5 Mt produced some years ago. The plan aims at reducing the mine's operating costs and adjusting to the world iron market. If this revival plan is accepted by the various partners

⁷ Port of Quebec – Press release, [17 % trade increase for Port of Quebec in 2002](#), 3 January 2003; Vaillancourt, Gilles, « Le vent dans les voiles », [Le Soleil](#), 4 January 2003; « Quebec Harbor reports a 17 % increase in business for 2002 », [Great Lakes and Seaway Shipping News](#), 26 January 2003; « Le port de Québec est à la veille de rejoindre celui de Montréal », [La Presse Canadienne](#), 3 January 2003.

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Moreault, Éric, « Le port cède 2 millions de pieds carrés », [Le Soleil](#), 5 February 2003.

¹¹ Tremblay, Stéphane, « Le port de Sept-Îles conserve son premier rang au Québec », [Le Soleil](#), 11 January 2003.

¹² Port-Cartier Port Authority

¹³ « Les minières de la Côte-Nord devront faire d'importants compromis en 2003 », [Groupe TVA WEB site](#), 13 January 2003.

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(Quebec Government, unions, suppliers, municipalities of Port-Cartier and Fermont), it will extend the mine's operations by roughly 15 year; if not, Company says production will inevitably stop within five years.¹⁴

Sorel

A year marked by the steel market slowdown

Tonnage handled at the Port of Sorel totalled 4,8 Mt in 2002, back 9 % from 2001's total. This is explained entirely by fewer ilmenite and iron ore transshipments from the Port of Havre-Saint-Pierre. Close to 80 % of all commodities handled at Sorel is ore. In the context of the actual North-American steel market slowdown, tonnage drops at ports that handle significant ore volumes.¹⁵

Baie-Comeau

Lower softwood lumber and cereal tonnage

With a total tonnage of 4,6 Mt in 2002, the Port of Baie-Comeau recorded a 4 % decrease of its traffic compared with 2001. Freight carried by the rail ferry ship *Georges-Alexandre-Lebel* between Baie-Comeau and Matane fell in 2002 to a total of 738 000 t, compared with 821 000 t in 2001. This 11 % drop is attributed to the Canada-US softwood lumber dispute. Abitibi-Consolidated softwood lumber shipments decreased in 2002. As for the other Baie-Comeau sawmill, Bowater, shipments remained stable because the company only ships unprocessed lumber logs to the South-Shore.¹⁶

Grains volume rose to 2,2 Mt, which is 10 % less than in 2001. This is explained by the severe drought that affected Western Canada during the last years. Also, Cargill's lock-out is in its third year and there are no indications at the present time that the dispute will be resolved in the near future.¹⁷

The construction of the railway connecting the Baie-Comeau industrial park to the rail ferry servicing area will start this spring. The port's future looks promising.¹⁸

Port-Alfred

Slight tonnage increase

Tonnage went up 2 % to a total of 4,5 Mt at Port-Alfred in 2002 compared with 4,4 Mt in 2001. Shipments of bauxite, alumina, caustic soda and burnt coke all increased in 2002 and the Port greeted a total of 120 ships.¹⁹

Property of Alcan, the Port of Port-Alfred will see its tonnage increase during the next few years when the multinational makes major investments in the aluminium transformation sector of the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region. Port Authority foresees a total tonnage of 4,7 Mt in 2003.²⁰

Havre-Saint-Pierre

Ore unloadings decline

Tonnage totalled 2,5 Mt at Havre-Saint-Pierre in 2002, down 17 % on last year's total, all attributed to fewer transshipments of ilmenite and iron ore as well as titanium. Consequently, traffic dropped from 86 ships in 2001 to 71 in 2002.²¹

¹⁴ Tremblay, Stéphane, « La minière et ses employés s'assoient à la même table », *Le Soleil*, 5 February 2003; Abud, Julie, « Québec Cartier demande aux villes de Port-Cartier et Fermont de compresser leur budget », *Radio-Canada's WEB site*, 16 January 2003; Leblanc, Philippe, « La minière Québec Cartier a rencontré ses employés », *Radio-Canada's WEB site*, 18 January 2003; Tison, Marie, « Québec participerait au développement de la mine de Québec Cartier », *La Presse Canadienne*, 20 December 2002.

¹⁵ Detailed report on tonnage handled by Quebec's harbours and ports – 2001 and 2002, *Transport Canada*.

¹⁶ Detailed report on tonnage handled by Quebec's harbours and ports – 2001 and 2002, *Transport Canada*; Paradis, Steve, « 11 % moins de marchandises – Les projets d'expansion devraient donner un nouveau souffle au port », *Le Soleil*, 22 January 2003, p. A-16.

¹⁷ Munger, Gilles, « Transbordement de céréales : les ports de la Côte-Nord viennent de connaître leur pire année depuis plus de 10 ans », *Radio-Canada's WEB site*, 7 January 2003; Dufour, Valérie, « Les années de lock-out », *Le Devoir*, 21 December 2002.

¹⁸ Munger, Gilles, « Facture plus élevée pour la Société du port ferroviaire de Baie-Comeau », *Radio-Canada's WEB site*, 23 January 2003; « Baie-Comeau : le prolongement du chemin de fer coûtera 30 % plus cher que prévu », *Groupe TVA's WEB site*, 3 January 2003.

¹⁹ Port-Alfred Port Authority.

²⁰ Moisan, Mylène, « La vallée de l'aluminium prend des couleurs », *Le Soleil*, 30 January 2003.

