



CASE STUDY: MARINE SECURITY

“We like Commissionaires because they come trained in security and first aid, they have organizational and leadership skills, and above all, they are dependable. You know what you’re going to get when you engage the service of a commissionaire.”

Gary Paulson

PRINCE RUPERT PORT AUTHORITY



PRINCE RUPERT PORT AUTHORITY OVERVIEW

- > Port's total land holdings are 965.60 hectares
- > Over 10.5 million metric tonnes of goods (36.75% increase) in 2007
- > 98,170 cruise ship passengers (56.20% increase) in 2007



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PRINCE RUPERT PORT AUTHORITY

The Port of Prince Rupert, located on Canada's most western edge some 1,500 kilometres north of Vancouver, is West Coast North America's newest gateway to Asia. With a new state-of-the-art container terminal to compliment its bulk and cruise terminals, it boasts the shortest Asian-North American sea-land link, deepest natural harbour and superior rail links into major North American markets. Prince Rupert Port offers shippers unparalleled reliability, speed, efficiency and customer service.

CHALLENGE

The Prince Rupert Port Authority is responsible for the overall management of the commercial port facilities within the Port of Prince Rupert. From a security perspective, it is a large and diverse area to secure. There are various state-of-the-art terminals that deal in everything from grain and containers to cruise ships and passengers. Though most terminals in the port are run by independent terminal operators responsible for their own security, the Port Authority takes a leadership role in establishing security standards and protocol. In addition, the Port Authority also provides both general security to the port and detailed security to the cruise terminal it runs.

In 2004, the Port Authority undertook a new venture and opened the Northlands Cruise Terminal, operational annually from May to September. Cruise ships on their way to Alaska, for example, can now stop in Prince Rupert and debark to participate in shore excursions.

Shortly after the cruise ship terminal was added, Transport Canada introduced enhanced Marine Transportation Security Regulations, which among other things, imposed a much higher level of security for cruise ships. The Port was faced with the challenge of complying with these increased regulations, which would entail having to secure the terminal building and process incoming passengers to ensure a safe environment.

In 2007, the Port converted its bulk terminal to a full container terminal. Extra security personnel were needed during construction of this intermodal (ship to rail) container terminal, and full 24/7 security was required during this project.

Security challenges have continued to increase in recent years, and with port development and expansion, the complexities of securing such a diverse facility have also increased. A need was identified for a mobile roving security patrol to establish a full-time security presence.

SOLUTION

In 2004, when first considering how to tackle security challenges in the Northlands Cruise Terminal, the Port completed a security audit and determined that they needed to outsource security protection to a professional organization.

Commissionaires was considered and at the time already had a presence in Prince Rupert at the Coast Guard base. Commissionaires was given the contract for providing security services to the Northlands terminal because the Port felt that they could instantly meet the security needs with their highly trained workforce. The commissionaires assigned to the Port completed an additional one-week detailed training program to address specific marine regulations and the unique needs of the site.

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As Dave Fisher, Manager of Operations & Security for the Prince Rupert Port Authority describes, “Commissionaires have a very high standard. They are very professional in their dealings. I have always been very impressed with their work. We felt Commissionaires would be a good fit. They come uniformed and they have a good standard of training. Not all security companies do. It was a natural choice. Also many of the employees are ex military, ex RCMP and come with their own expertise as well.”

In Northlands terminal today, commissionaires perform a full screening of the facility prior to a vessel coming in. Once the cruise ship is in and the passengers have disembarked and cleared customs, commissionaires are responsible to ensure that only authorized persons return to the vessel and do not pose a security threat. Commissionaires screen identification and baggage quickly and efficiently, as there may be 2000 passengers to process in less than two hours.

Shortly after Commissionaires began providing security at Northlands terminal, they were again called upon to assist in meeting the increasing security needs of the port’s expansion. The Port contracted Commissionaires to provide roving patrols of the entire property during off hours, establish an on-going security presence and provide detailed reporting. According to Gary Paulson, Director, Operations and Security for the Prince Rupert Port Authority, “We needed some people with security training to be a reminder to those concerned that we have security. We made a strategic decision to align ourselves with Commissionaires.”

In 2007, Commissionaires played a large role in site safety and security of the new container terminal as it was converted from a bulk terminal. Now that construction is complete, Maher Terminals has taken over the operation of the container terminal for the Port and have contracted Commissionaires to continue providing security services.

Recent initiatives, such as, the new construction of a 24/7 control and command center and the new access control point at Ridley Terminal, both guarded and patrolled by commissionaires, brings the total number of commissionaires providing security at the port to four full time and four seasonal.

RESULTS

The Port had a record year of growth in 2007, increasing its business by over 36% in metric tonnes of goods and over 56% in cruise ship passengers.

According to Fisher, Commissionaires are able to help the Prince Rupert Port meet its unique security challenges, such as, compliance with marine regulations and securing a vast, growing port holding. “As the Port has been growing and the security requirements, so have the Commissionaires been growing with us, able to assist us in all the aspects of security. For the security, as the Port grows in the future, the Commissionaires will be part of it.”

Mahe Terminals has also enjoyed the security protection and results that Commissionaires provides. As Paulson describes, “Based on our model, our success and our feedback they have chosen to go with Commissionaires. I know Mahe Terminals are extremely happy with the service they are getting from Commissionaires, again, because I know Commissionaires are reliable, well-trained, courteous and they provide the physical security needed.”