

ONTARIO'S FIRST MARINE SUMMIT HAILED A SUCCESS



(l to r) Keith Robson, Vice President, OMTF, Wayne Smith, President OMTF, Madame Julie Boulet Ministre déléguée aux Transports, Québec, André Meloche, Directeur Transports Québec discuss Québec's marine policy at the Ontario Summit

On November 28, 2006 the first Ontario Marine Summit was held in Toronto. The event was co-sponsored by the Ontario Marine Transportation Forum and Ontario's Ministry of Transportation and was chaired by Wayne Smith, President of the OMTF and Donna Cansfield, Ontario's Minister of Transportation. The objective of the Summit was to review Ontario's marine transportation policy and to discuss matters of strategic importance. About 60 leaders from the marine transportation industry and senior officials from the Governments of Ontario, Canada and Québec participated in the day long meeting.

Consulting firm, Mariport Group Ltd., was retained to provide a background report on current topics that the OMTF and an inter-ministerial Steering Committee of the Ontario Government believed could form a framework for a renewed Ontario Marine Policy. Following lunch, participants heard presentations about Québec's marine transportation policy initiative and programs by Madeleine Paquin, President and Chief Executive Officer of Logistec Ltd., Québec Minister for Transportation, Madame Julie Boulet, and André Meloche, Director of Marine Transportation Policy at Transport Québec. Ontario Minister Donna Cansfield had met with Madame Julie Boulet earlier in the day to discuss the Ontario initiative and

to learn more about the Québec experience and to discuss areas of common interest.

Summit participant's top five marine transportation policy priorities were;

1. Develop an Ontario focused Marine Policy. An Ontario policy will provide the foundation for Ontario's advocacy of its marine transportation interests with other governments including Québec and Canada and U.S. Great Lakes States, as necessary.

2. Develop an Ontario Ports Strategy as an impetus for economic development and to improve transportation efficiency.

3. Create an Ontario focused research capability to support the development of marine transportation projects. Develop fiscal means to support viable marine transportation projects.

4. Enhance promotion/branding of marine transportation. The H2O campaign is a very good start but more resources are required. There is excellent potential for public/private partnership to improve awareness of Ontario's marine transportation opportunities.

5. Support provincial marine education requirements by supporting college funding requirements.

Follow-up action plans under active consideration include;

1. The creation of a Minister's multi-modal table among Ontario's major transportation modes to discuss such topics as the sustainability of Ontario's transportation systems and intermodal efficiency.

2. Government support for OMTF initiatives in research and promotion.

3. Creation of an "Ontario Marine Caucus" and Annual Ontario Marine Awareness day to enhance awareness and understanding of Ontario's marine transportation industry.

4. Provide adequate funding for Ontario marine education programs.

5. Strengthen Ontario's multi-modal department within the Ministry of Transportation.

6. Plan for a second Ontario - Québec Minister's meeting during the first half of 2007 to advance areas of common interest.

7. Joint advocacy by the Ministry of Transportation and the OMTF of marine transportation matters of concern to other levels of government.

All who participated in the Ontario Marine Summit were very satisfied that the meeting had taken place and were optimistic that with continued strong leadership and effective collaboration from Ontario's Ministry of Transportation and the OMTF, Ontario's marine transportation industry will continue to be a significant part of Ontario's transportation infrastructure and that new opportunities to improve Ontario's transportation efficiency and its competitiveness in trade through the greater use of marine transportation can be pursued for the benefit of all. ■



(l to r) Donna Cansfield, Ontario Minister of Transport and Madame Julie Boulet, Québec Minister for Transport discuss marine transportation issues at the Ontario Marine Summit.