

**SEARCH AND RESCUE  
STATISTICS  
2000  
Laurentian Region**



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Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.

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## FOREWORD

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In Canada, not a day goes by without search and rescue services being called upon. Though there is less marine activity in the winter, it never comes to a complete halt. Consequently, the Marine Rescue Centre-Québec must remain on the alert 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The past few years have been witness to tremendous changes in the organization of marine rescues. A large part of this evolution stems from involvement on an international scale and the contribution of advanced technology; however, the most significant factor has been that all stakeholders have been regularly consulting each others for the past few years, striving to enhance the effectiveness of life-saving efforts.

Since the signing of the *International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue* in Hamburg in 1979 under the initiative of the IMO (International Maritime Organization), tangible actions to improve SAR operations at sea have been taken on an ongoing basis.

The GMDSS (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System) set up by IMO member countries is now in effect and has already had a positive impact. Detection of distress situations has greatly improved between, among others, the COSPAS-SARSAT and INMARSAT satellite systems. Communication devices with digital selective calling (DSC) units now ensure that a distress call will be heard and that a coordinated SAR operation will be set in motion.

More than ever, the success of a rescue operation hinges on COORDINATION: coordination of air and sea resources, coordination of organizational efforts involving different cultures, and coordination of planning, another essential element of a rescue organization.



In Canada, the persons in charge of the five rescue centres, including MRSC Québec, regularly meet for the purpose of continually fine-tuning the planning aspect of rescue activities, as planning is essential to the Canadian sea rescue infrastructure. It must be acknowledged that, with such an immense territory bordered by three oceans, the Canadian Coast Guard cannot afford to waste a single available resource.

Planning is often regarded as the invisible element having the greatest impact on the outcome of an operation. At the same time, planning is often the most demanding and frustrating aspect since it must always be justified. In the Laurentian Region, the evolution of the past few years has also had an impact on how SAR operations are organized and conducted. In addition to being affected by the introduction of the GMDSS (even if only a portion of its territory lies within a VHF DSC coverage area), MRSC Québec has expressed its concern regarding the routing of distress calls which requires, among other things, that a mandatory watch on channel 16 VHF be maintained

beyond the year 2005. (Normally, in 2005, Canada and the other member countries are to cease watch on channel 16 VHF in areas of GMDSS coverage.)

The number of requests for assistance received by MRSC Québec via cellular telephones has been increasing over the past few years, with most being made by recreational boaters in the Québec City–Montréal corridor. These calls, placed directly or through a 911 emergency centre, are indicative of two fundamental changes: first, in order to obtain information or maintain private contact with their close relations, more and more recreational boaters are abandoning VHF for an apparatus—the cell phone—that, while admittedly being useful along coasts, cannot in any way be likened to marine safety equipment. Second, the increased use of cellular telephony has made the coordination of certain operations more complicated since this technology does not enable all principal players to directly and simultaneously communicate with each other.

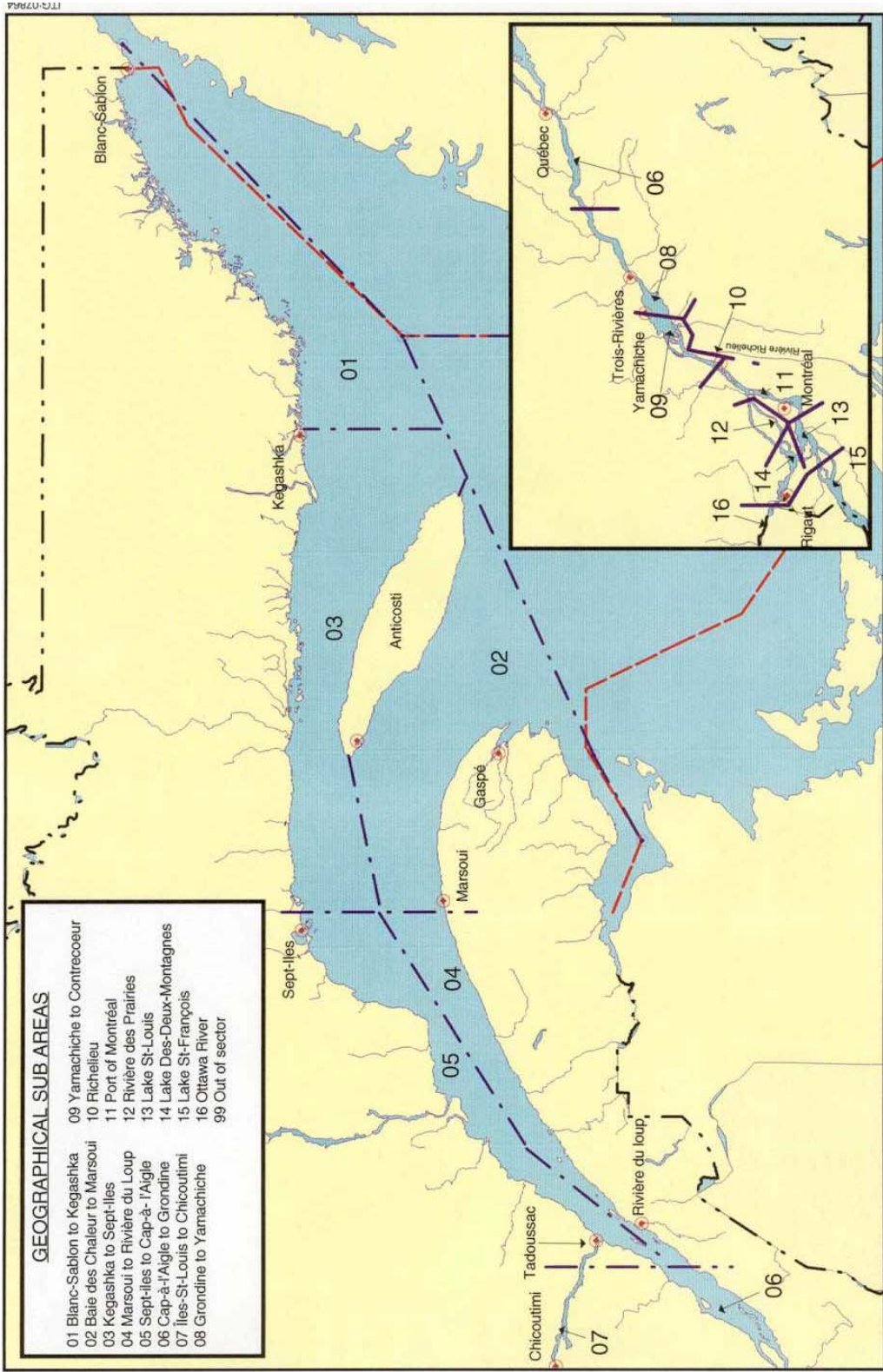
While technology clearly has its advantages, at times with a certain price to pay (more extensive training for rescue centre and rescue unit personnel), it is good to note that the Canadian Forces and the Coast Guard have begun the new millennium by taking concrete measures, again aimed at improving SAR operation effectiveness. In this regard, the first CORMORANT SAR helicopter will be delivered in Canada in the fall of 2001 and will replace the unit currently used, the 40 year-old LABRADOR. This first aircraft will be based at Canadian Force Base (CFB) Comox in British Columbia, with other replacement units scheduled to be based at CFBs Trenton (Ontario), Greenwood (Nova Scotia) and Gander (Newfoundland) in 2002. During this time, the Coast Guard announced that it will be going ahead with a program to construct the new "CAPE" class SAR lifeboat.



*The Cormorant SAR helicopter*

To conclude, the old adage that it is better to be safe than sorry cannot be repeated often enough. Prevention remains the key to winning this discreet but extremely demanding war. Mariners, fishermen and boaters are continually asked to remember that safety must always be a top priority.

