

# **Anticipated Impacts of the Canadian Coast Guard Kitsilano Base Closure**

Presented to Vancouver City Council

by

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# Agenda

1. The issue
2. Implications of Kitsilano Coast Guard Base closure
3. Conclusion and recommendations

Photo: Dan Bate



# 1. The issue

# Proposed Changes: Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) Service in Vancouver 2013



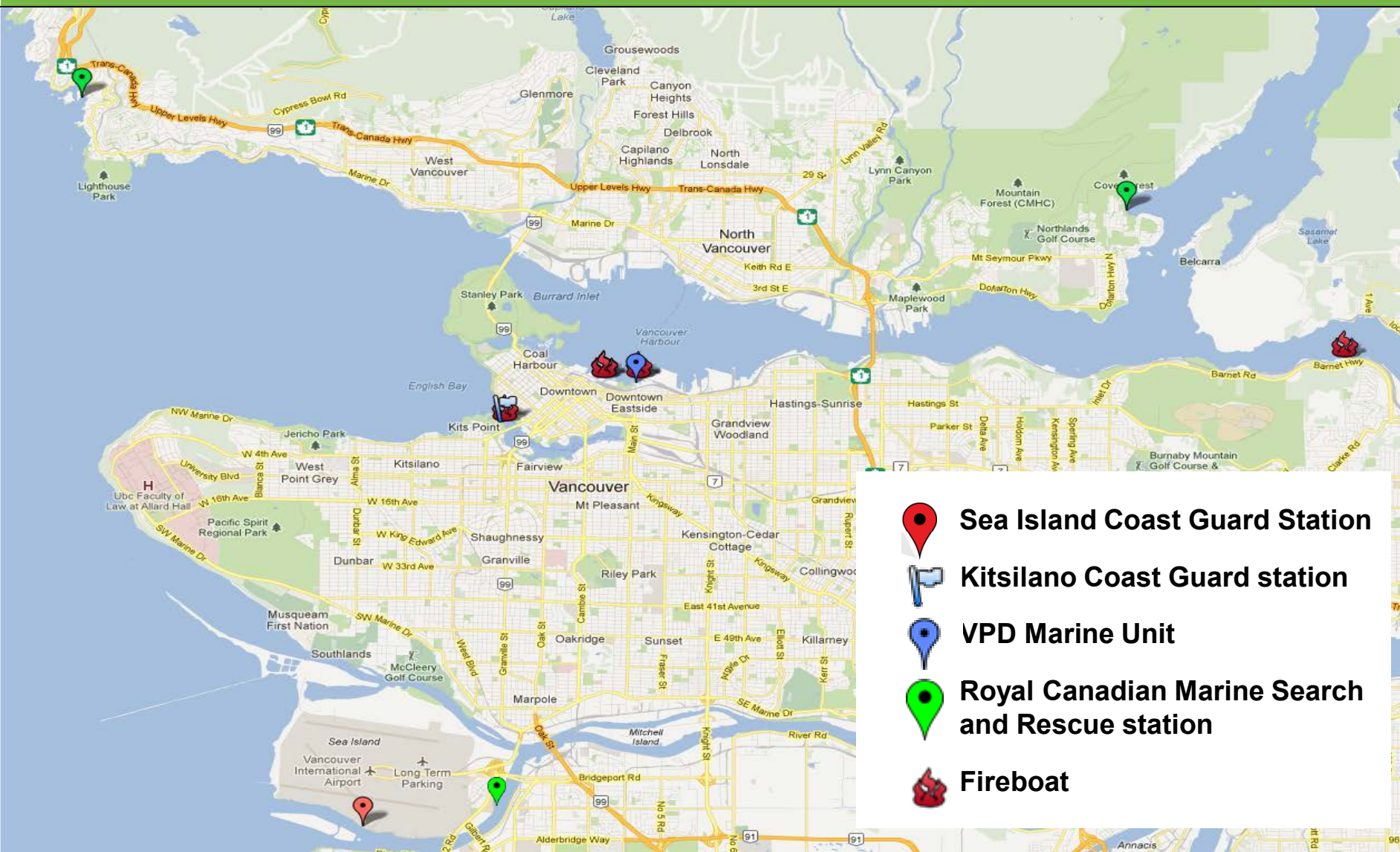
## Federal Government 2012 Budget:






- Kitsilano CCG Base will be closing by Spring 2013 (could be earlier).
- Richmond's Sea Island CCG Base to assume responsibility for all Metro Vancouver calls.
- Federal government to invest in additional local volunteer search and rescue resources.
- Planned reductions in CCG staff and equipment

## **2. Implications of Kitsilano Coast Guard Base closure**



# Current Players in Maritime Emergency Response



-  **Sea Island Coast Guard Station**
-  **Kitsilano Coast Guard station**
-  **VPD Marine Unit**
-  **Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue station**
-  **Fireboat**

# Key Areas of Activity: Maritime Environment

- **Search and rescue/  
medical response**
- **Firefighting prevention/  
response.**
- **Crime prevention/  
response/enforcement**
- **Navigation/vessel control**



# Key Agencies: Maritime Environment

## Federal agencies

1. Canadian Coast Guard (Kitsilano and Sea Island)
2. Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue (aka Coast Guard Auxiliary)
3. Port Metro Vancouver (PMV)
4. Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)
5. RCMP, West Coast Marine Services

## Municipal Agencies

1. Vancouver Police Department (VPD)
2. Fire Boat Consortium (includes VF&RS)
3. Other municipalities' police and fire departments

## Commercial Organisations

1. Commercial assist, various entities
2. West Coast Marine Response Corporation (Burrard Clean)



# VPD Marine Unit



- Significant crime prevention and enforcement demand on the water.
- Rely on support from Kitsilano Coast Guard base for various call types as VPD is not trained in marine SAR and has no paramedic capability.
- Supports CCG with search and rescue calls as available.



# Legislative Framework Search and Rescue: Maritime Environment

Marine Search and Rescue is a federal responsibility

Government of Canada



Exclusive jurisdiction over navigation and shipping, per *Constitution Act, 1867*.

Minister of Fisheries and  
Oceans Canada (DFO)



Responsible for marine search and rescue.

Canadian  
Coast Guard



Agency responsible for executing marine search and rescue under DFO.

City of  
Vancouver



“Vessel of Opportunity” obligation

# “Vessel of Opportunity” Obligation



- Per the *Canada Shipping Act* and international law: every vessel at sea in proximity of a vessel in distress is required to assist