²¹ Detailed report on tonnage handled by Quebec's harbours and ports – 2001 and 2002, *Transport Canada*.

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Trois-Rivières

Handled tonnage down slightly

Commodities handled by the port reached a total of 2,4 Mt in 2002, down 1 % on last year's. A total of 253 ships came into port, three more than in 2001.²²

Only dry bulk tonnage went up in 2002. Alumina, coal, sugar, salt and clay increased by 8 %, from 1 083 to 1 171 tonnes. Cereals were down 9 % from 537 000 to 487 000 t. Liquid bulk was down 8 % to 546 000 t from 595 000 t in 2001.²³

General cargoes (woodpulp and paper, wood and steel) remained more or less stable with a slight drop of 1 % from 230 000 t in 2001 to 227 000 t in 2002. New commodities were handled by the port in 2002, such as new types of steel, sugar as well as wood for the furniture industry.²⁴

2003 looks good for the Port of Trois-Rivières, where a new giant crane will complete its first year of operation and bring in new shippers; the crane facilitates and accelerates transshipments. Wharf repairs have top priority in the list of the port's investment projects; they will begin in 2003 and be completed in 2003. In addition, Port Authority still hope to be able to attract its first cruise ship. Finally, the project of merging with the Port of Bécancour is still alive, although very hypothetical for the moment.²⁵

Bécancour

Liquid bulk terminal inauguration in 2003

The volume of commodities handled by the Port of Bécancour reached 1,8 Mt in 2002, up 9 % on last year's. A total of 105 ships came into port compared with 98 last year. Like it did in the past, the port's priority went to users of the Bécancour port and industrial park and approximately 92 % of its traffic was exchanged with park-based companies. In fact, all of the transshipment activity increase comes from these companies.²⁶

Port Authority expect that 2003 will be good. The liquid bulk terminal under construction should be ready by the end of March. From then on, ships carrying liquid bulk should use the port's facilities every month.²⁷

Matane

Rail ferry freight down

Port of Matane's handled volume in 2002 totalled 917 000 t, down 10 % on the previous year's. Approximately 80 % of the commodities handled by the port come from the rail ferry ship *Georges-Alexandre-Lebel* and mostly consist of aluminium, paper, softwood lumber, wood logs and chemical products. The drop in tonnage is attributed to an 11 % decrease in freight carried by the ferryboat, particularly softwood lumber. In 2002, the rail ferry made 426 round-trips between Baie-Comeau and Matane, twenty less than in 2001. There were also 41 other ships using the Port of Matane to transfer goods not carried by the rail ferry. These commodities were mostly woodpulp, petroleum products and gas.²⁸

Port-Saguenay

Tonnage down slightly

Port-Saguenay handled a total of 448 000 t of commodities in 2002, down 3 % on last year's total. Of that figure, 196 000 tonnes were unloaded at the port and 248 000 were loaded for exports, mostly to Europe. A total of 77 ships came into Port-Saguenay; 76 last year.²⁹

²² Veillette, Guy, « Le port de Trois-Rivières sauvé par les vracs solides », *Le Nouvelliste*, 24 January 2003; « Une bonne année au port de Trois-Rivières », *Radio-Canada's WEB site*, 23 January 2003.

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Veillette, Jean, « Jean Fournier entrevoit l'année avec optimiste », *Le Nouvelliste*, 24 January 2003, p. 7.

²⁶ Lafontaine, Marie-Ève, « Bécancour défie la conjoncture », *Le Nouvelliste*, 8 January 2003; Veillette, Guy, « Nepveu cherche des solutions », *Le Nouvelliste*, 24 January 2003, p. 26.

²⁷ « Le port de Bécancour plus concurrentiel », *Le Nouvelliste*, 13 March 2003.

²⁸ Detailed report on tonnage handled by Quebec's harbours and ports – 2001 and 2002, *Transport Canada*; Gagné, Gilles, « Trois des quatre principaux ports gaspésien accusent une baisse d'activité », *Le Soleil*, 11 January 2003, p. B-5; Paradis, Steeve, « 11 % moins de marchandises – Les projets d'expansion devraient donner un nouveau souffle au port », *Le Soleil*, 22 January 2003.

²⁹ Port-Saguenay Port Authority.

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All of the 95 000 tonnes handled at Powell Wharf in 2002 were newsprint, which is 25 % more than last year. At Grande-Anse terminal, close to 349 000 tonnes were handled, mainly woodpulp and paper, de-icing salt, liquid pitch, coal and caustic soda.³⁰

Port-Saguenay Port Authority is working hard on the project of resuming the transport of oil products by the Saguenay River. Refined petroleum products from Saint-Romuald, currently carried by truck, offer interesting prospects. The project would require investing 8 M\$ to expand the actual port facilities and install storage tanks.³¹

In 2003, a total tonnage of 540 000 t is foreseen, which would bring in 90 ships, ten more than in 2002.