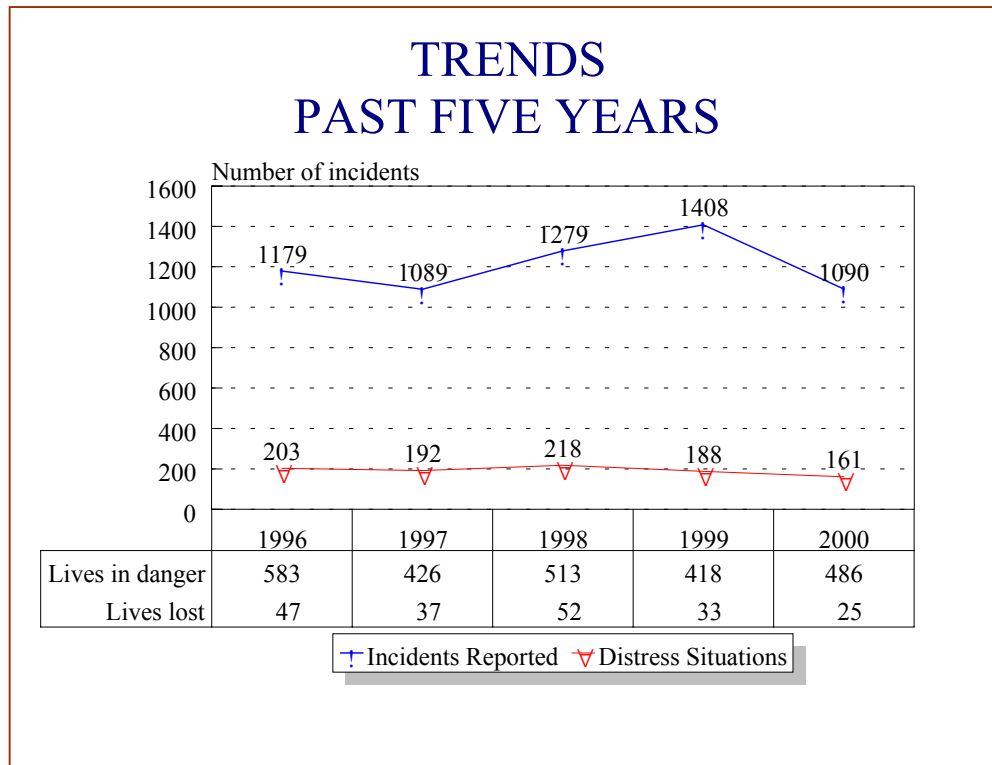
# LAURENTIAN REGION SEARCH AND RESCUE SUB-AREAS



## PART II OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR 2000

After having smiled upon the region with two very nearly idyllic summers in 1998 and 1999, Mother Nature appeared to have had a change of heart in 2000, largely confining the sun to the closet. The summer of 2000 in the Greater Montréal Area, chillier and rainier than normal, was one of the principal factors behind a pronounced drop in the number of incidents reported to MRSC Québec. The rise in fuel costs, compounded with the gloomy summer, was an additional factor contributing to the relatively low level of activity on the waters of the St. Lawrence.

As plainly indicated in the table below, the 23% drop in incidents observed in 2000 can also be attributed to early springs and very dry summers in both 1998 and 1999. Though 1999 was not a record-breaking year, it was among the exceptional ones. The five-year average, however, must also be taken into consideration. The number of incidents in the year 2000 was 14% (or 172 incidents) below the five-year average<sup>1</sup>. All other such comparisons can more appropriately be made with reference to a five-year sample: 14.7% of all missions coordinated by MRSC Québec in 2000 involved distress situations; a total of 2992 people were assisted, including 461 whose lives were in potential or real danger; and only four of the 25 fatalities recorded occurred in the context of a boating accident.<sup>2</sup>

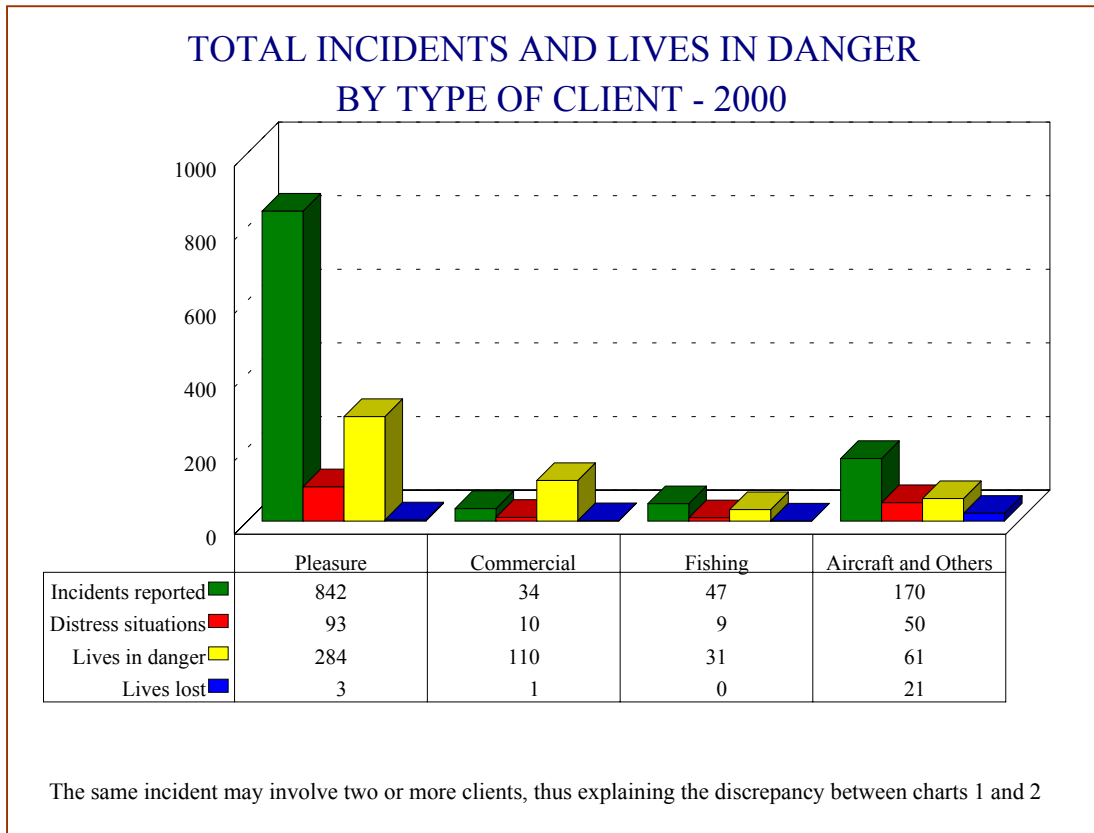


**Table 1**

<sup>1</sup> The five-year average referred to in this report is based on the period from 1995 to 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Twenty-one persons lost their lives in non-marine incidents (aircraft, bathers drowning, suicides).

All major categories of rescue service clients, and their respective proportions, are clearly illustrated in Table 2. It can be seen that the total number of recreational boating incidents—842—is 9% below the average of 925. On the other hand, the total number of lives in danger (285) is identical to the annual average.



**Table 2**

An additional observation can be made: while the number of incidents involving recreational boaters can be expected to follow fluctuations in the weather and in fuel prices, it is somewhat surprising to observe a significant drop in the number of incidents involving commercial fishermen (47 incidents compared to an annual average of 57). More information on the principal SAR service clients is presented in the following pages.

When statistics for the year 2000 are compared with the averages obtained for the past five years, many fewer incidents are found to have occurred on Lac Saint-Louis, essentially the same number took place in the Port of Montréal (186) and in the Greater Area of Québec (157), and the number in Trois-Rivières was greater, with 91 incidents compared to the average of 77.

In Table 3, details of incidents reported are presented by sub-regions and by category of client. In the wake of what some describe as the carnage of 1999, with low water levels being so costly for several recreational boaters, the number of groundings in 2000 was under the five-year average. Good news indeed for insurers who were kept busy the previous year!