# Coast Guard Emergency Response: Call Types

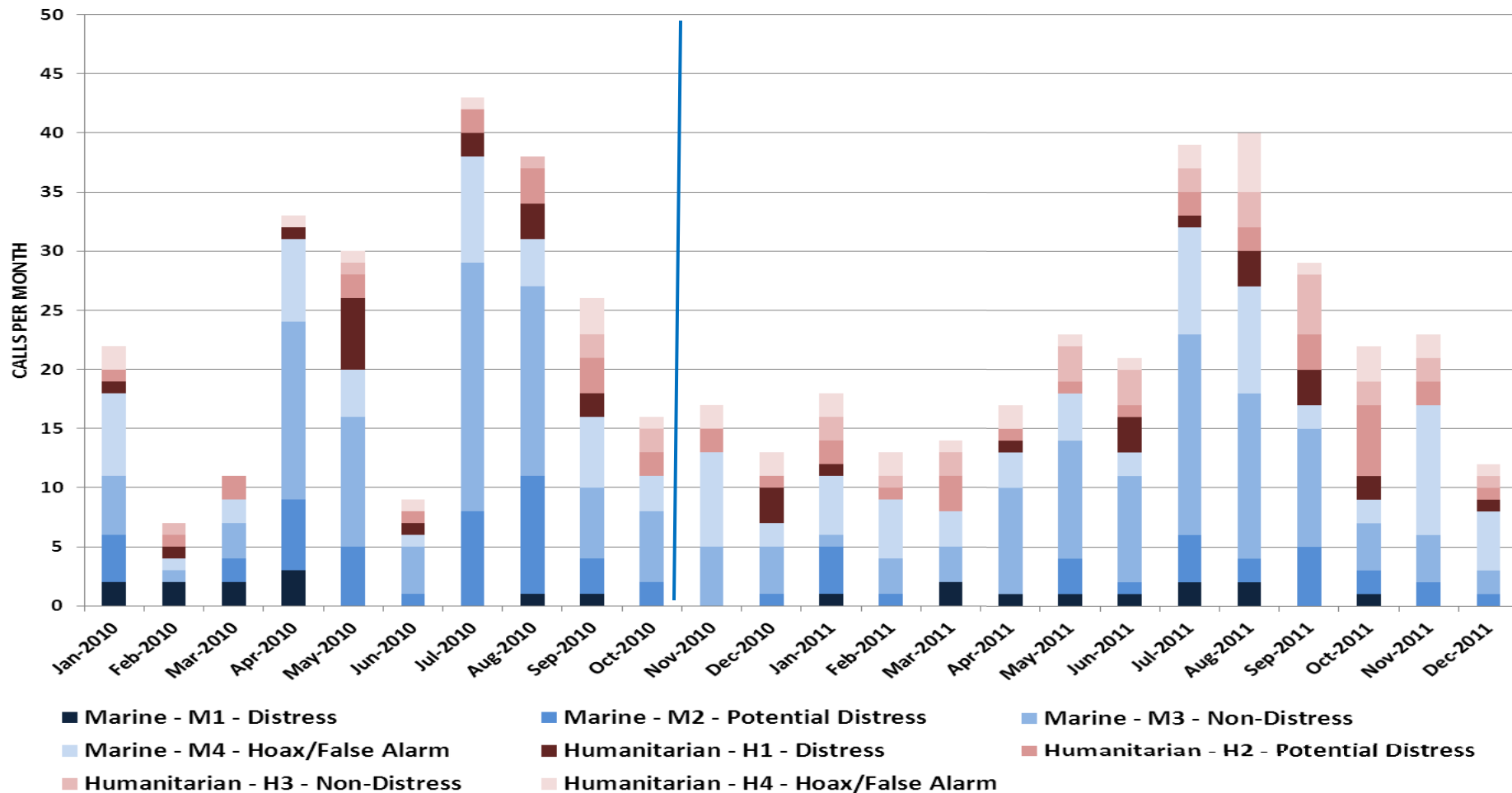
- Call Codes:
  - Priority 1                      Distress
  - Priority 2                      Potential Distress
  - Priority 3                      Non-distress
  - Priority 4                      Hoax/False Alarm
- Call Classification:
  - Marine:

A search and rescue (SAR) incident on the water involving a vessel or person(s) from a vessel, including the medical evacuation (medevac) of persons(s) from a vessel.
  - Humanitarian:

A search and rescue (SAR) incident (not aeronautical or Maritime) that requires a response by the SAR System (ex: originates from a beach or bridge)

