

REPORT NO. 71
HISTORICAL SECTION (G.S.)
ARMY HEADQUARTERS

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MANPOWER PROBLEMS OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY
DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

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Manpower Problems of the Royal Canadian Navy

During the Second World War, 1939-1945

1. This brief Report concludes the account of how Canada's Armed Forces dealt with manpower problems during the Second World War. The overall picture was outlined in Report No. 63, which dealt with the Army; particular problems faced by the R.C.A.F. and the Women's Services were studied in Reports Nos. 67 and 68 respectively.

2. Unlike the Army and R.C.A.F., the Navy was never seriously troubled by lack of recruits. The appeal of the sea seems to have been strong among enough young Canadians to meet the needs of what was by far the smallest of the three Services, primarily a small-ship navy whose expansion was as orderly as it was considerable: from six destroyers, five minesweepers and two smaller training vessels to more than 900 vessels, of which 375 of varying sizes were armed for offensive action. (1) There was the further difference that three distinct forces persisted throughout – the permanent Royal Canadian Navy, the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve of former merchant marine personnel and the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer

Reserve of amateur sailors and landsmen. The term “hostilities only” was applied to personnel of the R.C.N.R. and R.C.N.V.R. Nearly 100,000 officers and ratings wore naval uniform during the Second World War but the greatest number serving at any one time was 93,005 all ranks for November 1944. (2)

3. Although this Report is based, to a large extent , upon The Naval Service of Canada, Its Official History, Volume II, Activities on Shore during the Second World War (Ottawa, 1952) by Gilbert Norman Tucker, Ph.D., former Director of the Naval Historical Section, a considerable amount of other material has been examined. Although the appendices are meagre, they are an attempt to provide statistics comparable to those included with Reports Nos. 63, 67 and 68.

Changing Role

4. A few words might profitably be devoted to the changing conception of the Royal Canadian Navy during the War years, since this dictated manpower requirements.

5. In a memorandum of 29 Aug 39, entitled “Canada’s National Effort (Armed Forces) in the Early Stages of a Major War”, the Chiefs of Staff Committee had written as follows:

The Navy’s part would be to organize auxiliary forces as rapidly as possible, in order to give protection to shipping against mine and submarine attacks in Canadian waters, and at the same time to assist the British forces in keeping the sea communications clear of

enemy vessels. This assistance to be progressively increased as the Naval resources of the country are developed. (3)

Until early 1941 the requirement was for destroyers, anti-submarine and minesweeping vessels to protect Canadian coastal waters against surface raiders, submarines and mines. From the spring of 1941 to the end of 1943 the main emphasis centred on anti-submarine protection of trans-Atlantic shipping and the acquisition of escort destroyers and frigates. During the final phase (when plans were also being made for a continuing War in the Pacific) the ships acquired ranged from landing craft to cruisers and escort carriers and negotiations were in hand for the acquisition of more destroyers as well as light fleet aircraft carriers. (4)

Requirements

6. On 17 Sep 39 the Chiefs of Staff presented a mobilization programme to the Minister of National Defence, calling for a Navy of 5472 officers and ratings by 31 Mar 40, and 7000 by 31 Mar 41. All reserves in excess of 4500 would be loaned to the Royal Navy which had requested assistance. However, this programme was not dictated by strategic or tactical requirements, since it was conceded that the “existing R.C.N. [was] far below the force required to protect the shipping lanes in the vicinity of Canada’s coastline,” but rather by an appreciation of what could be acquired in the way of ships. (5)

7. A re-appraisal during January 1940 raised the goal for 31 Mar 41 to 9438 officers and ratings. The events of May resulted in a further authorized expansion, this time to 11,450 all

ranks. (6) On 14 Jun Hon. C.G. Power, acting Minister of National Defence, told the other members of the Cabinet War Committee that he had authorized the Chief of the Naval Staff to go ahead and train additional personnel, in case destroyers should become available from American sources. On 4 Jul he approved the recommendation of Rear Admiral Percy W. Nelles, Chief of the Naval Staff, that the “active service” component* of the Navy be increased to 15,000 (approximately 2000 officers and 13,000 ratings). (8) on 29 Jul Mr Power told the House of Commons that there were nearly 9000 officers and ratings then serving. (9)