Table 3

**GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTED INCIDENTS  
BY SUB-AREA  
2000**

TYPE OF INCIDENT	Lower North Shore	Gaspe	Middle North Shore	Lower St-Lawrence	Upper North Shore	Quebec City	Saguenay	Trois-Rivières	Sorel	Richelieu River	Port of Montreal	Rivière des Prairies	Lake St-Louis	Lake of two Mountains	Lake St-Francis	Ottawa River	Outside of Sector	Total
	<b>Capsized</b>		2	1		2	7	1	3	2	3	3	2	7	7	3		1
<b>Disabled</b>	1	7	2	11	19	85	4	51	63	28	109	15	57	74	36	3	1	566
<b>Grounded</b>		1		2	3	18	1	8	24	5	25	12	8	33	11	2		153
<b>False alarm</b>		1		2	2	2	1	1	2		3	2	2		2			20
<b>Other</b>	2	1		2	1	8	1	8	11	5	7		4	5	3	1		59
<b>Total</b>	3	12	3	17	27	120	8	71	102	41	147	31	78	119	55	6	2	842
<b>Lives in danger</b>	1	13	2	5	22	63	8	4	21	13	59	9	20	13	24	4	4	285
<b>Lives lost</b>				1							1	1						3
<b>Persons on board</b>	4	31	7	50	77	410	23	186	317	120	455	88	205	363	131	14	4	2485

<b>Disabled</b>	5	18	4	5	2	1											1	36
<b>Grounded</b>					1													1
<b>False alarm</b>																		0
<b>Medical</b>			1														1	2
<b>Foundered</b>		1	1															2
<b>Taking on water</b>		3		2														5
<b>Other</b>																	1	1
<b>Total</b>	5	22	6	7	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	47
<b>Lives in danger</b>		17	4	7													3	31
<b>Lives lost</b>																		0
<b>Persons on board</b>	16	77	19	17	6	2											6	143

<b>Man overboard</b>						1										1		2
<b>Disabled</b>	1	1	2	2	2	1	3				2							14
<b>Grounded</b>					1	2					1		1					5
<b>False alarm</b>				1				1									1	3
<b>Medical</b>				1	1			1					1					4
<b>Other</b>					1	1					2			2				6
<b>Total</b>	1	1	2	4	4	6	3	2	0	0	5	0	1	3	0	1	1	34
<b>Lives in danger</b>				60	39	2		1			3			4		1		110
<b>Lives lost</b>																1		1
<b>Persons on board</b>	14	2	8	86	61	51	26	23			19		2	6		1	3	302

<b>Incidents maritimes</b>		3		1	4	8	1	4	3	1	11	3	11	2	5		1	58
<b>Non-marine incidents</b>	1	2	2	2	5	21	1	11	2	7	26	7	13	5			7	112
<b>Total</b>	1	5	2	3	9	29	2	15	5	8	37	10	24	7	5		8	170
<b>Lives in danger</b>	1	4				17	1	4	1	10	13	5	2	3			3	64
<b>Lives lost</b>	1					5		2	1		5	2	2	1			2	21
<b>Persons on board</b>	1	4				17	1	7	1	10	15	5	6	4			7	78



## PART III RECREATIONAL BOATING

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Two positive findings emerge from the analysis of statistics for recreational boating in the year 2000: first, as indicated earlier, there were far fewer incidents of craft running aground. And, with respect to fatalities, there were fewer in 2000 than in any of the previous five years—three fatalities for 870 craft involved in incidents, compared to 10 fatalities in 1996 with fewer craft (852).

Not surprisingly, the proportions of incidents for the different categories of pleasure craft involved in incidents in 2000 are almost identical to those of the previous years (see tables 4, 5 and 6). It should be noted that this is the last report in which reference will be made to the former boat-length categories. As of 2001, the category "0 to 5.5 metres" will be replaced by the category "0 to 6.0 metres".

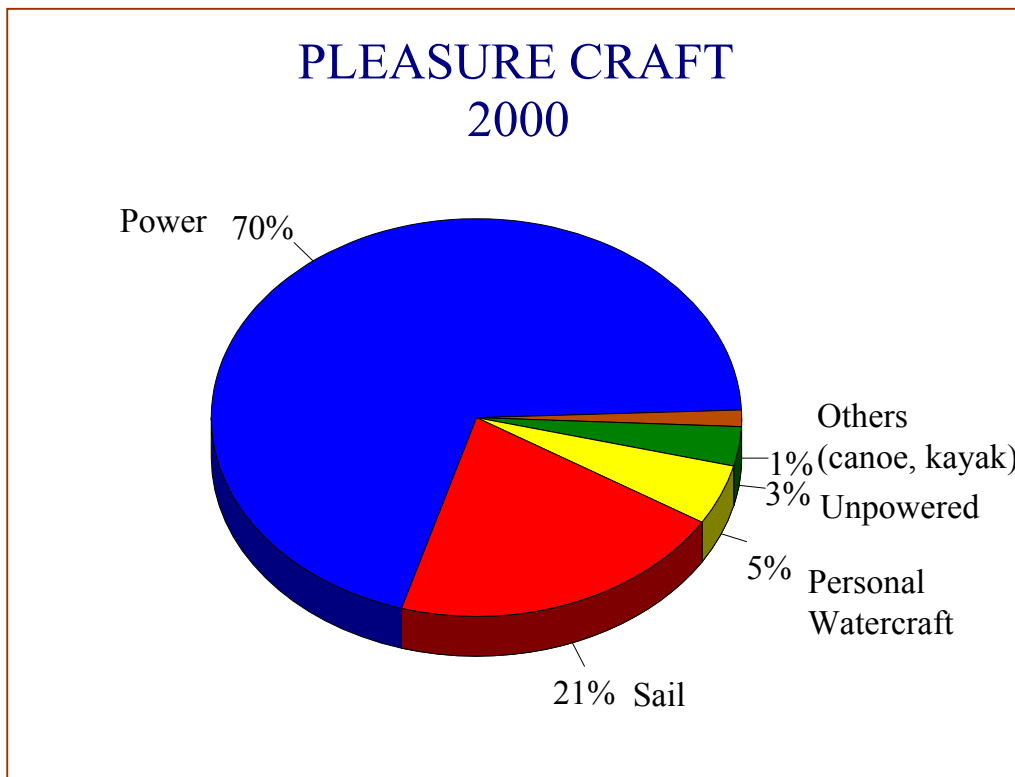
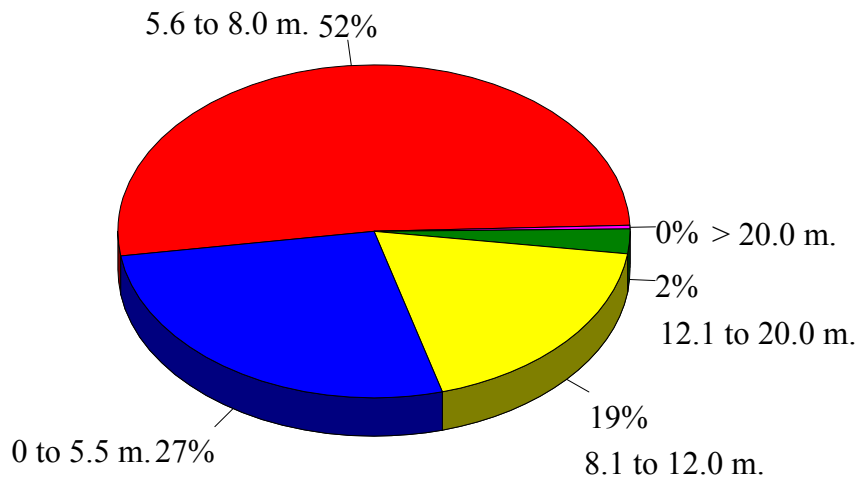