Chandler

Glimmers of hope for the Port of Chandler

The total tonnage handled by the Port of Chandler in 2002 was 3 255 tonnes, a little less than 2001's total of 3 425 tonnes. Since the Gaspésia paper mill closed, only salt transits by the port.³²

Traditionally, the Port of Chandler's vocation was exporting newsprint, when Gaspésia was running at full capacity. Gaspésia closed down in 1999 but works are now underway to modernise it. The port could get busy again if the mill resumes its production in the summer of 2004. Until then, city officials will try to convince Papiers Gaspésia to export its future production by sea rather than by road or rail, in accordance with Quebec's Marine Policy.³³

The construction of the boarding ramp is well underway. Two giant cranes are presently driving down the steel beams that will support the ramp taken by vehicles boarding CTMA's *Le Vacancier* that will begin shuttles to Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine in June 2003. However, Groupe CTMA still hasn't decided which port, Chandler or Matane will get the call.³⁴

The ramp project is managed by the City of Chandler which received a 3,5 M\$ grant from Transports Québec for the infrastructure. This grant will also cover the cruise passengers accommodation facilities that will be built near the wharf.³⁵

Rimouski

More petroleum products unloadings

Traffic at the Port of Rimouski increased to a total tonnage of 296 000 tonnes, up 3 % on last year's total. This is explained by more gas and petroleum products being unloaded. In 2002, 86 ships docked at the Port of Rimouski, one more than last year.³⁶

In the issue of the port's transfer to the City of Rimouski, dredging of the port's channel is the main condition set out by city officials to Transport Canada. The City claims that without sufficient draught, the port's development and cost-effectiveness is impossible.³⁷

Pointe-au-Pic

Tonnage down despite increasing newsprint shipments

Tonnage handled at Pointe-au-Pic totalled 206 000 tonnes in 2002, down 21 % on last year's total. In spite of the North-American slowdown in the newsprint sector, the port's total tonnage reached 163 000 t, a slim 4 % rise. Wood chips tonnage was down from 103 000 tonnes in 2001 to 42 000 only in 2002, which explain the overall tonnage decline. In terms of marine traffic, 39 ships came by Pointe-au-Pic in 2002, compared with 40 in 2001.³⁸

Gaspé

Significant tonnage drop

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Blackburn, Roger, « La direction travaille fort sur le transport des hydrocarbures », *Le Quotidien*, 31 December 2002, p. 6.

³² Detailed report on tonnage handled by Quebec's harbours and ports – 2001 and 2002, *Transport Canada*.

³³ Gagné, Gilles, « Le maire croit encore en la survie du port », *Le Soleil*, 4 February 2003, p. C-8; Gagné, Gilles, « À Chandler, la construction du débarcadère va bon train », *Le Soleil*, 5 February 2003, p. A-13; « Le port de Chandler tirera son épingle du jeu selon le maire Claude Cyr », *Radio-Canada's WEB site*, 4 February 2003.

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ Detailed report on tonnage handled by Quebec's harbours and ports – 2001 and 2002, *Transport Canada*; Gagné, Gilles, « Trois des quatre principaux ports gaspésiens accusent une baisse d'activité », *Le Soleil*, 11 January 2003, p. B-5.

³⁷ « Rimouski exige le dragage du chenal de son port avant de signer une entente avec Ottawa », *Radio-Canada's WEB site*, 31 December 2002; Thériault, Carl, « Rimouski croit encore à la faisabilité du lien entre les deux rives », *Le Soleil*, 6 February 2003, p. A-19.

³⁸ Detailed report on tonnage handled by Quebec's harbours and ports – 2001 and 2002, *Transport Canada*.

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The Port of Gaspé's total tonnage dropped by 56 % in 2002, from 540 000 tonnes to 240 000 tonnes. Only 40 ships used the port's facilities compared with 71 in 2001. The closure of the Murdochville smelter in 2002 reduced the port's tonnage by half, compared with 2001. The overall tonnage drop is mainly attributed to plunges of copper ore transshipments, as well as salt and petroleum products to a lesser extent. For 2003, Port Authority foresees a total tonnage of 75 000 tonnes, mainly composed of petroleum products and abrasives.³⁹

Gros-Cacouna

Tonnage down by half

The total tonnage of commodities handled at Gros-Cacouna was down by almost 50 % in 2002, from 270 000 to 140 000 tonnes. This drop comes from newsprint, pulp wood and softwood lumber in particular. The softwood lumber dispute, the decrease in wood shipments from Anticosti and fewer woodpulp and paper deliveries explain this drop in forest products handled by the port. In 2002, 36 ships carried shipments in and out of Gros-Cacouna, compared with 60 in 2001.⁴⁰

Portneuf

Tonnage up

Total traffic at the Port of Portneuf rose by 35 % in 2002 to 140 000 tonnes, explained mainly by an increase in transshipments of gypsum and coal. In 2002, 15 ships came into port, one less than in 2001.⁴¹

SAINT-LAWRENCE SEAWAY

Tonnage remains stable

The Saint-Lawrence Seaway (SLSW) greeted 3 891 ships in 2002 compared with 4 085 in 2001, down by 5 %. However, these ships carried roughly the same tonnage in 2002 (41,4 Mt) as in 2001 (41,7 Mt). According to information received from the SLSW Management Corporation, there were fewer ballast ships in 2002, meaning that most ships carried loads both ways and not only in one direction. Bulk products were the main category of commodities carried with 13 Mt. Cereals and iron ore ranked second and third respectively with 10,5 and 9,6 Mt, followed by general cargoes with 4,2 Mt and finally coal with 4,1 Mt. Compared with 2001, coal and cereals suffered the most significant drops, down 14 and 11 % respectively. General cargoes recorded the highest increase with 38 %. Iron ore was up 11 %.⁴²