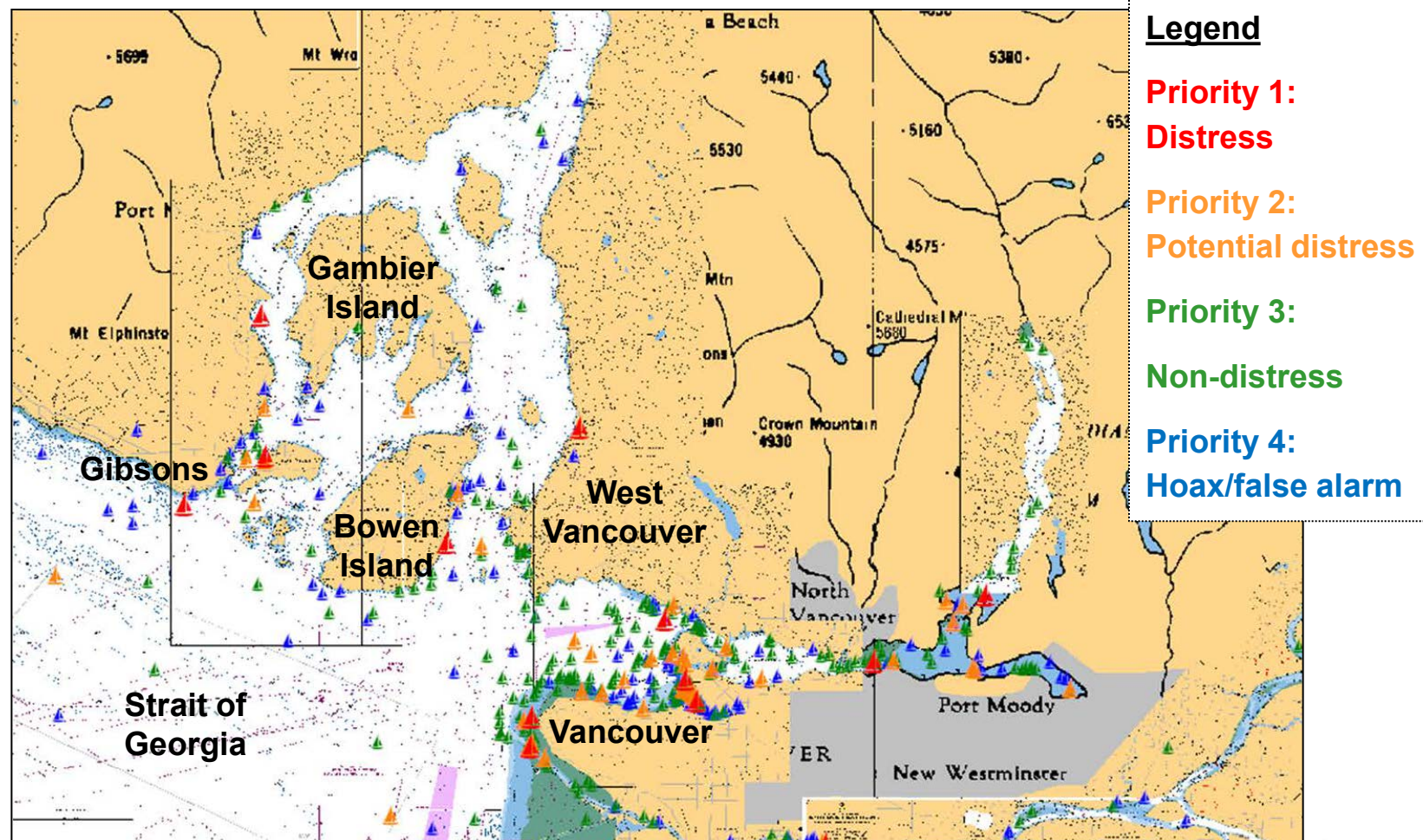
# Kitsilano CCG Base: Call statistics

**KITSILANO STATION COAST GUARD CALL DATA, 2010 & 2011**





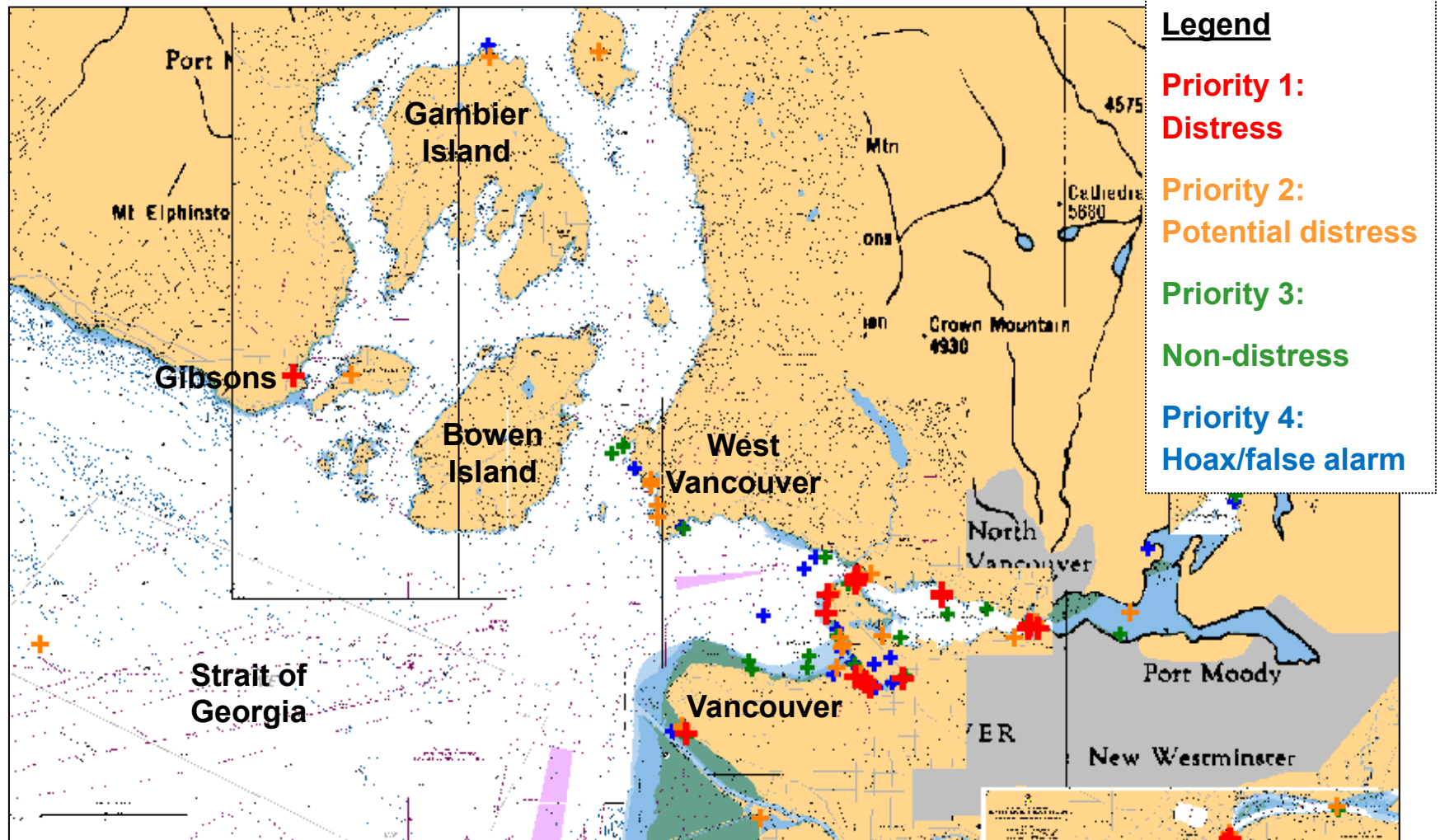
# Coast Guard, 2011 marine incidents



Source: Canadian Coast Guard, July 2012.



# Coast Guard, 2011 humanitarian incidents



Source: Canadian Coast Guard, July 2012.