8. Further expansion made it necessary for Rear Admiral Nelles to request, on 26 Oct, that the authorized complement for the fiscal year be increased by a further 110 officers and 1500 ratings. (10) This was approved. (11) Almost at once, however, the programme for the fiscal year 1941-42 came up for discussion. This called for a total strength of 3,000 officers and 20,000 ratings by 31 Mar 42. (12)

9. On 4 Dec 41 Hon. Angus L. Macdonald, Minister of National Defence for Naval Service, told the Cabinet War Committee that how would require a further expansion of 13,000 personnel for the fiscal year 1942-43. The complement actually authorized for this fiscal year totalled 4667 officers and 38,147 ratings. (13) A few days later the war became global in nature, however, and by the spring of 1942, U-Boats were haunting the eastern coastal waters of North America. On 24 Jul the Chief of Naval Personnel advised the Naval Board that the

* The authorized R.C.N.V.R. Divisional strength for 1940-41 had been 110 officers and 1256 ratings, who would not be on “active service”.(7)

personnel expansion authorized for the fiscal year would be completed by October and suggested that the following supplementary complement would be necessary: (14)

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Ratings</u>
Service afloat	90	1689
Service in shore establishments	<u>694</u>	<u>9120</u>
	764	10809

This last would provide personnel for landing craft, dockyard employment, increased training facilities, and a manning pool of 1500 to meet any contingencies. The Naval Board* Considered that an increase of 800 officers and 11,200 ratings was justified but authorization was only granted by Order in Council P.C. 90/9150 of 7 Oct 42. (15) This total authorized complement of 5467 officers and 49,347 ratings was, however, slightly less than the actual strength of 5651 officers and 49,329 ratings on 31 Mar 43. (16) At that time some 1400 officers and ratings were serving with the Royal Navy, approximately 20,000 were manning Canadian vessels and the remainder were in training or employed ashore. (17)

10. The Naval estimates approved for 1943-4 called for a further expansion, to a new total of 6950 officers and 69,861 ratings by 31 Mar 44. (18)

* At this time the Naval Board comprised the Deputy Minister of National Defence for Naval Services, Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, Chief of Naval Personnel, Chief of Naval Engineering and Construction and a Secretary.

11. By the summer of 1943, however, requirements had altered once again. Due to a delay in the completion of further frigates and corvettes the Royal Canadian Navy was faced with a temporary surplus of personnel. In an effort to get more men to sea the Chief of the Naval Staff approached the Admiralty which was faced with a shortage of 20,000 men. During the course of a meeting with the First Sea Lord (Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound) and the Chief of Combined Operations (Vice Admiral Lord Louis Mounbatten) at Quebec on 11 Aug, Vice Admiral Nelles advanced proposals which would also convert the Royal Canadian Navy from a small-ship navy into a balanced force. The British officers agreed that it would be advantageous to acquire and man cruisers, after small nuclei had been trained through attachments with the Royal Navy, but doubted whether the creation of a separate Fleet Air Arm organization would justify the heavy overhead required. In any case, these were long term projects and the only way to solve the immediate problem was to man major landing craft flotillas for the coming invasion of North-West Europe. Such personnel could subsequently be returned to Canada to man the additional escort vessels which would then be available. (19) Vice Admiral Nelles had no authority to negotiate officially, however, and suggested that the Canadian Government would react more quickly to a British request. (20)

12. Thus it was that on 31 Aug, when the Cabinet War Committee met with Mr Churchill and his advisers at Quebec, the British Prime Minister requested assistance in manning R.N. ships. Meeting on 8 Sep the Cabinet War Committee agreed to the following action, provided there was no increase in the total manpower commitment: the manning of two further R.N. fleet destroyers; infiltration of personnel into two R.N. cruisers on the understanding that they later would become R.C.N. ships; formation of three R.C.N. flotillas of landing craft; formation of a

Beach Commando; and the provision of 10 C.W. (commissioned warrant) officer candidates monthly for training and service with the Royal Navy. The question of acquiring aircraft carriers was postponed for further study.

13. Separate arrangements had been made in July 1943 for the Royal Canadian Navy to man two coastal craft flotillas, which would, however, remain under the operational control, administration and maintenance of the Admiralty. (21)

14. By October 1943, the Admiralty considered that sufficient escort vessels were in commission or building to permit the cancellation of future construction. (22) Acceptance of this view by Canada, and the cancellation of the last 41 frigates and 11 corvettes on order, meant that the Royal Canadian Navy would likely have a continued surplus of personnel (23). Minor modifications were made in the previous arrangements and it was agreed to man the escort carriers Nabob and Puncher* (apart from Fleet Air Arm personnel) and 10 British frigates. (23) The cruiser Uganda was commissioned as a Canadian ship in October 1944 and the cruiser Ontario in April 1945.