Opening of 2003 navigation season

SLSW 2003 season officially opened on Monday March 31st 2003. Initially planned for March 25th, the opening was delayed for the first time since SLSW's inauguration in 1959, on account of ice.⁴³ Ships movements will depend on the weather and ice conditions. It is possible that day navigation only will be authorised in certain sectors until light buoys are installed. Sault-Ste-Marie U.S. locks are open since March 25th. In the Montreal-Lake Ontario section, the draught will be 26'0" until the south shore channel is free of ice. Draught will then be 26'3" by April 15th at the latest. In Welland Canal, draught will be 26'3" for the entire season. The Montreal-Lake Ontario section is expected to close on midnight, December 20th, 2003 and the entire Seaway should close on December 25th at the latest, depending on the weather and ice conditions.⁴⁴

Water levels worry

All of Quebec's waterways tributary of the Saint-Lawrence had lower water levels last February. In early March, the water levels of the Great Lakes were lower than they were a year ago. In March 2003, the water level of Lake Superior was approximately 23 centimetres lower than normal. Water rose on Lake Erie and Lake Ontario but levels remained under seasonal average and under last year's level for the corresponding period. Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, whose levels go up and down simultaneously, vary by around 30 centimetres every year but are now 59 centimetres below normal. As for Lake Ontario, its water level now varies by about 32 centimetres compared with 45 centimetres last year.⁴⁵

³⁹ Detailed report on tonnage handled by Quebec's harbours and ports – 2001 and 2002, [Transport Canada](#); Gagné, Gilles, « Trois des quatre principaux ports gaspésien accusent une baisse d'activité », [Le Soleil](#), 11 January 2003, p. B-5; Briand, Naomie, « Port de Gaspé – Ottawa ne répond plus », [Le Soleil](#), 3 February 2003, p. A-12; Briand, Naomie, « Un sort incertain pour le port de Gaspé », [Le Soleil](#), 7 February, p. A-11; Briand, Naomie, « Port de Gaspé - Le projet d'expansion compromis », [Le Soleil](#), 15 December 2002, p. A-9; « 2003 sera une année tranquille pour le port de Gaspé », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#), 9 January 2003.

⁴⁰ Gagné, Gilles, « Trois des quatre principaux ports gaspésien accusent une baisse d'activité », [Le Soleil](#), 11 January 2003, p. B-5; Larouche, Marc, « Un port de mer en perdition depuis 5 ans », [Le Soleil](#), 24 January 2003; « Le port de Gros-Cacouna enregistre l'une des pires années de son histoire », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#), 13 January 2003.

⁴¹ Detailed report on tonnage handled by Quebec's harbours and ports – 2001 and 2002, [Transport Canada](#).

⁴² « SLSW Monthly traffic review dated 31 December 2002 », [Great Lakes/SLSW WEB site](#).

⁴³ « 2003 Seaway navigation season begins March 31 », [Press release, Great Lakes / SLSW Network WEB site](#), 7 March 2003.

⁴⁴ « Opening of 2003 navigation season » Notice to Shipping no 2 – 2003, [Great Lakes / SLSW Network WEB site](#), 6 March 2003.

⁴⁵ [Info-Level](#), Volume 11, Number 3, [Environment Canada's WEB site](#), 7 March 2003;

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Environment Canada foresees that the Great Lakes water levels could come down again this summer to levels below those observed in 2001.⁴⁶

At the Port of Montreal, the water level reached its lowest in 38 years. The current average level is 11,06 m, 72 centimetres below normal. This is apparently due to late ice formation. In theory, a decrease of 30 centimetres means that a ship will carry 130 containers less. However, this applies only to ships loaded at full capacity, which is not very frequent according to Dominic Taddeo, Port of Montreal's CEO.⁴⁷ Until recently, not one ship was forced to cut down its load to reach Montreal, But Mr. Taddeo admits that certain carriers had to leave a few containers on the docks last summer, when the Saint-Lawrence channel depth was insufficient.⁴⁸

Last January, the International Joint Commission which manages water levels between Canada and the U.S. wanted the situation corrected. The strategy was to erect booms that would change the rate of flow, favour ice formation on the Saint-Lawrence and increase the outflow into Lake Saint-Louis and the area around the Port of Montreal.⁴⁹

Improved security measures

After the incident of the *Windoc*, which hit a bridge over Welland Canal, an inquiry by the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) was requested. TSB's final report proposes three recommendations to SLSWMC. These recommendations concern the supervision of rolling bridge operators, emergency preparedness and employees' health conditions. Changes were made to the operating procedures and supervision. With regards to bridges and other SLSWMC structures, it was proposed to use cameras, sensors and other means of remote monitoring from a central control station. A review of emergency measures was conducted and an annual planning exercise will improve staff and other resources co-ordination in critical areas. In addition, the Automatic Identification System (AIS) is compulsory on board all commercial ships since March 31st 2003.⁵⁰

More security

Transport Canada has announced a project for improving the security of Canada's marine transport network and marine boundaries. The costs of this 5-year project could reach 172,5 M\$. It will look at the preservation and protection of our marine infrastructure, the surveillance of Canadian waters and improvement of our capacity to respond to emergencies. These various marine security sub-projects will be conducted by six federal departments and/or agencies, among which Fisheries & Oceans. Within the scope of its Conservation and Protection Program, DFO will intensify air surveillance in order to obtain more information on ships activities.⁵¹

Toll schedule increase⁵²

A 1,23 % cargo toll and ship charge came into effect last March 25th.