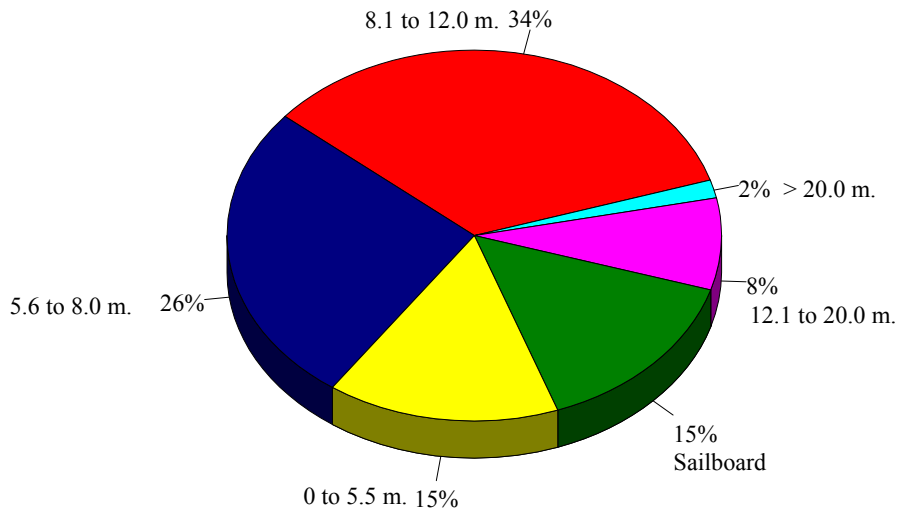
Table 3

## PLEASURE CRAFT - POWER 2000



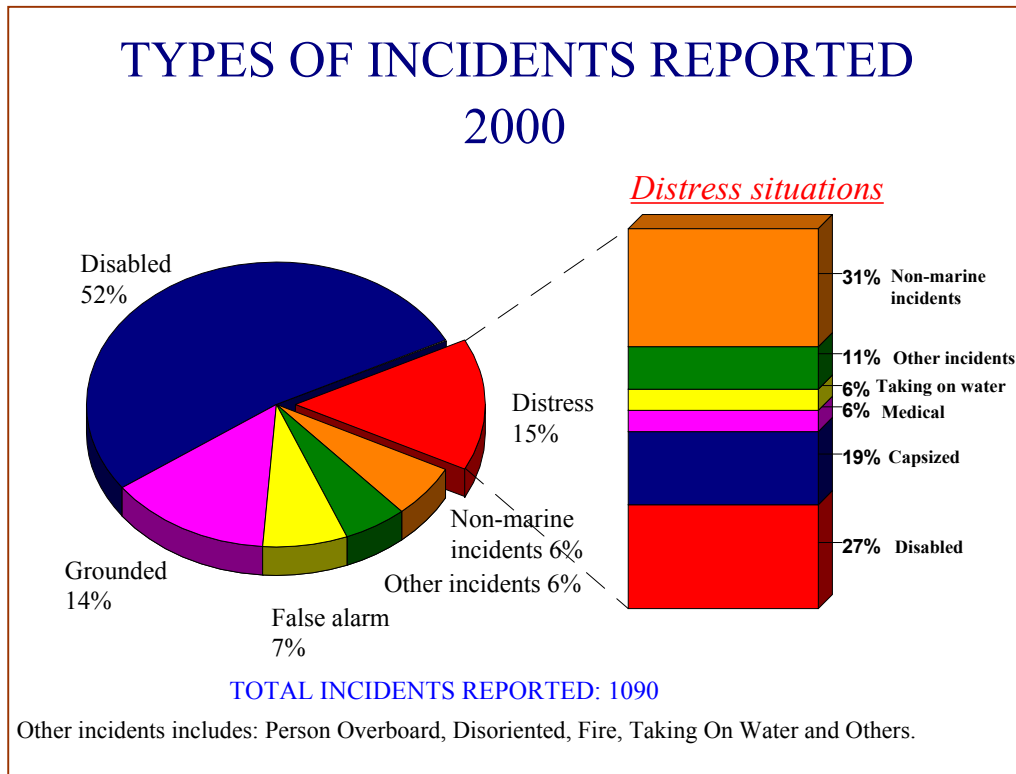
**Table 4**

## PLEASURE CRAFT - SAIL 2000



**Table 5**

Table 7 depicts, in a rather significant way, a "back to normal" situation with respect to groundings, especially when compared with the same table in the 1999 report. Groundings as a percentage of all incidents recorded at MRSC Québec went from 27% in 1999 to 18% in 2000.

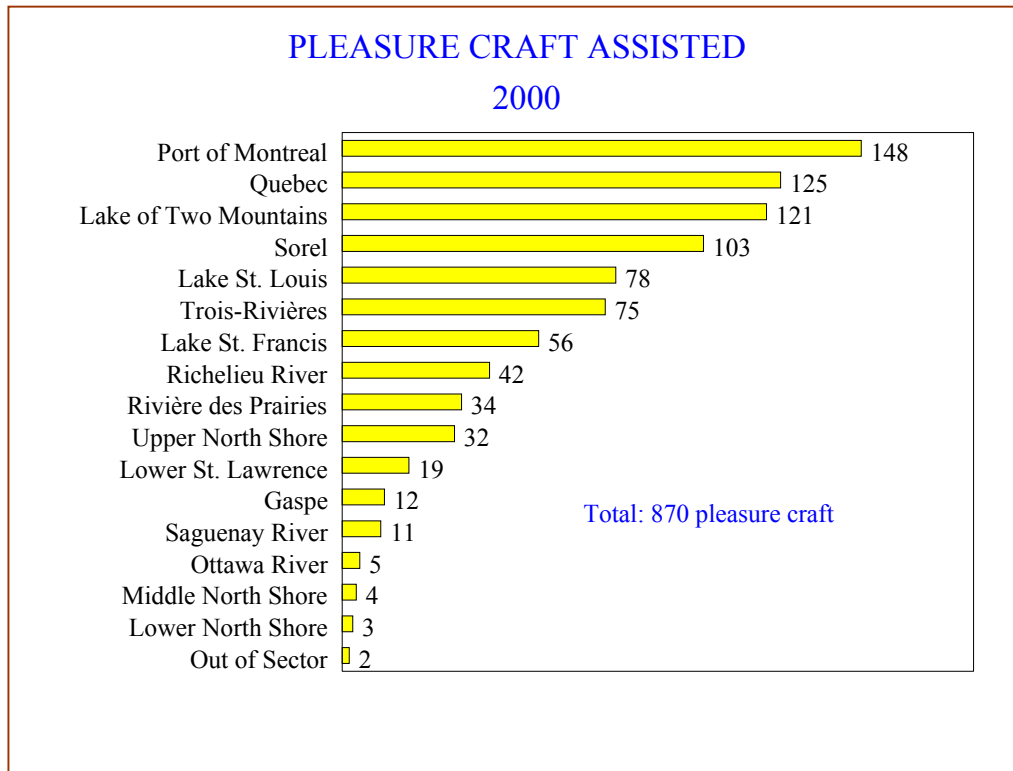


**Table 6**

- 11% of the 842 boating incidents were "DISTRESS" category.

Analysis of the incidents, and specifically the seriousness of them, reveals a positive record for the year 2000. The average ratio of fatalities to reported incidents is 1:116. In 2000, this ratio increased to 1:280. With respect to the number of lives in danger against the number of fatalities, the situation in the year 2000 again improved, with 1 fatality for every 95 recreational boaters in danger whereas the five-year average is 1 fatality for every 36 persons in danger.