15. On 21 Oct 43 Mr Macdonald placed the naval programme for 1944-46 before the Cabinet War Committee. It requested an increase of 11,000 (including W.R.C.N.S.) in each of the fiscal years 1944-45 and 1945-46 and would enlarge the Navy to approximately 104,000 all ranks, including air personnel for the aircraft carriers not yet

* These escort carriers (C.V.Es) were on Lease-Lend from the United States Navy to the Royal Navy.

approved. It was not until 9 Mar 44, however, that Mr. Macdonald placed his 1944-45 requirements before the House of Commons. (25)

The Navy was given a fixed total of 93,862 officers and ratings for the fiscal year: personnel could be employed in any manner desired as long as this ceiling was not exceeded. (26)

16. On 28 Jun 44, however, Mr Macdonald told the Cabinet War Committee that, although the Navy would require 2000 men in each of July and August, the recruiting programme would dwindle thereafter to 500 per month. In view of manpower shortages elsewhere, the Navy would not recruit beyond the absolute minimum. In actual fact the increase for these months of 1944 was considerably less: (27)

July	1627
August	717
September	359
October	852
November	283
December	241

17. Plans made during the summer of 1944 in conjunction with the Admiralty for the continuing war in the Pacific called for the employment of 20,358 officers and ratings afloat in the newer Canadian ships, with a further 30,000 ashore and 3000 in Europe. The Prime Minister told the Cabinet War Committee on 22 Sep 44, however, that these proposals were too high and

should be reduced, so that they were in line with Canada's other commitments. It was Mr King's opinion, derived from information he had obtained at Quebec, that military necessity was not the factor governing Canadian participation in the Japanese War, since both the United States and United Kingdom would have larger forces available after VE-Day than could be utilized. On 14 Oct Mr Macdonald presented a smaller programme, equal to about one-third of the personnel then afloat. It called for 8812 officers and ratings to man a force which would serve with a British fleet in the Central Pacific. Later a further 4600 officers and ratings would be made available, to man two light fleet carriers and 10 fleet destroyers. The Cabinet War Committee approved this total commitment of approximately 13,412 officers and ratings. A further proposed commitment in the Bay of Bengal was, however, rejected.

18. On Apr 45 Mr King announced in the House of Commons that only those who volunteered would see service in the Pacific. (28) Immediately following VE-Day all personnel were given a chance to volunteer. However, the cruiser Uganda, which had joined the British Pacific Fleet on 9 Mar 45, was the only Canadian ship to go to the Far East. Since its crew had not been given a chance to volunteer for Pacific service this cruiser was withdrawn from action on 27 Jul for return to Esquimalt. It reached Esquimalt, on 10 Aug, to bring the War to an end for the Royal Canadian Navy. (29).

Recruiting

19. Although the Royal Canadian Navy and its reserves were placed on active service on 1 Sep 39, immediate expansion was effectively limited by lack of instructors, training facilities

and ships. All that could be done for most applicants, except those with specialized knowledge of a sort that qualified them for immediate draft to either coast, was to take their names. Retired officers and ratings of the Royal Canadian Navy were recalled to active duty, however, and, thanks to the generosity of the Admiralty, it was possible to make use of the experience and service of British reservists living in Canada. The 18 R.C.N.V.R. Divisions across Canada were authorized to recruit to their peace time complement, but this was soon accomplished and there was no knowing when they might be able to despatch their members on active service. (30)

20. On 1 Sep 39 there were 1986 officers and ratings in the permanent Royal Canadian Navy. Together, the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve and Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve had a “paper” strength of 1929 officers and ratings. (31) From the following table it will be seen that the strength of those placed on active service almost doubled during the autumn, the increase consisting almost entirely of “hostilities only” personnel: (32)

	Officers		Ratings		Total	
	23 Sep	28 Dec	23 Sep	28 Dec	23 Sep	28 Dec
R.C.N.	191	204	1799	1846	1990	2050
R.C.N.R.	74	208	71	656	145	864
R.C.N.V.R.	<u>132</u>	<u>238</u>	<u>406</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>538*</u>	<u>2128</u>
TOTAL	397	650	2276	4392	2673	5042

* There were a further 18 officers and 200 ratings mobilized for duty at R.C.N.V.R. Divisions across Canada.