2003 Seaway tolls

\$ CAN per metric tonne	Montreal-Lake Ontario	Welland
Cargo toll		
Bulk cargo	0,9275 \$	0,6145 \$
Cereals	0,5698 \$	0,6145 \$
Coal	0,5475 \$	0,6145 \$
General cargo	2,2348 \$	0,9834 \$
Steel slab	2,0225 \$	0,7040 \$
Containerised cargo	0,9275 \$	0,6145 \$
Vessel charges		
Per Gross Registered Tonne (GRT)	0,0894 \$	0,1453 \$
Minimum charge per ship, per lock transited, for full or partial transit of the Seaway	16,44 \$	16,44 \$
Lockage charge (per lock)		

⁴⁶ « Le niveau d'eau dans les Grands Lacs pourrait continuer à baisser », *Le Nouvelliste*, 26 March 2003.

⁴⁷ Benessaieh, Karim, « Le port a soif! », *La Presse*, 15 January 2003.

⁴⁸ Dupaul, Richard, « Pire année au port de Montréal depuis 1993 », *La Presse*, 18 December 2002.

⁴⁹ Benessaieh, Karim, « Le port a soif! », *La Presse*, 15 January 2003.

⁵⁰ « SLSW increases security after Windoc incident », Press Release, *Great Lakes / SLSW Network WEB site*, 9 January 2003.

⁵¹ « Government of Canada announces 172,5 MS envelope for new marine security projects », Press release, *Transport Canada*, 22 January 2003.

⁵² SLSW 2003 toll schedule *Great Lakes / SLSW Network WEB site*.

Marine outlook

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Loaded vessels	0 \$	490,79 \$
Ballast vessels	0 \$	362,62 \$

Source : SLSWMC

COMMODITIES

Iron ore

North-American steel market slowdown

2002 was marked by a steel market slowdown in North-America. The fall in the production of automobiles and higher energy costs deteriorated the business conditions of U.S. and Canadian steel producers. In that context, Quebec mining companies were badly hit by the slowdown, which resulted in decreasing North-American demand for iron ore.⁵³

Quebec Cartier Mining's sales of concentrate and pellets decreased so much during the last years, that the company is showing annual losses of 30 M\$ for the last two years.⁵⁴

The fall in steel prices also hurt Iron Ore of Canada, which lost 11 M\$ in 2002, in spite of a 12 % sale increase.⁵⁵

Wabush Mines, another North-Shore mining company, produces annually 4,5 MT of pellets, only two-thirds its annual capacity.⁵⁶

Analysts are not very optimistic as to the prospects of the steel industry in 2003. On the short-term, the North-American steel industry's future remains extremely bleak. *Morgan Stanley* foresees a world economy growth of up to 3 % in 2003. Below that figure, world steel consumption usually decreases and is accompanied by falling prices. Further more, *Morgan Stanley* is expecting that Europe's GDP will grow by only 1,4 % in 2003, bringing steel demand down across the continent.⁵⁷

BMO Nesbitt Burns consultants anticipate another tough year for steel because of the weak steel demand in the energy and manufacturing industry sectors in general. In addition, consumer durables demand has started to fall, particularly in the automobile sector, a huge consumer of steel sheets.⁵⁸

In that context, a decrease in North-American steel production is expected in 2003, as in 2002, which is likely to have a serious impact on Quebec's production of iron ore and, consequently, on the tonnage handled by certain ports of the province.

Wheat

Drought effects still perceptible at break of year⁵⁹

The 2002 crop is one of the worst of the last thirty years with 12 Mt. Stocks are at historic lows. Anticipated Canadian exports between August 2002 and July 2003 are of the order of 6,5 Mt which is 50 % lower than 2002-2002 exports. However, AAC analysts foresee that export volumes will rise by 85 % in 2003-2004, mainly due to larger cultured areas and anticipated yields above last year's.

Recent snow falls have improved soils humidity level but it remains low in many areas of the Canadian Prairies. Spring precipitation will be closely monitored in the coming months because of their significant impact on next year's production.

Last March, the U.S. have imposed countervailing rights of 3,96 % on Canadian wheat exports. This tax will affect producers' income since the U.S. is a prime market for Canadian exports. However, the duties should have no significant effect on the destination Canadian exports take, nor on wheat volumes handled by Canadian ports.

Aluminium

Several expansion projects for Quebec's smelters

⁵³ Export and Development Canada, « Basic products monitor », December 2002.

⁵⁴ « Les minières de la Côte-Nord devront faire d'importants compromis en 2003 », [Groupe TVA's WEB site](#), 13 January 2003.

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ « Peu d'optimisme dans l'acier », [Les Affaires](#), 4 January 2003, p. 40.

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Canada : Grains and Oilseeds Outlook, [Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada \(AAC\)](#), 10 January 2003 and 13 March 2003; « Après le bois d'œuvre, le blé », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#), 5 March 2003; Press release, [Canadian Wheat Board](#), 5 March 2003.

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The production of aluminium in Canada is concentrated in the Province of Quebec. In 2002, it reached 2,8 Mt, up 5 % on last year's.⁶⁰ Quebec's aluminium production growth will be strong in the coming years when companies complete their expansion projects

In December, Alcoa announced a 1 G\$ investment for its Baie-Comeau smelter. Since it had to replace the smelter's tanks, Alcoa decided to modernise. Therefore, the new technology will not only be more environment-friendly, but will also help bring the annual production from 437 000 to 547 000 tonnes. Works will begin in December 2003 and be completed by 2010.⁶¹

In early March, Alcoa announced another 1 G\$ investment at its Deschambault smelter. Expansion will bring annual production from 250 000 to 570 000 tonnes.⁶²

In January, Alcan announced various investment projects at its Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean smelter. The most important project will be the construction of a tank coating centre at the new Alma plant.⁶³

Sept-Îles' Alouette has launched its phase II expansion works; once completed in 2005, Alouette will more than double its production from 243 000 to 550 000 tonnes.