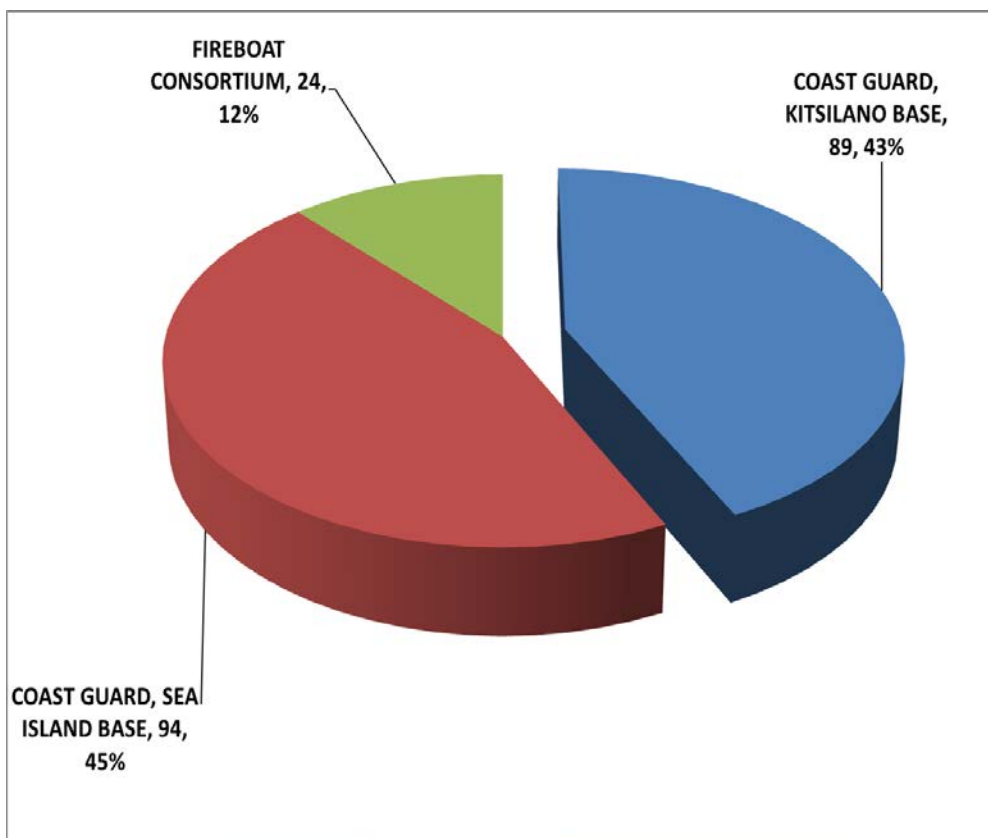
VANCOUVER

# Emergency response: Annual Calls Kitsilano CCG Base

	COAST GUARD, KITSILANO BASE	COAST GUARD, SEA ISLAND BASE
<i>Primary mandate</i>	<i>Search and rescue</i>	<i>Search and rescue</i>
Priority 1	29	35
Priority 2	61	59
Priority 3	120	83
Priority 4	83	64
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>241</b>
	<i>Avg/yr, 2008-2011</i>	<i>2011</i>

- Kits Coast Guard Base responds to 75-100 life-at-risk calls per year (“distress” and “potential distress”)
- Approximately two thirds of life-at-risk calls occur in winter months
- Over 2/3 of all calls are marine, primary CCG mandate

