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# Introduction to Clean Marine BC

## The Origins of the Handbook

In February 2006, Environment Canada approached Georgia Strait Alliance (GSA) to develop a voluntary marina certification program for British Columbia, in order to provide public recognition to those marinas, yacht clubs, harbour authorities and boatyards that are committed to environmentally responsible policies and practices. GSA researched available options to determine the best possible program for British Columbia. After considerable consultation with marine industry, government and boating sector representatives, we decided to work with the successful, ongoing Ontario-based Clean Marine program, run by the Ontario Marine Operators Association as part of the multi-agency Clean Marine Partnership. The goal of the Partnership is to reduce and prevent water, air and land pollution from recreational boating activities in Ontario and across Canada.

This handbook has been adapted for use by marinas throughout BC; consequently, it has information relevant to both marine and freshwater environments. It is intended to inspire owners and operators of marinas, harbour authorities, yacht and sailing clubs to incorporate sound environmental practices into their management systems. It will also provide the tools to incorporate those practices into the daily activities of their staff.

All facilities are different and many have unique conditions and circumstances; therefore this handbook may not cover all situations. However, we believe that by working together, we can find creative solutions to all environmental challenges, to protect the health of our local waters.

## How to use the Handbook to your Advantage

The handbook has nine sections. Section 1 is the mission statement of the Clean Marine Policy. This is the backbone of the environmental management system. This policy provides the basic guidelines for subsequent management decisions.

**Section 2** Our environment, our business – explains the need for Clean Marine practices. It pinpoints the many advantages to be gained by adopting these practices. The section then guides the owner/operator through the process of incorporating the handbook into their operation.

**Sections 3 and 4** contain the nuts and bolts of the Clean Marine practices. Section 3 deals solely with waste management; Section 4 provides practices for each of the management areas available in a full-service marina. In recognition of the fact that many marinas provide only some of the facilities discussed, owners should customize or pare down Section 4 to suit their particular operation.

**Section 5** addresses the importance of preparing an emergency response plan. The section includes a generic example for marinas to customize to suit their own needs.

**Section 6** provides a good working knowledge and understanding of the laws and regulations applicable to marinas and yacht clubs in British Columbia.

**Section 7** provides guidance for the training of management, employees, customers and subcontractors.

**Section 8** Other environmental initiatives – recognizes other programs in place around the world that support the same goals as Clean Marine BC.

**Section 9** puts this handbook in its proper place in the total scheme of continual improvement. Environmental responsibility requires everyone to strive continually to find even better practices and techniques. This philosophy will form the basis of the marina certification program.

To ensure that this handbook is user friendly, we have tried to keep the main text as straightforward as possible. We expect that many users will want a greater knowledge of some of the issues raised, and have therefore included detailed Appendices.

We have designed this handbook to grow with experience, in a format that will allow changes and revisions to be made as cost effectively as possible. As the marine industry adopts the handbook, we anticipate many useful suggestions for additions and improvements that users would like to see incorporated into subsequent editions.

Environmental responsibility must be an ongoing process. The publishers hope that this handbook will be the spring-board for a wave of environmental initiatives in the marine industry.

Please help to feed future editions by sending your comments and ideas to the publisher:

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**Note:** For the sake of brevity, the term “marina” throughout this handbook includes marinas, yacht clubs, harbour authorities, boat yards and any other facility that provides moorage or maintenance facilities for boats.

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