



Comox Valley Record - News

TEXT [] []

0 COMMENTS

EMAIL LETTER PRINT FOLLOW SHARE

Coast Guard's planned cuts slammed by union

By [Scott Stanfield - Comox Valley Record](#)

Published: December 29, 2011 4:00 PM

Updated: December 29, 2011 4:53 PM

The Canadian Auto Workers' Union (CAW) Local 2182 is blasting the federal government for planned cuts to Coast Guard centres.

The Canadian Coast Guard intends next month to reduce the number of officers on watch most of the year at Marine Communications and Traffic Services centres. Although no one is losing their job per se, the union is concerned about mariner safety due to inadequate resources during emergencies.

Most centres, including the one in Comox, are manned by three staff members at any given hour.

"What they're intending to do for a good portion of the year is reduce that down to two on watch at any given time," CAW Local 2182 regional director Allan Hughes said Thursday. "When we get a day like today where it was beautiful, sunny and calm and now it's blown up to 30 knots on the water, it doesn't take long for a lot of incidents to occur."

Incidents could involve a boater who has run out of gas or fallen overboard, or a vessel that has gone aground or sunk.

"That can happen any time of year, and if you don't have enough people to handle the communications then you're in a situation where you're so busy dealing with one situation you don't hear somebody else calling for help," Hughes said. "We're here to protect people and save lives."

MCTS centres provide distress and safety communication, traffic services and weather

BCDailyDEALS.com

Get deals in the Comox Valley and Campbell River

SIGN UP NOW

Topsoil

Bark Mulch

Driveway Chips

Landscape Rocks

Compost Sand

Garden Soil

CALL US...

Black & Gold
Landscape Supply

250-338-0338

3599 Comox Logging Rd
Courtenay, BC

ENGRAVE IT!

Trophies • Awards
Name Tags
Rubber Stamps
Gifts & Promotions
Clothing • Plaques

Click For WEBSITE

SHARE THIS STORY

Recommend Confirm 26 25 Send

Tweet 10

Recommend this on Google

- Coast Guard says maritime safety still a priority
- Coast Guard auxiliary looking for new recruits
- Guards protest B.C. prison conditions
- 'Stanley Cup' in Union Bay
- Now it's a race in Union Bay byelection
- Workplace injuries worrying hospital union

Comox Valley Record Newsroom on Facebook

Like Confirm

You like this. · Adr Page · Insights · E
You like this. · Adr Page · Insights · E

836 people like **Comox Valley Record Newsroom**. 835 people like **Comox Valley Record Newsroom**.

Facebook social plugin

information. Each year, the centre at Cape Lazo regulates 55,000 vessel movements through the Inside Passage, and handles more than 850 marine incidents.

A total of 17 people work at the Comox centre. Other B.C. centres are located in Vancouver, Victoria, Ucluelet and Prince Rupert .

Hughes said the job is complex, requiring training to keep up with changing technology. There's also entitlements such as maternity leave. The union criticizes government for refusing to pay overtime while accepting the risk "through dollar reduction," Hughes said.

"Our people work more hours of overtime than anybody else in the federal civil service, which is burning our people out. They're (Ottawa) not willing to change the number of staff that we have to allow for those things (such as paternal leave). What they're doing is reducing the number of people that are in the centre in any emergency that happens."

The union is calling on the Coast Guard — an agency of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) — to reverse its decision.

Calls to DFO were not returned by press time.

reporter@comoxvalleyrecord.com



eEditions view pages online...

Recent Activity

Create an account or **log in** to see what your friends are doing.

Comox Valley Record - Brick House Betties scrimmage Sunday at Cumberland Rec
15 people recommend this.

Comox Valley Record - Air quality warning issued for Comox Valley
16 people recommend this.

Comox Valley Record - Grant will improve safety at Lewis Centre waterpark
One person recommends this.

Comox Valley Record - 'No smoke, no fire' in Courtenay pool sexual interference charges
3 people recommend this.

Comox Valley Record - GUEST COLUMN: Speaking frankly about native people in Canada
125 people recommend this.

Facebook social plugin

what **twitter** is saying about **#comox**

OldHouseVillage New flights to northern BC's oil and gas fields increase flights at **#Comox** Airport: [@safeharbourcdn](http://ht.ly/8uBec) @YQQ @timesolonist
5 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

applebeesbc #yyj 2 Can Dine for only \$25! #uivcikes everyday at Applebee's! #yvr #comoxvalley #courtenay #comox #campbellriver
yesterday · reply · retweet · favorite

Carla_Boers Was going to say that it is a beautiful day in **#Comox**
yesterday · reply · retweet · favorite

CVNature Learn about the **#Comox** Lake Bluffs Eco Reserve at next CVNS mtg. Sun. Jan. 15: tinyurl.com/958bu4r #comoxvalley #cumberland

Join the conversation