# Average Annual Emergency Priority 1 & 2 Search and Rescue Calls: by Agency

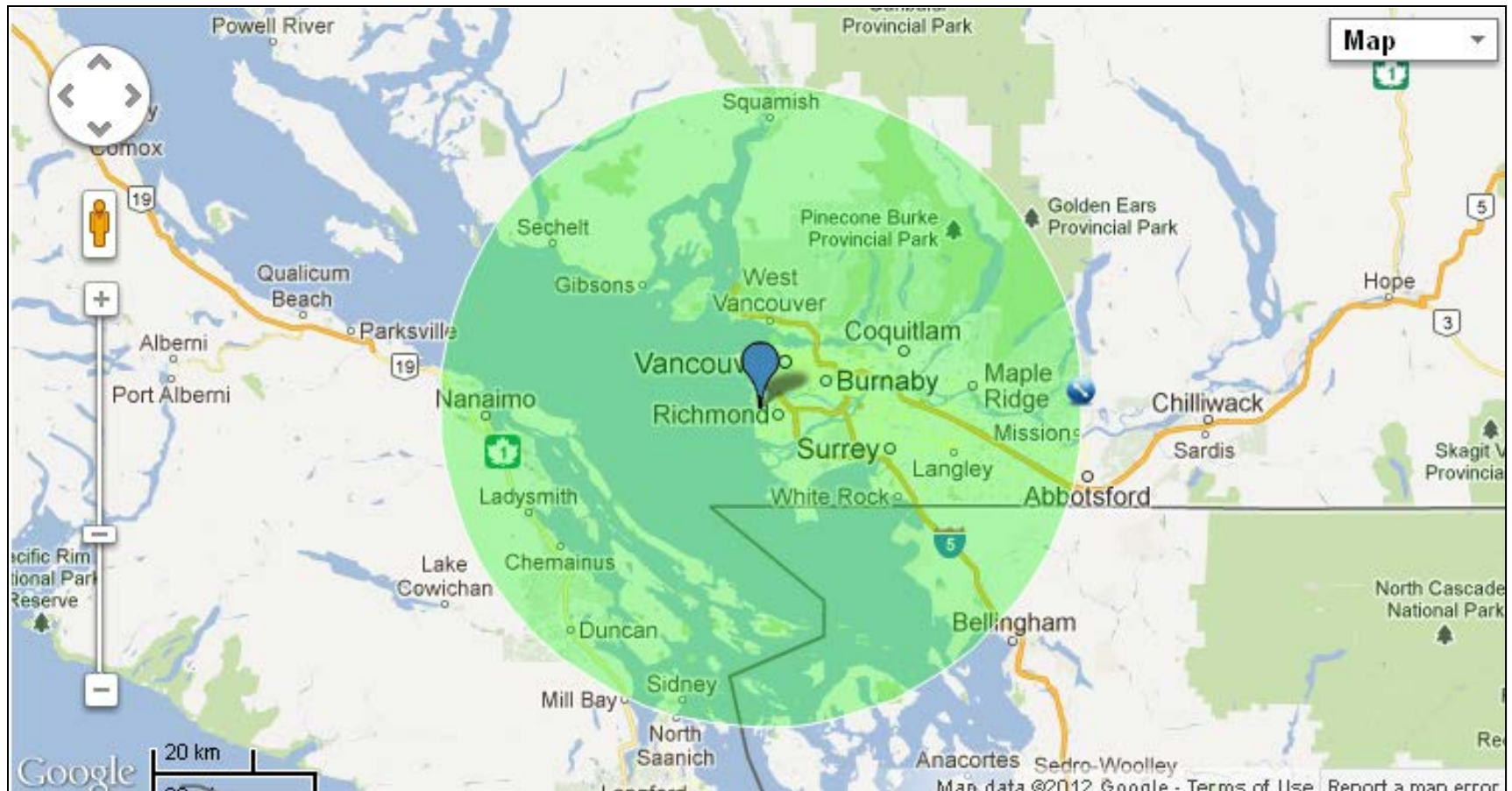


- More than one agency often responds to an incident
  - VPD (no paramedic skills) have large number of crime related calls in maritime environment and may often respond as support
  - Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue (volunteer service) mostly co-respond with other agencies (170 calls per year in Lower Mainland region )

# Coast Guard: Search and Rescue Assets and Services

	KITSILANO	SEA ISLAND
<b>Staff (S&amp;R)</b>	• 12	• 40
<b>Operational hours</b>	• 24/7, year-round.	• 24/7, year-round.
<b>Vessels</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Vessels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 search and rescue vessels (1 crewed at a time)</li> <li>• 1 environmental response vessel.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 vessels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hovercrafts (1 crewed at a time)</li> <li>• 1 inflatable</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Service area:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within 1 hour of base</li> <li>• Vessel and weather dependent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English Bay, Burrard Inlet, Indian Arm, False Creek, with an overlap in the Howe Sound/Georgia Strait areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 mile radius from base (depending on weather), including Fraser River to Pitt River Bridge/Douglas Island.</li> </ul>
<b>Calls per year</b>	• 300	• 250

# Sea Island CCG base has a 40 mile service area



Map shows approximate 40 mile radius around Sea Island CCG base.