The situation was satisfactory and attempts, both from without and within N.S.H.Q., to institute a recruiting campaign were resisted. On 29 Jan 40 the Director of Personnel informed the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff that all ships in commission were fully manned and the barracks at Halifax and EsquimalT badly overcrowded. Some 25 per cent of the personnel at the Halifax barracks were being maintained in private lodgings. (33)

21. Renewed pressure was exerted following the events of May 1940 and once again it proved necessary to take a firm stand. On 17 Jun the Director of Naval Reserves advised all R.C.N.V.R. Divisions that the number of men who might be enlisted was governed by the number of ships either available now or in the offing. Personnel should be advised that the Navy was doing its utmost to obtain more ships, so that more men could be placed on active service. (34)

22. The permanent Royal Canadian Navy continued recruiting for seven years' engagements (boys signing on for seven years after they should reach the age of 18) while other personnel were being accepted for "hostilities only". All applicants had to belong to the "white race" and be British subjects who had resided in Canada for at least two years prior to the date of application. In addition to being physically fit, recruits had to produce evidence of having completed Grade VIII education and a letter of character reference from a local clergyman or

other prominent citizen. Following a preliminary medical examination recruits were drafted to either H.M.C.S. Naden on the west coast or H.M.C.S. Stadacona barracks on the east coast. Generally speaking those living west of Ontario were sent to the Pacific coast. These arrangements were handled entirely from N.S.H.Q. (35)

23. On 22 May 41, however, the Director of Naval Personnel pointed out to the Chief of the Naval Staff that:

Reports from both coasts tend to show that these boys and Ordinary Seamen as a group are inferior mentally and physically to the R.C.N.V.R. recruit. In short we are recruiting an inferior type for the permanent force. This is particularly true since the commencement of hostilities. (36)

There were the further facts that this recruiting procedure was becoming increasingly difficult to handle from N.S.H.Q. and that the numbers available did not warrant the trouble. Therefore, instructions were issued on 4 Jun 41 putting an end to this form of recruiting. With effect from 15 Jul 41 all recruits would enter through the R.C.N.V.R. Divisions. Anyone considered suitable for R.C.N. could subsequently be transferred. A new minimum age limit was set at 17 ½ years and the enlistment of boys stopped. (37) Direct entry into the R.C.N. was resumed in May 1944 and by June 1945 its total strength was 4450, of whom 614 possessed temporary status. (38)

24. It is of interest that the R.C.N. complement was increased to 771 officers and 7781 ratings early in 1941. This provided an establishment whereby officers and ratings could be promoted to provide a trained nucleus for ships manned by “hostilities only” personnel. Additional ratings could be transferred to the R.C.N. after six months’ service, provided that they were under the age of 30 and thereby could complete 20 years’ pensionable service before reaching the retirement age of 50. No officers could, however, be so transferred. (39) Their cases would be dealt with during the demobilization period. In addition, this was a first step towards providing for the post-war force of 1000 officers and 10,000 ratings (manning two cruisers, eight destroyers and 40 smaller vessels) that had been tentatively approved for planning purposes by the Cabinet War Committee on 19 Nov 40.

25. On 1 Sep 39 the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve constituted a reserve of 66 officers and 196 ratings; by 1943 the number had reached a peak strength of some 6000. Merchant marine sailors were directed by R.C.N. R. registrars at Halifax, Charlottetown, Quebec, Montreal, Vancouver and Prince Rupert to apply to the barracks in “Stadacona” or “Naden” for actual enlistment. Except for two recruiting trips, in 1940 and again in 1941, the potential of professional seamen and engineers working on the Great Lakes was ignored by the R.C.N.R. By the spring of 1941 it was considered, however, that the small number of merchant seamen who might still join the Navy could be more readily handled through R.C.N.V.R. Divisions. (40)

