

LETTER OF THE DAY

# Tanker threat overblown

Much information spread about oil tankers is simply wrong

*Re: Tanker increase in local waters courts danger, Letters, April 14*

Thomas Hara's well intentioned letter illustrates the problem of this tanker safety debate occurring outside the jurisdiction of competent experts. Much of the information floating around is just plain wrong, and tends to mislead the public.

Hara's letter says "2,700 litres or 94 barrels" leaked in the recent Vancouver Harbour spill. Twenty-seven hundred litres is actually about 17 barrels. Next he says "modern tankers carry one or two million barrels of oil." Actually ULCC tankers can carry up to four million barrels, and many smaller tankers are under a half million barrels. However, this information is irrelevant for Vancouver Harbour which

allows no tanker larger than Aframax (now, and for the Kinder Morgan expansion). These tankers, due to draft limitations, carry under 600,000 barrels, in many separate tanks, are double hulled, and they have the right-of-way over other shipping. Lastly, Hara frets about the "swift tides" under the Second Narrows Bridge — true, but again somewhat irrelevant as loaded tankers go under the bridge at slack water only (little or no current) with tethered tugs.

Public debate is important, but I encourage writers to research their subject to minimize errors.

**JOHN HUNTER, P. ENG.**

*North Vancouver*