

## **Island Public / Natural Science School**

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February 7, 2007

Dear Parents of Gibraltar Nursery & Island Public School/Natural Science School

Thank you to Sonia for gathering the information in response to the questions raised by our parents around boat safety.

We contacted Doug Wilson, District Manager of Transport Canada Marine Safety and put to him the questions/concerns raised around boat safety. Doug was able to answer most questions.

1) How often are the ferryboats inspected?

On speaking with Doug Wilson, District Manager of Transport Canada, Marine Safety, we were informed that inspections are conducted by Transport Canada Marine Safety every 12 months. The last inspection was conducted on March 22, 2006. The next inspections are scheduled for March 21 2007. The ferryboat (Ongiara) allows 220 passengers at a time which explains the few times when we haven't been able to get all our children on the ferry. Doug Wilson also indicated that Transport Canada "spot checks" periodically.

2) Is there any way that the school escorts can receive fire drill safety information e.g. drill information?

The School is in the process of requesting FerryBoat authorities to provide information on the following:

- a. Arrange a boat safety drill
- b. Assist in educating IPNSS (escort & all staff both Day program and Science Program) and GPDN escort staff with information regarding Safety Drill Policy and Procedures.

3) Does the coast guard mandate procedures?

Coast Guard overseas pleasure boats and is not responsible for public ferry boats.

4) How often are the life jackets tested?

Life jackets are checked along with the yearly inspections by Transport Canada Marine Safety. Mark Millen, who is with Transport Canada Marine Safety and also is a parent alumni of IPNSS & GPDN, and Islander will be conducting a life jacket and boat evacuation demonstration at the School in the very near future.

5) Are there enough jackets for the number of people who travel on the ferries during high tourist season? There are 224 adults 20 children's life jackets on board. Adult life jackets also accommodate children as they have adjustable strings.

6) Is there a pamphlet for parents to practice boat safety awareness with their children? The school does not provide this. Please contact the ferry docks (Gary Sims) directly. His telephone number is below

7) What is the responsibility of the Ferry operators with respect to boat safety, particularly given the number of children?

The ferry boat operators have the responsibility to ensure that the number of passengers on the ferry boats does not exceed the number of life jackets available on the ferry.

In summary, these are the steps we will take:

- Representative from Transport Canada, Marine Safety visit the school to provide demonstration for the children on boat safety & lifejacket use.
- Training on boat safety for staff who escort and other teaching staff.
- Communicate with Ferry Docks personnel in scheduling boat drills (likely not to happen until Spring).
- A Parent Night in March at which time we will be updating parents on a number of Safe School Issues (i.e. Code of Conduct, Evacuation/Lock Down Drills, and Boat Safety). We will be inviting Doug Wilson to the meeting to answer any questions you still might have.

Below are the names of staff who you may contact if you have any further questions. We have tried our best to answer your questions. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of Transport Canada, Marine Safety, to ensure all measures are taken regarding boat safety & lifejacket use.

Contacts:

Gary Sims, Supervisor Marine Operations (416)-392-8197  
James Dann, Manager, Parks & Recreation (416) 392-1122

Transport Canada:  
Mark Millen (416) 925-3145 (Island Resident & associated with Marine Safety, Transport Canada)  
Doug Wilson (416) 954-8226 (District Manager Marine Safety, Transport Canada)

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