

**Comments by Wayne Smith**  
**At the November 28, 2006**  
**Ontario Marine Summit**

- This is an historic day for Ontario and its marine industry. We have brought together leaders from Ontario's marine transportation industry, senior officials from the Governments of Ontario, Quebec and Canada and representatives of key marine industry stakeholder groups for the purpose of reviewing Ontario's marine transportation policy and strategic planning priorities.
- What I would like to do in my opening comments is to provide you with important context and background for today's activities. To start, I need to explain the Ontario Marine Transportation Forum, what is it and why was it created.
- The Ontario Marine Transportation Forum was incorporated in Dec, 2004. The objective of the Forum is to promote the interests of the marine transportation field in Ontario. Membership in the forum is open to any organization with marine transportation operations in Ontario. Founding members of the Forum include the Thunder Bay Port Authority, the Windsor Port Authority, the Hamilton Port Authority, the Toronto Port Authority, the St Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, Canada Steamship Lines, Federal Marine Terminals and my company, Seaway Marine Transport which is a partnership of two Ontario based ship owning companies, Algoma Central Corporation and Upper Lakes Shipping inc.
- When the OMTF was originally formed it identified 3 strategic priorities. These priorities are, 1) to increase understanding about Ontario's marine industry through education, increased awareness and research, 2) to integrate marine transportation within Ontario's transportation planning and policy development and 3) to work with the Ontario Government to advocate Ontario's marine transportation interests at the federal government level.
- The goal of the OMTF is to build a vibrant, efficient, safe, environmentally friendly and fully integrated transportation system within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway for the benefit of the Province of Ontario.
- **Why is this important at this time?**
  1. The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Waterway is one of the world's greatest and most strategic commercial inland transportation systems. It is a navigational system consisting of many inter-connected parts that together form the largest inland shipping route in the world. Nearly one-half of the Waterway, including all of the Great Lakes is stretched along Ontario's southern border. US States with borders along the Great Lakes include: New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Today, Ontario's ports handle more than 75 million tonnes of cargo. An equivalent movement by road would require about 3 million truck trips annually. In 2003, more than 40 million tonnes of cargo was moved through the St. Lawrence Seaway system alone. Ontario's leading ports are responsible for early 30% of Canada's domestic marine trade and 17% of Canada's international port trade. Ontario already has a substantial marine transportation presence.

2. Ontario's existing marine transportation activities face several serious challenges. Some of these challenges concern the competitiveness of the industry and the businesses it serves. We have witnessed the impact of the Federal Government's changing role in the support of marine transportation infrastructure and the provision of marine transportation services. We also witness differential treatments of other transportation routes and modes by some governments.
  3. At this time, Ontario, like many of our neighbors, is facing a crisis in transportation. Roads and borders are increasingly congested. Transportation safety and the environmental impacts of transportation are of great political and public concern. Marine transportation with available low cost infrastructure, preferred environmental impact and greater safety offers a unique opportunity within Ontario to address a greater portion of our transportation needs.
  4. At the present time, Ontario's marine transportation system is under-utilized. Ontario has a tremendous opportunity to improve transportation efficiency, enhance trade through the greater movement of goods and people by water and to improve the environmental and safety impacts of transportation by increasing the use of marine transportation.
- The journey that brings us to this important day has been almost 2 years in the making. Dialogue between the OMTF and the Ontario Government commenced in early 2005. The OMTF, together with senior officials at MTO developed an industry "SWOT" analysis as a basis for potential future policy development. The OMTF prepared for the Ontario Government a detailed analysis of the marine transportation policies of the Governments of Quebec and British Columbia. Also in support this initiative the OMTF together with MTO met with the multi-department ADM Land and Resource Use Committee of the Ontario Government to explain our initiative to other interested ministries. The subject areas included;
    1. Transportation system infrastructure optimization and improved intermodal efficiency
    2. Economic development through enhanced trade opportunities
    3. Environment and safety; opportunities for enhancement
    4. Inter-governmental affairs
    5. Promotion of marine industry and Provincial benefits.

These are the 5 study areas that the Mariport Group was asked to focus their study upon.

- The OMTF remains firmly convinced that with strong leadership from Ontario's Ministry of Transportation and effective collaboration between Government and industry stakeholders, Ontario's marine transportation industry can remain a significant part of Ontario's transportation infrastructure and new opportunities to improve Ontario's transportation efficiency and competitiveness in trade through the greater use of marine transportation can be pursued for the benefit of all. We believe the marine transportation sector can play an even greater role in Ontario to support economic growth and development by facilitating trade and the movement of both goods and people. Studies are currently underway regarding new cargo and trade routes in such areas as containers and car and truck ferry services that will ease highway and border congestion.
- Before we receive the Mariport Group report, the OMTF thought it would be important to explain our perspectives on potential outcomes of today's meeting. Clearly we have been given the mandate by our Minister of Transport to review Ontario's marine transportation policies and to prioritize future strategic action plans to ensure that Ontario's marine transportation sector needs are understood and addressed and, I might add, that opportunities are captured. While we do hope to make significant progress today to identify marine transportation policy options and action plans we recognize that we cannot answer all issues that are before us today. Much more work will be required on several different fronts. We do believe, however, that information we receive today should lead us to the following conclusions;
  1. The process we have commenced to improve Ontario's private / public understanding, cooperation and collaboration on marine transportation issues, opportunities and challenges within Ontario and with neighboring Provinces and the Federal Government is absolutely essential. The joint OMTF and Ontario Government inter-departmental working committee structure that has been established must continue, in fact be strengthened, in order to ensure the integration of Ontario's marine industry within Ontario's transportation planning and policies.
  2. We need to address the weaknesses in our public / private information and decision making systems by strengthening the capability of both government and industry to address key issues either through joint public / private marine industry research in key areas and through the greater allocation of resources to marine transportation matters.
  3. We need a framework for the Ontario government to work with both the Federal and Quebec governments to advance marine industry matters of importance including the potential development of a St. Lawrence / Great

Lakes Gateway and related matters such as ports, the St Lawrence Seaway, the provision of marine services and any other matters affecting the competitiveness of our marine industry.

4. We need to establish a task force of the Ontario Government and Ontario CPA ports and small ports to develop a comprehensive Ontario Ports Strategy to address major port issues including; access to capital, including access to federal and provincial infrastructure funding, review of port taxation policies to ensure development objectives are met and review Brownfield re-development opportunities and strategies.
  5. We need to examine public / private structures to support the development of new shipping projects, including project research, access to infrastructure funding and the integration of marine transportation into Ontario's transportation planning activities.
  6. We need to enhance the public's awareness of the benefits of marine transportation in Ontario through joint public / private promotion of the St Lawrence Seaway, Ontario Ports and marine infrastructure.
  7. We need to enhance marine education and career opportunities within Ontario by improving the funding of Georgian College's marine education programs and through the promotion of Ontario marine industry careers.
- Our hoped for output from today's Summit will be a clear direction for Ontario marine policy. We also want to identify deliverables that both the industry and Ontario's Transport Minister can point to as achievements from this Summit. These deliverables will sustain the momentum we have developed and provide a framework for our subsequent endeavors. We wish all of you a successful meeting.