26. In order that the ratio of R.C.N.R. to R.C.N.V.R. personnel might bear some relationship to the distribution of population across Canada it had been early decided that the Maritime Provinces, and particularly Nova Scotia, should be retained as a recruiting ground for the R.C.N.R. while the rest of Canada recruited R.C.N.V.R. personnel to R.C.N.V.R. standards. (41) There were exceptions, of course, and professional seamen were directed into the R.C.N.R. whenever they presented themselves for enlistment, but the role of the R.C.N.V.R. Divisions in Saint John, Charlottetown, Quebec, Montreal (2), Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Hamilton, London, Windsor, Port Arthur, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver eventually assumed greater importance. (42)

27. During 1939 and 1940 the R.C.N.V.R. Divisions drew most of their recruits from the urban population and no recruiting drives were conducted into rural areas. By January 1941 the Navy had increased to roughly 15,000 all ranks, about 8000 of whom were R.C.N.V.R. personnel, Naval expansion was definitely underway and the R.C.N.V.R. Divisions had become primarily recruiting stations. (43) On 6 Feb 41 instructions were issued that, in order to relieve the congestion at the Halifax and Esquimalt training establishments, six weeks' preliminary recruit training should be conducted by the Divisions. (44) On 25 Feb instructions were issued, outlining a scheme whereby the country would be divided into 20 recruiting areas, one for each of the 20 R.C.N.V.R. Divisions then functioning. (45) Recruiting tours were instituted under the Direction of the recruiting officer now posted to each. Instructions also were issued that 50 per cent of the recruits obtained should be out-of-town residents, even though they would be unable to attend the preliminary evening drills. (46)

28. The Naval Historian had deduced, from the recruiting statistics made available to him, that the Navy tended to draw heavily on the urban population, with each R.C.N.V.R. Division drawing disproportionately on the city in which it was located. For example, 77 per cent of “Discovery’s” intake had been living in Vancouver, 73 per cent of “York’s” in Toronto and 70 per cent of “Donnacona’s” in Montreal. Statistics for previous civilian occupation also suggest that the Navy’s recruiting remained highly urbanized. (47)

29. Although there were temporary shortages in certain specialities, there never was a lack of recruits for general entry. Factors in the Navy’s favour were: it was a small service in comparison with the Army and R.C.A.F.: requirements were smaller and expansion was kept at a comparative rate; sufficient recruits presented themselves, without the elaborate recruiting campaigns and publicity sponsored by the Army and R.C.A.F., to enable the Navy to pick and choose. When the Director of National Selective Service complained that the Navy was exceeding its recruiting quota during the summer of 1943, at a time when the Army could not meet its needs, it was pointed out that it was not practicable for the Navy to have a definite monthly quota. The Navy recruited only the numbers authorized during the fiscal year and these were bound up with its requirements to man now and existing ships. More men were accepted during the spring and summer, merely because recruiting slacked off during the winter. (48)

30. The Army’s “M” test of “ability to learn” had been introduced in March 1942 and medical officers were given short courses in personnel selection methods. Henceforth all seamen ratings had to pass a night vision test and all seamem earmarked for A/S the prescribed auditory test. (49) According to Volume One (in draft) of The Official History of the Canadian

Medical Services, 1939-1945, medical standards prescribed in the Recruiting Manual were applied at the R.C.N.V.R. Divisions as follows:

...the medical officer was directed that trivial and repairable defects should not prohibit the entry of an enthusiastic patriot who sincerely desired to serve his country; nor should an exaggerated view of minor complaints exempt the less willing volunteer. Organic disease with any likelihood of aggravation by service, would automatically eliminate a recruit; but there was, nevertheless, a reasonably wide margin in fitness between a seaman on the bridge and the less arduous duties required between decks.

That the work of these medical officers at recruiting centres was of a high order is shown by the fact that of one hundred and five thousand recruits examined only 10.1 per cent were rejected upon medical grounds, and of those accepted only 3.5 per cent later eliminated for medical reasons. Since the wear and tear of service life in six years of warfare would give cause for more than half of these discharges, it is seen that the error of the recruiting medical officer would be little more than 1 per cent, and this figure would include the recruit who did not admit to epilepsy, ulcer, or other conditions nor readily discernible in the type of physical examination it is possible to conduct at recruiting centres. (50)

Only in September 1943 was a Directorate of Personnel Selection established at N.S.H.Q. Due to the above-mentioned factors normal wastage was not the serious problem that faced the Canadian Army and R.C.A.F. and was only about four and a half per cent yearly. (51)