The ports of Sept-Îles, Baie-Comeau, Port-Alfred, Quebec and others should also increase their tonnage of bauxite, alumina and aluminium ingots when these projects are completed. Until then, thousands of tonnes of construction equipment and material will transit by these ports.

Softwood lumber and newsprint⁶⁴

Tough year for softwood lumber

Marked with the Canada-U.S. softwood dispute, 2002 was tough for Canadian forestry. Countervailing duties of 27 % on Canadian softwood exports to the U.S. and the slowdown of the U.S. construction market have been costly for the industry, not only financially but also in terms of job losses. In Quebec only, softwood exports have dropped by 20 % in 2002.

Canada brought the case before the World Trade Organization (WTO) and officially demanded that a special group of the North-America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) examine the decisions made by the United States. This dispute might be resolved this year or by early 2004. This is a long process and Canadian softwood producers will have to be patient before the conflict is settled.⁶⁵

According to Export & Development Canada (EDC) economists, the duties imposed by the U.S. will continue to have a negative effect on Canadian softwood lumber exports growth. Moreover, the decreasing demand in the U.S. residential construction market is likely to continue and add more pressure on the downward trend of softwood deliveries for 2003. They expect that Canadian softwood lumber exports to the U.S. will be down 4 % in 2003.

Despite these rather dark prospects, there is a faint glimmer of hope that the situation might not turn out too disastrous for the Canadian softwood industry. EDC analysts believe that Canadian softwood exports on other foreign markets will help keep the overall drop to around 1 %. As a direct consequence of the anticipated decline of Quebec and Canadian softwood lumber, the tonnage of forest products handled in some ports of the province could also decrease.

Newsprint exports will recover in 2003

In 2002, overall Canadian newsprint exports fell by 12 %. Exports to the U.S. alone were down 9 %. The fall occurred on all export markets. The paper industry is very sensitive to world economic cycles since it largely depends on consumption and industrial activity.

According to EDC economists, Canadian woodpulp and newsprint exports should begin to increase in 2003 because of the expected recovery of the U.S. economy. This perspective will stimulate the demand and boost prices up. The growth rate of Canadian newsprint exports could reach 6 % in 2003, which is good news for Quebec's ports that handle woodpulp and newsprint.

⁶⁰ Production of principal minerals in Canada, Natural Resources Canada, December 2002.

⁶¹ « Alcoa : Baie-Comeau possède elle aussi son mégaprojet », Les Affaires, 25 January 2003, p. A-4.

⁶² Godin, Michel, « Alcoa investit 1 milliard \$ », Le Soleil, 5 March 2003, p. A-1.

⁶³ Moisan, Mylène, « La vallée de l'aluminium prend des couleurs », Le Soleil, 30 January 2003.

⁶⁴ Export and Development Canada, « Basic products monitor », December 2002.

⁶⁵ Lacombe, Réjean, « Le bois n'est pas sorti de l'auberge », Le Soleil, 1 February 2003; « Bois d'œuvre : rien ne va plus, faites vos jeux », Radio-Canada's WEB site, 30 January 2003; Vallières, Martin, « Bois d'œuvre : ça jase beaucoup à Washington », Le Soleil, 1 February 2003.

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FERRIES

New link

A new link between Grande-Vallée, Port-Meunier and Havre-Saint-Pierre might be in service by 2005. The Quebec Government has announced a 25 M\$ budget for this project (landing stage, buildings, etc.). STQ has one million \$ to acquire a new ferry boat.⁶⁶

Temporary docking facilities at Les Escoumins wharf

The ferry service between Trois-Pistoles and Les Escoumins was interrupted in the summer of 2002 because of the poor condition of Les Escoumins wharf. Works totalling 800 000 \$ are presently underway for building temporary docking facilities at Les Escoumins wharf with a view to resuming service in May 2003.⁶⁷

New services between La Gaspésie and New-Brunswick

The viability of a ferry service between Paspébiac in Gaspésie and Grande-Anse, New-Brunswick is currently under study. The consulting firm Roche Limitée is conducting a feasibility study for operating a ferry ten months a year. The study has three phases : review of commercial and recreational markets, technical feasibility and finances ; it should be tabled before September 2003.⁶⁸ Also, after three years without a marine shuttle service, the City of Dalhousie, New-Brunswick hopes to be able to resume the connection between Dalhousie and Miguasha in Baie-des-Chaleurs. The ferry boat, which would ply only 10 months a year would be larger and capable of carrying cars and trucks. If the feasibility study is conclusive, service could start in 2004 or 2005; results are expected in May.⁶⁹

Chandler or Matane?

Groupe CTMA will have to decide which of Matane or Chandler will get *Le Vancancier's* gaspesian call on its round trips between Montreal and Îles-de-la-Madeleine. Groupe CTMA claims that the ship does not have the capacity to justify two calls in Gaspésie.⁷⁰ The terms of the contract between CTMA and the Quebec Government specify that *Le Vancancier* must serve three functions : carry commodities from Montreal to Les Îles and ply once or twice a week between Chandler and Les Îles. As for the cruise part of the trips, the ship can stop either in Matane or in Chandler.⁷¹ During a conversation with a representative of Groupe CTMA, last April 2nd, we received no confirmation that the ship will stop in Chandler. It appears that the decision will be made within the next month. For the moment, the ship is scheduled to follow last year's itinerary and stop at Quebec and Matane.