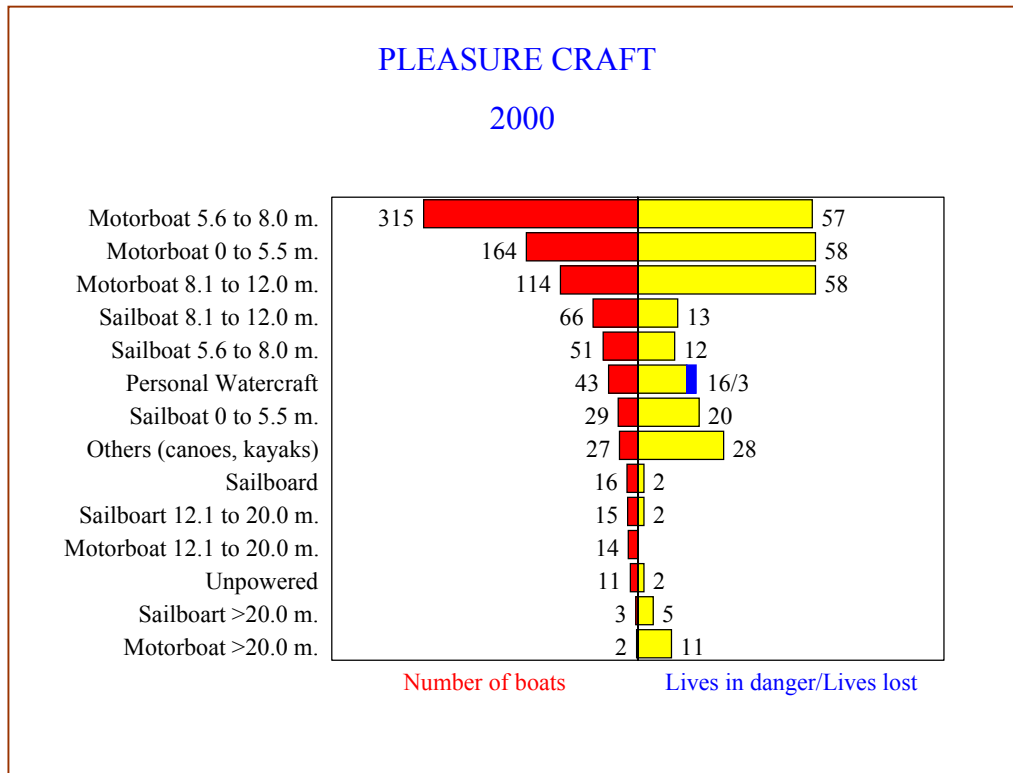
Table 8 presents the general geographical distribution of the number of crafts that requested assistance in 2000. While it can be agreed that the year was in many respects a quiet year across the province, the Trois-Rivières region was an exception, with just as many, if not more, incidents being reported that year than in preceding years (75 incidents in 2000 compared to 58 in 1999).



**Table 7**

- Nearly half of the incidents took place on the waters surrounding the Island of Montreal.

Table 9 presents the statistics for the different categories of pleasure craft, with the corresponding information regarding the number of lives in danger. Despite a certain degree of stability over the past two years, the "personal watercraft" category alone accounts for the three fatalities that occurred in recreational boating.



**Table 8**

## PART IV COMMERCIAL FISHERY

At the outset, it is important to point out that this section does not include sports fishing. The term "commercial fishery" means a food fishery and a profit-making fishery. In the Laurentian Region, commercial fishing—whether for crab, lobster, scallops, shrimps or ground fish—is generally conducted using small or medium-sized ships rarely longer than 30 metres, or fishing boats that generally operate a short distance from the coast. The larger ships are generally recently built, well-equipped and, above all, well-maintained.

In the year 2000, considered one of the most profitable years of the past two decades, the number of tons landed increased for most species. Specifically, crab landings increased by 27%, lobster 5% and shrimp 13% (16 900 tonnes of shrimp were landed in 2000). Scallop boat operators saw their catch decline (-14%) and a total of only 1600 tonnes of halibut was caught, compared to 2900 tonnes in 1999.

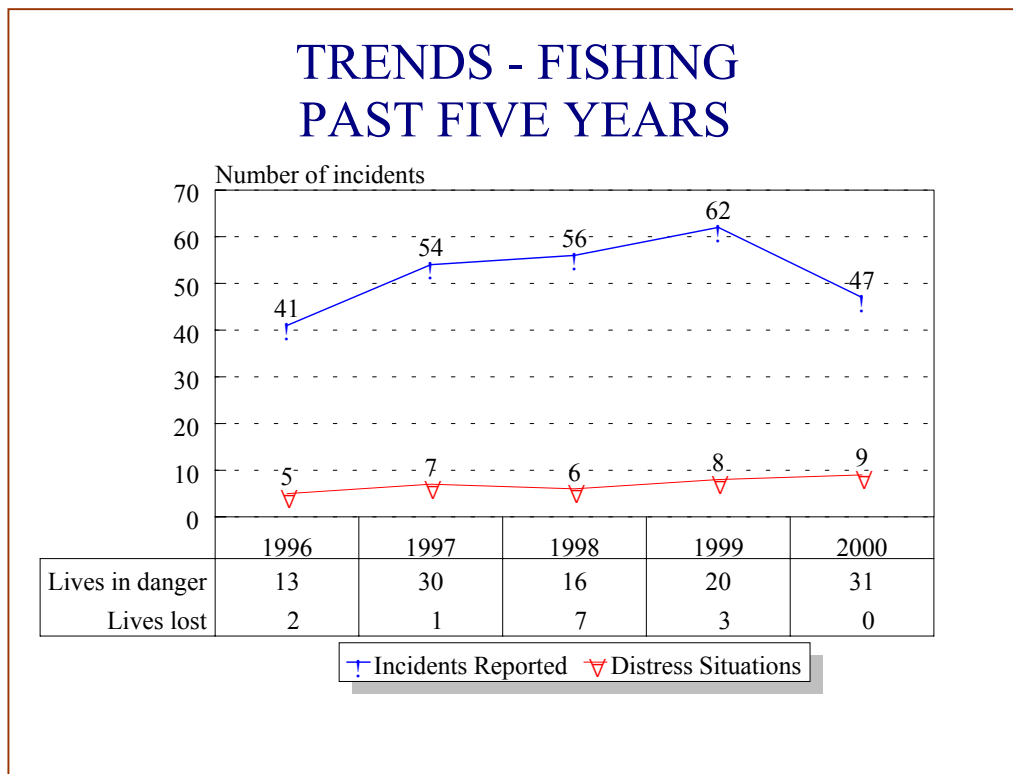
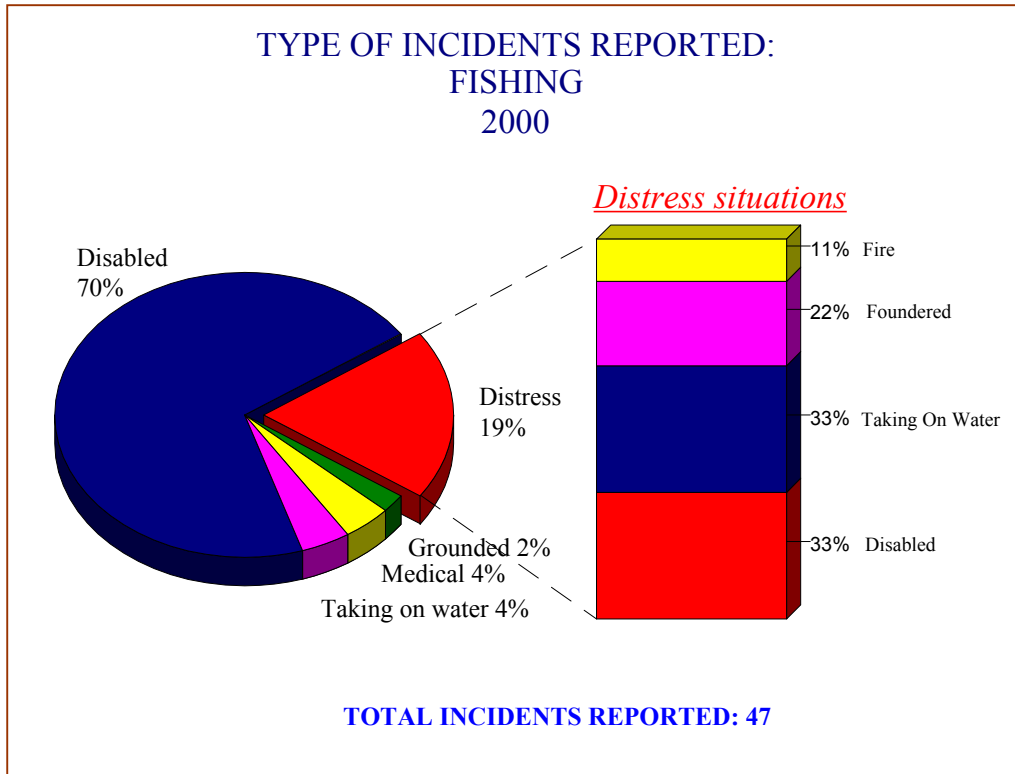