Restrictions on Enlistment

31. As has been mentioned above (see para 22), in 1939 only members of the “white race” who were British subjects and resident in Canada for at least two years were eligible for enlistment. On 20 Sep 39 confidential instructions were issued not to enlist men of German, Italian or Russian origin, unless their parents were natural-born British subjects. In the event that any such men had been enlisted commanding officers were to ensure that they were not “employed in positions where they might have exceptional opportunities of causing mischief”. (52) Instructions were later issued to prevent known Communists from enlisting. (53) Not until the summer of 1940 was it realized that existing regulations had been wrongly interpreted, since anyone born in Canada or elsewhere in the British Empire-Commonwealth was a British subject, irrespective of the nationality of his parents. (54) A memorandum of 14 Aug 40 cancelled the instruction of 20 Sep 39. (55) However, if recruits were of recent foreign descent, their loyalty was to be checked by the R.C.M.P. before acceptance. Naturalized citizens might also be enlisted, subject to investigation by the R.C.M.P. where considered necessary.

32. Canadian citizens of Chinese and Japanese origin were acceptable after investigation by the R.C.M.P., but only if they possessed special qualifications for employment. (56) Actually no

Nisei were ever enlisted. (57) The Navy's argument was that it was not practicable to mix members of the white and coloured races in the confined quarters characteristic of a small-ship navy. (58) Canada's Indian population was not encouraged to enlist, although an unsuccessful attempt had been made to enlist a single crew for the Fishermen's Reserve on the west coast. (59). Until February 1943 Canadian-born negroes were excluded. (60) Order in Council P.C. 1986 of 12 Mar 43 ruled that any male British subject of any racial origin might be enlisted for the period of hostilities, but in practice the Navy continued to follow the policy of not accepting recruits from other countries when Canadians were available for enlistment.

33. This policy had been laid down as early as 16 May 40, in a submission by the Chief of the Naval Staff to the Acting/Deputy Minister (Navy) (61): furthermore, although all cases of aliens should be considered on their merits, a thorough knowledge of English was essential.* A few "stateless" citizens had been accepted in the early months of the War because of their technical qualifications but subsequently the Governments-in-Exile in London wanted such men for their own services. (63) During the autumn of 1940 a few Americans with special qualifications were enlisted. During the summer of 1941 instructions were issued that Americans presenting themselves at an R.C.N.V.R. Division might be enlisted. (64) These had to be given an assurance, however, that in the event of the United States entering the war, they might transfer to the Armed Forces of their own country. (65)

* Since it was not feasible to operate a two-language Navy, French-speaking recruits could not be utilized unless they possessed an adequate command of the English language. After Hon. Angus L. Macdonald pointed this out to the Cabinet War Committee on 18 Jun 43 it was agreed that the Navy should provide facilities for teaching English to French-speaking recruits. An unsuccessful attempt had been made during the summer of 1941, at H.M.C.S. Montcalm (Quebec), but now the course was transferred to H.M.C.S. Prevost (London, Ont) where the instructors were professional language teachers. The ratings were quartered with English-speaking families in the city. After three months instruction the ratings were returned to their Division for initial training. In January 1945 the English language school was again moved – to H.M.C.S. Cornwallis at Deep Brook, Nova Scotia. (62)

34. In view of an understanding with the British Government that Newfoundlanders would not be enlisted into Canada's Armed Forces and because the Royal Navy had long regarded them as its potential recruits, the Royal Canadian Navy never sought these men. (66) This restriction did not apply to the W.R.C.N.S., however; since any girls enlisted would be employed in Newfoundland the W.R.C.N.S. carried on recruiting there for some time (A.H.Q. Report No. 68)

Procurement of Officers

35. During the first two and a half years of war the majority of officers came direct from shore, without experience of life on the lower deck. Some had qualified as officers in the peace time reserves while others had been considered acceptable by the commanding officers of the R.C.N.V.R. Divisions over the naval barracks at "Stadacona" and "Naden". However, in August 1940 the selection of officers from among R.C.N.V.R. ratings was authorized, if they possessed high educational qualifications. During January 1941 each Command was directed to submit nominees for the executive, engineer and accountant branches through the Command Boards. It was not until February 1943, however, that the Royal Navy's scheme of prior entry as ordinary seamen completely superseded the direct entry of officers into the executive branch. (67)

36. Entry into the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve was governed by the possession of certain marine certificates. Although some went to sea without any further training the majority were

given a month's course in gunnery, squad drill, signals, naval customs and organization. (68)
 This source of officers lasted until 1942. At the Navy's peak there were roughly 600 R.C.N.R. officers on active service in the executive branch as against 4000 in the R.C.N.V.R. (69)