Possible suspension bridge

An impact study for the construction of a suspension bridge on the Saguenay River near Tadoussac is currently underway and a report will be submitted in the fall of 2004. A 1 450 metre-long suspension bridge and a 1,2 km access tunnel could be built.⁷²

North-South connection?

The Quebec Government contract for the marine servicing of the Lower North-Shore communities will end in 2005; then, there could no longer be any connection with Rimouski and Sept-Îles. Lower North-Shore populations want a change in the service provided. They want the service to be faster, better adapted for tourists, more frequent round-trips, reasonable fares and most importantly, the possibility of getting their goods from Quebec or Montreal.⁷³

As for the Rimouski/Forestville ferry service, it will be in operation for the sixth season this summer. Although there were rumours that service could be stopped because of the Quebec Government's decision not to subsidise the cost of bunker fuel, the *CNM Évolution* will begin the shuttles April 25th, repeating last year's schedule.⁷⁴

⁶⁶ « À la recherche d'un navire – La Société des traversiers du Québec cherche un navire pour assurer une nouvelle liaison entre Grande-Vallée, Port-Meunier et Havre-St-Pierre », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#), 15 March 2003.

⁶⁷ « Il n'y aura pas de recours collectif contre Transports Canada », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#) 29 March 2003.

⁶⁸ « La viabilité d'un traversier Paspébiac-Caraquet à l'étude », [Réseau TVA's WEB site](#), 17 February 2003.

⁶⁹ « Traversier dans la Baie-des-Chaleurs : le projet suit son cours », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#), 6 February 2003.

⁷⁰ « Le Groupe CTMA devra choisir entre Matane et Chandler », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#), 17 February 2003; Gagné, Gilles, « À Chandler, la construction du débarcadère va bon train », [Le Soleil](#), 5 February 2003.

⁷¹ « La liaison Chandler-les-Îles de la Madeleine est une obligation », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#), 19 February 2003.

⁷² Paradis, Steeve, « Étude sur un pont de 1,45 km », [Le Soleil](#), 23 January 2003.

⁷³ « La desserte maritime ne pourrait plus accoster à Rimouski et Sept-Îles », [Réseau TVA's WEB site](#), 11 March 2003.

⁷⁴ « Malgré des rumeurs d'abandon, la traverse Rimouski/Forestville entamera une sixième saison », [Réseau TVA's WEB site](#), 26 March 2003.

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Several projects for Lévis

The City of Lévis is pursuing its recreational and tourist development project of the Saint-Lawrence River banks. The next step is making the ferry sector more attractive. The redevelopment of the intermodal terminal and of the service road for vehicles using the ferry, as well as the refitting of the wharf, are among the envisaged projects.⁷⁵

Navigation season ends abruptly

The *N.M. Trans-Saint-Laurent* connecting Rivière-du-Loup to Saint-Siméon had to end its navigation season earlier than planned. Ice, currents and wind gave the ship a hard time coming alongside the Rivière-du-Loup wharf; the ship bumped into the wharf and suffered important damages. It is now under repair and by the same occasion is getting a major refit. The ship's docking safety measures will be reviewed following this incident that caused four injuries. Access to staircases could be prohibited when the ship is engaged in docking manoeuvres. The *Trans-Saint-Laurent* should be back in service on April 11th 2003.⁷⁶

Less crossings this season

The Québec/Lévis ferry had to cancel some 200 crossings during the 2002-2003 season, a lot more than the 119 cancelled during the previous season. Ferry officials say the main reason for cancelling was weather, particularly ice conditions.⁷⁷

CRUISES - TOURS

Daily discovery of the Saint-Lawrence islands

Croisières le Coudrier will add to its fleet, a fifth boat valued at 1 M\$. The 65-foot ship has a capacity of 125 passengers and will make discovery trips to the islands of the Saint-Lawrence (Île d'Orléans, Grosse-Île and Îles-aux-Grues) as of June 2003. The ship will be lighter, faster, need less fuel and have a low draught. The cruise could also include approaches to the marinas of Sillery, la Chaudière and Saint-David as well as to the entrance to the Saint-Charles and Montmorency rivers. The company expects that their fleet will carry between 20 000 and 25 000 passengers during the 2003 season.⁷⁸

Enhanced safety measures on small passenger boats

Transport Canada has presented the TSB with its third update of measures for improving safety on board small passenger ships. Since the first two updates were issued in February and August 2002, TC developed a draft regulation for small passenger ships, which will require that rescue equipment be stored in an easily accessible place, that ships be equipped with appropriate radiocommunication equipment and child safety vests. TC is also working on a technical guide concerning passenger transport regulations, standards and safety practices, which will be distributed to ships operators. In addition, a small passenger ship inspection program was developed with regards to training, easier inspections, improved inspection reports, etc.⁷⁹

INTERNATIONAL CRUISES

Passengers up and services improved

The Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) foresees that 8 million North-American citizens will go on a cruise in 2003, which is 1,4 million more passengers than last year. CLIA also says that the Caribbean and Alaska will be the most popular destinations. An upward trend is also observed for cruises in South-America, Antarctica, the south Pacific, the Baltic and Norwegian Sea. Europe, particularly western Mediterranean is also a prized destination. Departures are mainly from Florida, (Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Tampa) and from Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Vancouver on the west coast, but we now see more departures from Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New-Orleans, Houston, Galveston and Honolulu. Demand for cruises that offer both sea and land sightseeing is also increasing, as passengers like to take tours during stopovers. Also, cruise lines are offering

⁷⁵ Fortin, André, « Lévis : seconde étape d'un vaste aménagement récréotouristique », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#), 13 January 2003.

