



By email: diane.lebouthillier@parl.gc.ca

OTTAWA, August 2, 2024

The Honourable Diane Lebouthillier, MP
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
229 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Lebouthillier,

On behalf of the members of the Union of Canadian Transportation Employees (UCTE) and in particular our lighthouse keepers at Carmanah Point and Pachena Point, I am writing to express our deep disappointment with your department's decision to end staffing at the light stations.

This decision is rash and ill-thought out and based on data that is flawed and out of date. UCTE has conducted a preliminary review of the original 2018 report that the decision was based on and we have found a number of errors and miscalculations. These errors and miscalculations have led to a series of incorrect assumptions in the latest report. This report was prepared without input or consultation with employees, union representatives, the general public, or the indigenous peoples. The general public regularly utilize this area for recreation and the indigenous peoples continue to harvest the waters in the area as part of their traditional and Constitutional rights.

There have been some incoherent references to protecting the safety of employees as a rationale for ending staffing at these light stations. While UCTE will always work to ensure the health and safety of our members, we believe that minor modifications to their worksite, working and living conditions could alleviate these concerns. These are not reasons to end staffing at these crucial light stations and to reduce the protection that is currently being provided to mariners, harvesters or the travelling public.

These actions, if carried out, will have a drastic and dramatic impact on the safety and well-being of many. Given that this decision is based on erroneous data, without consultation and due consideration of the safety of the general public, who use the area for recreational purposes and the Indigenous peoples who continue to harvest the waters in this area. We ask that you immediately freeze the implementation of this decision and begin a consultative process that will benefit the stakeholders and result in an informed decision regarding these light stations.



We are requesting a meeting with you at the site of these light stations, so that we can point out the specific flaws and misinformation in the reports on which this decision has been made. UCTE can also provide a detailed list of the many duties and responsibilities that our members perform to protect the property as well as the lives and well-being of the thousand of Canadians who visit or work near these sites every year.

Sincerely,

Teresa Eschuk
National President

cc. John Jack Chief Councillor Huu-ay-aht First Nations

Barry Tchir, UCTE Regional Vice-President Pacific