Table 9

With regard to the drop in commercial fishery incidents observed over the past few years, Table 10 would be more representative were 1995 to be included, as the significant decline in 1996 (41 in 1996; 70 in 1995) would then be apparent. This, in turn, would reveal the strong parallel between the decline in incidents and the impact of the closing of certain fishing zones. In this report for the year 2000, the number of incidents has again dropped, to 47. Nearly half of these incidents involved ships of more than 15 gross registered tons.

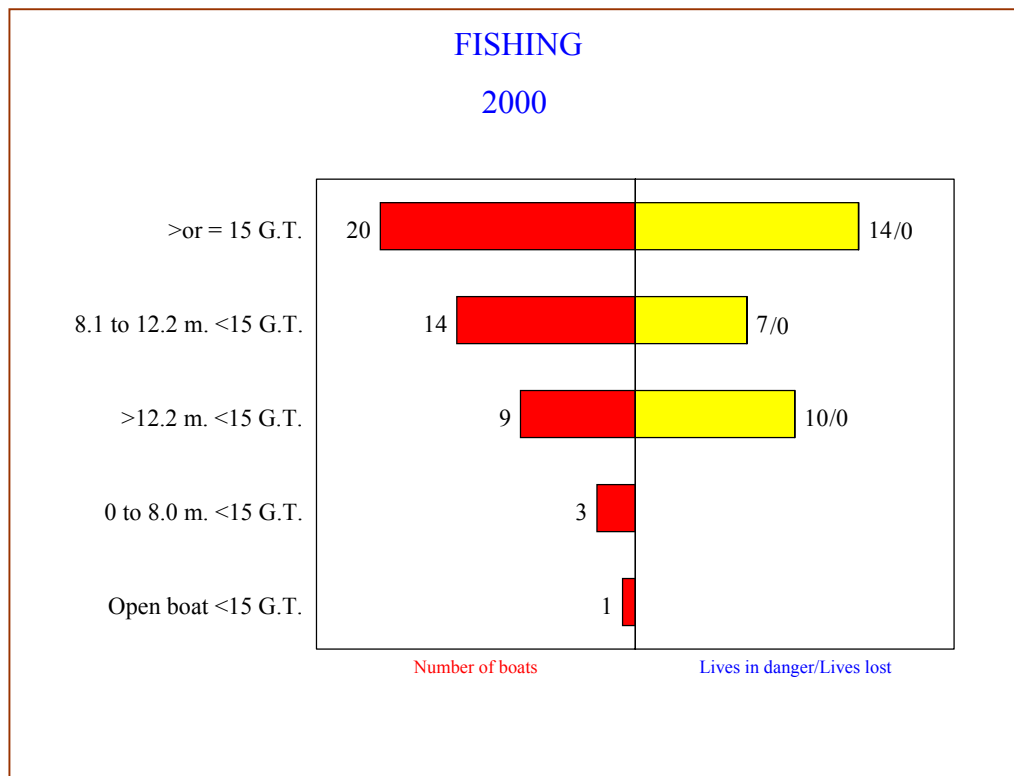


**Table 10**

The apparent reasons for this positive record are few. It may be explained by safer methods, more caution, or perhaps more clement weather. Most likely, it is a combination of these factors. With no fatalities in the commercial fishery in five years in the Laurentian Region, it is interesting to compare this record with those of the other regions in Canada.

Transport Canada, whose Marine Safety Branch is responsible, appropriately enough, for the safety of the fishing fleet, confirms that the Laurentian Region's record is clearly more positive in comparison to those of Newfoundland and the Maritimes. However, it is important to not be overly optimistic.

Despite this significant drop in the number of incidents, it should be remembered that 31 people nevertheless were in situations of real danger, which is an increase over the previous two years. Since 1996, the number of distress incidents has followed what has essentially been a steady upward trend (9 incidents in 2000).

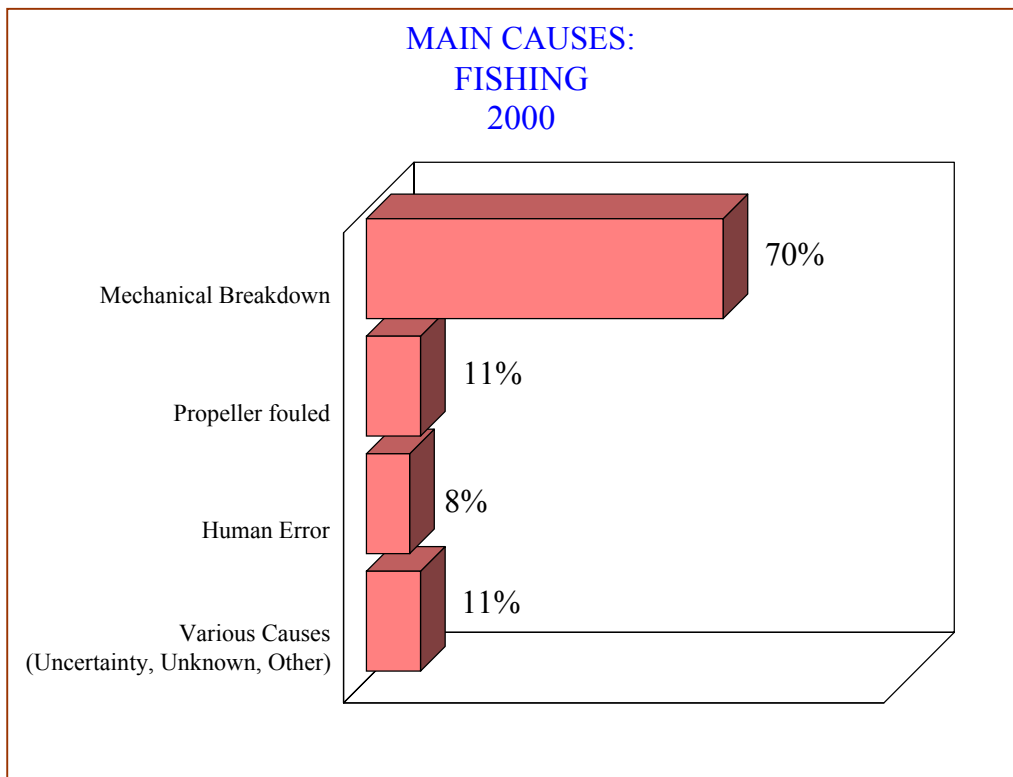


**Table 11**

What is more, the Québec workmen's compensation commission—the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail du Québec (CSST)—recently indicated having recorded 40 injuries sustained during sea fishing activities. Back injuries (22%) account for the largest percentage of injuries to which professional fishers are commonly exposed, followed by finger injuries (15%) and leg injuries (9%).

Table 12 presents the number of incidents per category of vessel, with the categories being determined by the ship's length and gross tonnage. Table 13 clearly illustrates the primary reason for requesting assistance: mechanical breakdown (70%).





**Table 12**

Fisheries and Oceans Canada recently conducted studies on catches, using a geographical grid, that show that the majority of commercial fishery activities are conducted on either side of Anticosti Island. An analysis of incidents during the 2000 season confirms this trend, with 30% of the incidents taking place along the North Shore and 47% along the Gaspé Peninsula.