37. The training of accountant and engineer officers in the reserves and of electrical, medical and special branch officers (in R.C.N.V.R. only) was kept separate from that of executive officers. In January 1945 the numbers of officers in the non-executive branches were: (70)

	<u>Accountant</u>	<u>Engineer</u>	<u>Special Branch</u>	<u>Electrical</u>	<u>Medical</u>
R.C.N.	31	63	0	2	1
R.C.N.V.R.	460	363	751	430	386
R.C.N.R.	33	144	0	1	0

Demobilization

38. The general instructions concerning demobilization laid down in September 1944 were based on a policy of "first in, first out" for those who wished to return to civilian life. However, the stipulation was made that if too many preferred to remain in the Navy, as actually became the case, additional personnel were to be released on the basis of "last in, first out" following the principle that personnel with the least training and experience would be the least useful to retain. (71)

39. Priority for return to Canada of personnel serving overseas was laid down as follows: prisoners of war and casualties; volunteers for the continuing Pacific War; non-volunteers afloat in European waters; non-volunteers ashore in Europe and the United Kingdom. (72)

40. All “hostilities only” officers fell into four groups: those volunteering for service in the Pacific as long as that war should last; volunteers for the Pacific who wished to be released as soon as their release priorities would entitle them; those who had not volunteered for the Pacific but were willing to continue serving in other areas as long as required, regardless of demobilization priorities; those who wished to be retired as soon as their release priority would permit. (73)

41. There were eight classifications of discharge for ratings. Four were termed “honourable”: medically unfit; at own request to return “honourable”: medically unfit; at own request to return to agriculture or essential industry, or on compassionate grounds; unsuitable for rating held; unlikely to become efficient. The other categories were classed as “dishonourable.” (74)

42. The sudden end of the War with Japan made it necessary to revise demobilization plans. By the middle of 1946 it was found that many of the personnel who had elected to remain in the Interim Force until 30 Sep 47 were now surplus to requirements. (75) By 31 Mar 48 the adjustment to conditions of peace was complete and only 1061 officers and 5796 ratings were serving, of whom three officers and 13 ratings were on loan from the Royal Navy. Some 611 officers and 2808 ratings belonged to the Royal Canadian Navy (Reserve). (76)

43. This Report was drafted by J.M . Hitsman. It was read in draft by Mr E.C. Russell, Naval Historian, Naval Headquarters, whose comments have been incorporated, and by the Chief of Naval Personnel who made no comment.

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Director Historical Section.

APPENDIX "A"*

STRENGTH INCREASE (MALE)

ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY, 1939-1945

Month	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
January		323	1237	1137	1707	1901	323
February		343	662	1334	1953	2356	213
March		423	650	2120	2529	3149	150
April		428	878	2566	2648	2705	107
May		764	1733	2750	2637	2383	132
June		1062	1765	2891	2545	2216	6
July		1349	1496	3123	2311	1627	30
August		1101	1487	3141	2846	717	11
September	3069	1174	896	1537	2358	359	82
October	520	934	947	1508	1877	852	227
November	319	1164	493	1573	1036	283	118
December	230	1041	847	1008	905	241	18
Total	4138	10106	13091	24688	25352	18789	1417

Grand total of 97600 includes 19 men for whom no year of enlistment could be found. It does not, however, include the 1986 members of the R.C.N. serving on 1 Sep 39.

* Statistics furnished by War Service Records, Department of Veterans Affairs on 13 Jan 54. It was not possible to produce figures showing officers and ratings, since the Hollerith cards turned over by the Navy gave no indication whether a rating had later been appointed to commissioned rank.

STRENGTH DECREASE (MALE)

ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY, 1939-1945

Month	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
January		62	66	106	150	251	552
February		43	76	178	162	239	547
March		41	107	157	145	296	616
April		44	111	139	105	502	707
May		67	109	119	145	451	623
June		54	96	140	179	388	1606
July		64	190	122	185	345	2962
August		71	137	148	401	416	6761
September	59	60	157	290	366	339	9577
October	27	125	149	173	269	441	14826
November	58	79	123	183	332	515	15350
December	45	73	154	160	302	578	7117
Total	189	783	1475	1915	2741	4761	61244

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