# Volunteer Rescue: Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue



Photos: Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue

- Year-round 24/7 service staffed with on-call volunteers.
- Co-respond with other agencies (CCG, Fire Consortium, VPD) for great majority of calls.

BASE	ASSETS	MEMBERS	AVG CALLS PER YEAR
01. West Vancouver (Horseshoe Bay)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 rigid hull inflatable boat &amp; 1 jetboat</li></ul>	40	50
02. North Vancouver (Deep Cove)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 rigid hull inflatable boat &amp; 1 jetboat</li></ul>	30	40
10. Richmond (near Dinsmore Bridge and Steveston)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 rigid hull inflatable boats</li></ul>	35	80



# Proposed Federal Plan

- Close Kitsilano Coast Guard Base
- Implement Vancouver-based Post Secondary Student Rescue Team for summer months (6 students)
- Further investments in Royal Canadian Marine Volunteer Search and Rescue (still to be clarified)

# Federal Proposal: Assessment of Impact

## Current Assets:

2 Coast Guard Locations

52 Staff

6 vessels

550 calls

Sea Island :

250 Calls; 40 mile radius  
(hovercraft)

CCG Kitsilano

300 Calls; 1 hour radius

RCMS&R Volunteers:

170 Calls (most in support role)

105 volunteer members

## Proposed Assets:

1 Coast Guard Location

40 staff (~25% decrease)

4 vessels (~30% decrease)

550 calls

Sea Island:

~550 calls; 40 mile radius  
(hovercraft)

Summer Student Program

Unknown number of calls

RCMS&R Volunteers:

170++ calls

105++ volunteers

### **3. Summary and Conclusion**

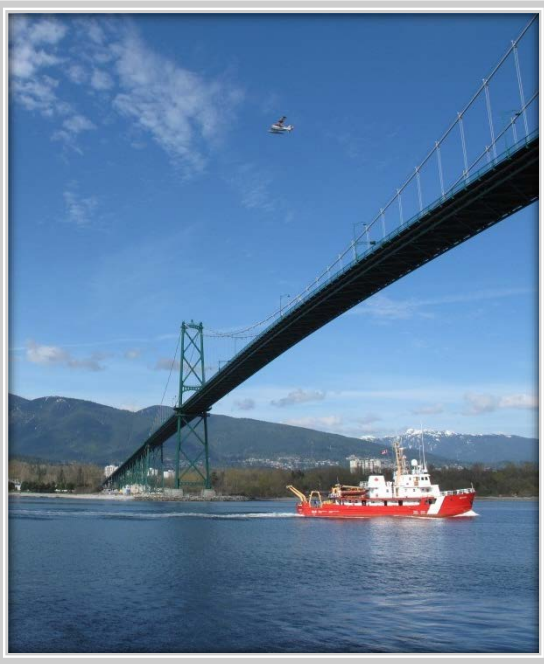
# Summary



- **High number of life-at-risk calls in the Vancouver area**
  - Kitsilano base: responds to ~ 100 life-at-risk calls per year in Vancouver area (often multiple potential victims per call).
  - Two thirds of life-at-risk calls occur during winter months when new student service will not be operating.
  - Response time from CCG Sea Island base to inner harbour is minimum 30 minutes, more if vessel not at base or in bad weather.
- **Sea Island, new summer service and RCM-SAR not sufficient.**
  - Primary Sea Island vessel (hovercraft) not ideal in all weather conditions.
  - Sea Island currently responds to approximately 250 calls per year and has a very large service area.
  - Anticipate RCM-SAR response times will be significantly longer than Kitsilano base.

# Conclusion

Photo: Kyle Pearce



- Kitsilano Coast Guard base closure creates a significant gap.
- Current activities of Kitsilano Coast Guard Base are within legislated mandate of Government of Canada and CCG.
- Peoples' safety will be at risk as a result.
- The City does not have the resources nor is it the City's mandate to fill this gap.