### **Magdalen Islands**

Since the sector of the Magdalen Islands does not come under the jurisdiction of the Marine Rescue Centre-Québec, the following information has been provided by the Halifax Rescue Coordination Centre. It has not been included in the official data for the Laurentian Region, and is presented in this report as supplementary information only.

Sixty-five incidents were reported off the Magdalen Islands archipelago in 2000. Of these, 45, or 70% of all incidents, involved fishing boats and vessels. No fatalities were reported in this sector for which, in common with the rest of the Laurentian Region, the year 2000 was the quietest of the past five years (annual average of 78 incidents).

Note: For more information on SAR incidents in the sector of the Magdalen Islands, please contact the person in charge of statistics at the Halifax Rescue Coordination Centre at (902) 427-2108.

## **PART V            OTHER SECTORS**

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In the year 2000, the Coast Guard received 34 requests for assistance from commanding officers of commercial vessels (including sight-seeing boats and government vessels). In 10 of these incidents, a total of 110 people were considered in real or potential danger, and one life was regrettably lost (a person on a sight-seeing boat falling overboard in the Ottawa River, in the region of Hull).

Furthermore, the Rescue Centre is sometimes called on to assist civil authorities during incidents occurring on or near water areas in the Laurentian Region. MRSC Québec intervened in 170 such incidents. In nearly half them, it was a matter of investigating abnormal situations or situations that had mistakenly led one to believe that lives were in danger.

At other times, the MRSC coordinated the marine aspect of operations initiated following suicide attempts, most often made from the principal structures spanning the St. Lawrence River. In-flight emergencies occurred aboard seven aircraft, including a float plane that crash-landed in Lac des Deux-Montagnes.

In all, the missions conducted in the context of these non-marine situations made it possible to save 43 people whose lives were in real danger.

## PART VI PREVENTION

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The environment in which search and rescue is conducted has undergone a number of changes over the past 20 years, most of which have directly resulted in improved safety. Whether a recreational boater, commercial fisherman, professional mariner or a passenger aboard a cruise ship or a boat rented for the day, or even aboard an aircraft flying over Canadian waters, one cannot help but notice the decrease in successive fatal accidents, despite a general increase in the population. Improvements to safety are often invisible to the eyes of the mariner. The installation of an emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) is in reality the link to a satellite-based global system. These American and Russian satellites are associated with land-based position fixing stations dispersed throughout the world and linked to different rescue coordination centres (RCC/MRSCs). A VHF communication device equipped with the DSC function permits all local stations (land and marine) equipped with a channel 70 receiver to be automatically alerted, making it possible to quickly initiate rescue operations. As a result of other improvements, shipwrecked persons are now better able to wait for help despite the distances and cold temperatures typical of our region: immersion suits, and enclosed lifeboats and life rafts significantly better chances of survival.

Despite everything, however, lives are lost. Often it is a matter of ignorance or simply a lack of concern. According to the Red Cross<sup>2</sup>, in 90% of deaths by drowning/hypothermia in Canada, the persons were not wearing personal flotation devices/lifejackets. Want them or not, these devices are essential: falling overboard can be fatal for even excellent swimmers.

It is interesting to observe that since the release of the movie TITANIC in December 1997, serious incidents have occurred aboard more than 20 giant cruise ships and ferries which, as a consequence, had to be evacuated. Though high standards mean that this type of situation is fortunately infrequent, such events have serious consequences, despite everything. The marine incidents that have recently occurred around the world, such as the wreck of the ESTONIAN, the collision of the NORWEGIAN DREAM and, closer to home, the grounding of the NORWEGIAN SKY in September 1999 near Tadoussac, have led to an enhanced awareness among the authorities of the United States Coast Guard (USCG), Canadian Coast Guard and the North American cruise industry. Assembled in Jacksonville (Florida) last March, senior officials of Canadian, American and British search and rescue branches expressed their concerns and discussed with company representatives the impact of a mass evacuation at sea. The IMO, responsible for establishing international marine safety standards, also attended the discussions. All participants admitted that joint action and attention must be turned to the subject of small sightseeing boats. Again with reference to the cinema, specifically the release of the movie, "The Perfect Storm", six Canadian fishing boats have since been foundered. The coroner's reports and the Transportation Safety Board's reports on the sinking of the scallop boat BRIER MIST off Rimouski with all hands on board confirmed that professional fishermen at times take risks by setting out in bad weather on ships that have sometimes been modified more in response to commercial needs rather than to

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<sup>2</sup> The National Drowning Report. 2000 Edition. *Canadian Red Cross Society (Part 2)*

safety needs. A single non-watertight opening can be the element that proves fatal, bringing a trip to a tragic conclusion.

### ...AND THE RESCUES

Given the vastness of Canada, it is only natural that different rescue methods be used, reflecting the country's diversity. At the national SARSCENE convention in October 2000 in Laval, Québec, conventioners were given a demonstration of this diversification. Tracking dogs, spider-fire fighters, mountain climbers, helicopter pilots, nurses, fire fighters, specialized Canadian Forces parachutists, police officers of a nautical squad, Coast Guard mariners, volunteer air and marine rescuers, are but the most visible players. Indeed, when a distress signal is transmitted to one of the rescue coordination centres in Canada (including the Marine Rescue Centre-Québec), a veritable spider's web is woven in effort to prevent the loss of lives.

The table below presents the distribution of resources on the different water bodies monitored by MRSC Québec. CCG ships and crafts intervened on 561 occasions whereas Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary volunteers, who conducted 362 interventions, showed that they have unquestionably become the Canadian Coast Guard's principal partner.

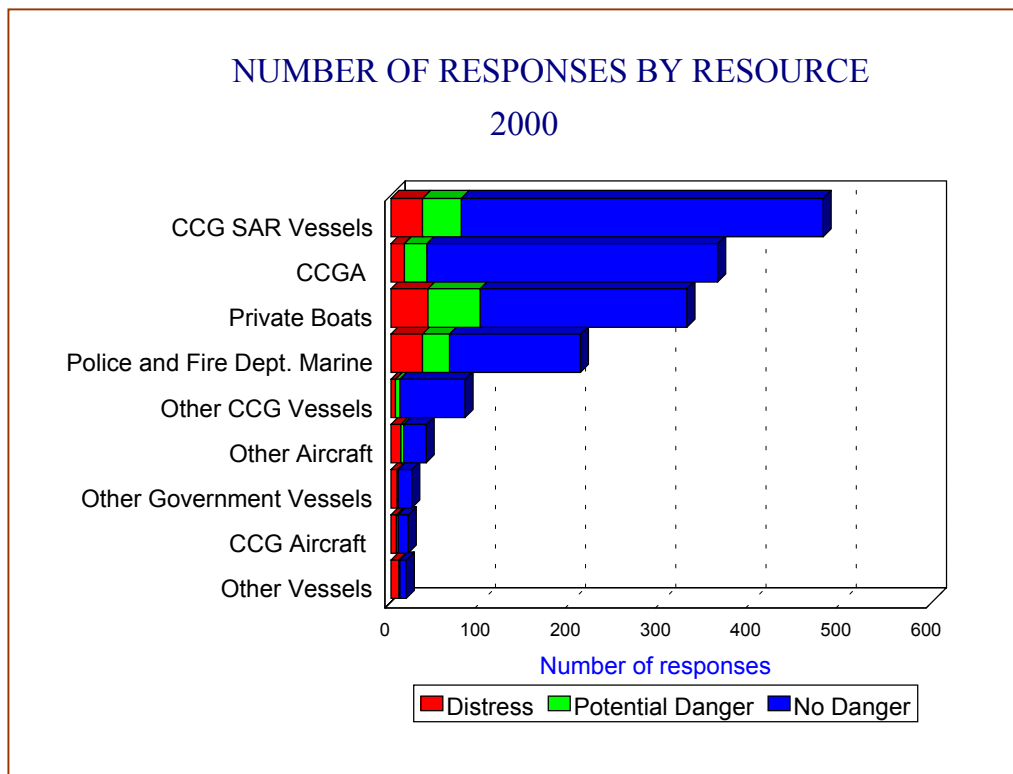


Table 13

In addition, the Canadian Coast Guard is planning to install, over the next two years, lifeboat stations using the new 14.7-metre long "CAPE" class boats. In conjunction with the \$115.5 million program announced in July 2000, there will be two such stations in the St. Lawrence Estuary, at Rivière-au-Renard and at Havre-Saint-Pierre.