⁷⁶ « Avaries majeures pour le traversier N.M. Trans-Saint-Laurent », [Radio-Canada's WEB site](#), 3 January 2003; Larouche, Marc, « Les mesures de sécurité seront revues; L'incident de la semaine dernière, qui a fait quatre blessés, suscite quelques questions », [Le Soleil](#), 10 January 2003.

⁷⁷ Salut Bonjour Québec, [Réseau TVA](#), 4 April 2003.

⁷⁸ Desmeules, Sylvain, « Petite-Rivière-Saint-François - La construction du bateau de croisière va bon train », [Le Soleil](#), 26 February 2003.

⁷⁹ « Improvement updates for small passenger ships safety », Press release, [Transport Canada](#), 19 March 2003.

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various activities when the ship is at sea, such as lessons in cooking, finance, pottery, computers, etc. More kids now accompany their parents on a cruise and some liners have developed on-board educational programs for them.⁸⁰

World-wide, it is estimated that 14 new cruise ships will join the existing fleet in 2003, increasing the total capacity to 9,6 million passengers.⁸¹

Calls at Quebec and Montreal

Port Authority expect that 74 calls will be made in Quebec in 2003, unchanged from last year's. The first cruise ship is expected May 26.⁸² It is worth mentioning that the Port of Quebec was first prizewinner at a major cruise symposium held in Miami. Prizes were awarded for best destination in the Caribbean, Mediterranean, Northern Europe and the rest of the world. Port of Quebec came first as best destination in that last category.

26 calls are expected at the Port of Montreal in 2003. The first liner is expected on June 4.⁸³ Although these are only estimates for the time being, this represents 7 less than in 2002.

POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

“ Straight Ahead ” : Canada's new transportation policy⁸⁴

On February 25, 2003, Transport Minister, David Collenette introduced [Straight Ahead – A vision for transportation in Canada](#).

Straight Ahead addresses long-term transport challenges in Canada and presents the vision, strategic framework and principles that will guide government decisions in this matter.

This new transport policy is based on the following seven principles :

- 1. Highest practicable safety and security of life and property** - guided by performance-based standards and regulations when necessary.
- 2. Efficient movement of people and goods to support economic prosperity and a sustainable quality of life** - based on competitive markets and targeted use of regulatory and spending interventions.
- 3. Respect for the environmental legacy of future generations of Canadians** – Transport Canada will work with its partners to gradually reduce the intensity of carbon fuel use, developing alternative fuels and technologies; progress will be made toward including the cost of environmental impacts in the prices paid by transportation users.
- 4. User pricing that better reflects the full costs of transportation activity, and transportation infrastructure decisions that meet user needs** - based on governance models that provide for stakeholder involvement and transparency.
- 5. Reasonable access to the national transportation system by Canada's remote regions-** by providing infrastructures in the most cost-effective manner.
- 6. Accessibility in the national network without undue obstacles for persons with disabilities.** The transportation system must respond to the mobility challenges of an ageing population and of persons with disabilities.
- 7. Partnerships and collaboration among governments and with the private sector** for an integrated, coherent transportation policy framework, taking into account the respective jurisdiction, role and responsibilities of all participants. Transportation policy must therefore be co-ordinated and harmonized across modes of transport, among governments within Canada, and between Canada and other countries. Partnerships and joint ventures between the public and private sectors shall provide transportation infrastructures that will meet users needs and generate enough revenues to cover their costs.

⁸⁰ Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), « Cruise industry brings in 2003 with new ships, innovations, close-to-home and worldwide ports », [CLIA's WEB site](#) (www.cruising.org/cruisenews), 3 January 2003.

⁸¹ Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), « CLIA lines host 8.66 million cruise vacationers in 2002 », [CLIA's WEB site](#) (www.cruising.org/cruisenews), 4 March 2003.

⁸² Port of Quebec's WEB site : www.portquebec.ca

⁸³ Port of Montreal's WEB site: www.port-montreal.com

⁸⁴ Transport Canada's WEB site : www.tc.gc.ca

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RECREATIONAL BOATING

Project « *Marinas branchées* »⁸⁵

Quebec-based Médiom Internet, proposed to equip 35 marinas of the Saint-Lawrence Valley with a technology allowing boaters to access Internet from their docked craft. The project, called « *Marinas branchées* » consists of installing 300-metre range antennas near participating marinas. These antennas provide a WiFi (Wireless Fidelity) wireless connection, allowing boaters to surf the WEB from their boat.

Médiom Internet will provide the service, installation of stations and users' service. When at least 12 boaters decide to subscribe, the participating marina will get the service at no extra cost. In exchange, pleasurecraft owners will pay Médiom directly for the service they receive, which according to first estimates, would amount to roughly 150\$ for the season.

Médiom says « *Marina branchée* » is already a success and clearly meets boaters' needs. A report titled « *Nautical tourism marketing and development strategic plan* » published last fall, after a survey was made by a group of industry stakeholders, identified that services offered by marinas did not meet boaters' requirements in many respects.

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⁸⁵ « Internet sans fil pour les plaisanciers », Le Soleil, 7 April 2003.