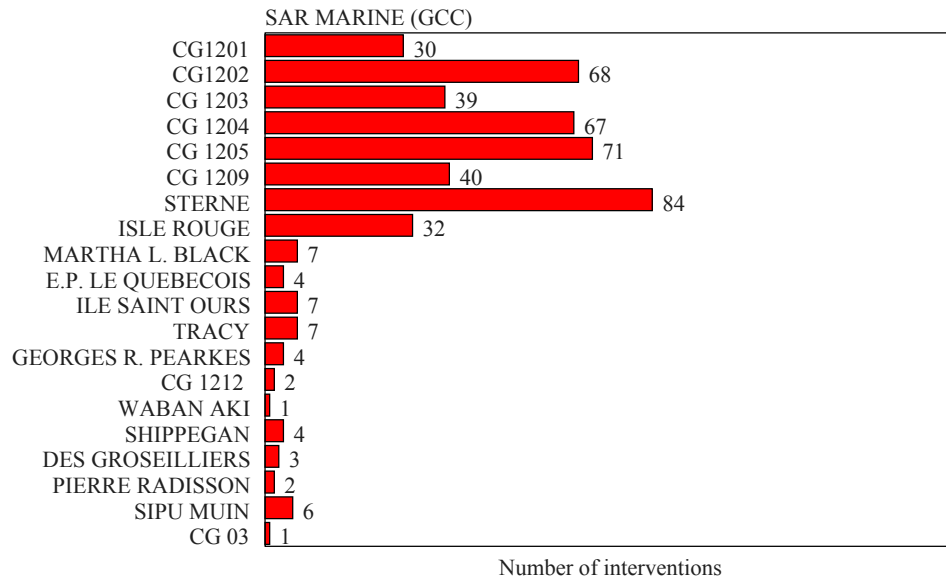
*The "Cape" class lifeboat*

With the continuing objective of maintaining SAR program integrity and of improving the program's components, MRSC Québec was authorized to hire additional personnel. As well, under the Inshore Rescue Boat program, its rescue craft will begin to be replaced during the 2001 season (three will be replaced in 2001 and three others in 2002). During that time, the Rivière au Renard MCTS centre will become the Laurentian Region's first communication centre, equipped for automated watch on the VHF DSC distress frequency (channel 70).



New Inshore Rescue Boat 733 type

**NUMBER OF INTERVENTIONS BY RESSOURCE  
2000**



**Table 14**

## A FEW INCIDENTS

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### Drinking and driving...

2000-07-01      Rivière Richelieu. On the evening of July 1, a "cigarette-type" boat, driven by an impaired operator, crashed headlong into a buoy in the area around the Saint-Roch / Saint-Ours crossing. Despite a nearly one-metre long tear in the boat's hull and the clearly evident leak resulting from it, the pilot tried to proceed! But the motor stopped shortly thereafter when the gas tank became empty. The immobilized craft then sank. One person had suffered minor injuries at the time of the initial impact. The shipwrecked persons spent about 25 minutes in the water before being rescued, clinging to the personal watercraft which was towed by their craft!

### A lone kayaker

2000-07-26      Gaspé Bay. The Coast Guard patrol boat E.P. LE QUEBECOIS spotted, *by pure chance*, a capsized kayak with one person in the water off Cap aux Os. Easterly winds at 20 knots had generated waves nearly one metre high. The hapless kayaker, who was nonetheless very lucky to have been spotted, told the crew that he had been in that unenviable position for more than three hours!

### Cold water, unforgiving water

2000-08-06      St. Lawrence River, sector of Cacouna. Two personal watercraft operators left Cacouna early in the morning and proceeded toward Île. Around 08:30<sup>3</sup>, one of the personal watercraft (PWC) broke down and the other craft took it under tow. The second craft was subsequently immobilized by a leak. At around 10:00, drifting and without any means to give the alert, the two decided to abandon their craft and attempt to swim to the western tip of Île Verte. At approximately 12:25, when island residents noticed the two personal watercraft nearly grounded on the beach, they alerted authorities. Marine Rescue Centre-Québec immediately launched search activities and tasked the Tadoussac-based CCGS ISLE ROUGE to the incident, which in turn sent its fast rescue craft as a scout. Around 13:10, the Coast Guard craft recovered one of the shipwrecked persons, exhausted and extremely cold, and 45 minutes later, located the body of the second watercraft operator, which was unfortunately lifeless (water temperature: 9.4° C).

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<sup>3</sup> All times are local.

### **What tide???**

2000-07-30 Port of Québec. Late that evening, people aboard a powerboat were returning from the fireworks display at the Montmorency Fall when their craft violently ran aground—the tide had dropped since their departure. *"But there was water here when we arrived!"* When the brutal impact occurred, three people were thrown overboard. Two of the injured were evacuated by the cutter CG Sterne, but not without difficulty, since the powerboat was in barely 30 centimetres of water, completely outside the channel. Adding to the difficulties: there were no visual signals whatsoever aboard the boat. Some passengers had reached the shore on foot. Excessive speed is presumed, considering the darkness, the tide conditions and the number of craft in the sector. Lack of experience with the effect of the tide and night navigation.

### **Not wearing a PFD....**

2000-08-09 St. Lawrence River - Repentigny. The victim and his spouse were aboard their cruiser, which was anchored near the shore. Since repair work had rendered their dock inaccessible, they used a personal watercraft to shuttle back and forth. Having decided to go ashore, the victim slipped as he climbed on board the PWC. His spouse jumped into the water and tried to help him but her efforts were futile. She barely succeeded in reaching the shore to seek assistance. Death by drowning; the victim was not wearing a PFD.

### **A tad show-off...at a price!**

2000-08-13 Port of Québec. Near the docks of the Old Port, the operator of a "cigarette-type" motorboat made an abrupt, unexpected manoeuvre in the waves and three passengers were outright ejected overboard before the eyes of strollers, dumbfounded by the sight. The Coast Guard cutter STERNE was alerted and helped evacuate the three people whom a passing boat had taken on board. The injuries sustained by one of the accident victims required that the person be handled with extreme caution.

### **Shipwrecked at night!**

2000-6-20 Around 21:40 - Port of Montréal  
Six people aboard a craft found themselves in a distress situation when its motor suddenly stopped and it abruptly overturned. Only three passengers managed to grab lifejackets, including a child-sized one. In view of the darkness and the fact that no one had seen the accident, the owner of the craft decided to swim toward the nearest dock and seek help. When he reached the dock, it was deserted, so he had to find a public telephone to call 911. His call was automatically transferred to the Coast Guard Rescue Centre. The Centre, in turn, immediately alerted a tug and



CG-1204. The latter succeeded in rescuing the remaining passengers, who had spent nearly one hour in the water.

### **Overloaded and marginal weather dont mix...**

2000/10/28 St. Lawrence River – Sainte-Croix. Around 06:00, four hunters were aboard their aluminum boat and heading off to a blind (submerged) off Sainte-Croix. The usual cargo was on board: firearms, an outboard motor, a dog, camouflage material and supplies. Initially, the transit went well because the flats acted as a breakwater. However, once the boat was further out, the large waves whipped up by the strong wind prevented the hunters from continuing onward. When the operator made a U-turn, a strong wave swept over the boat, which then promptly sank. Fortunately, the four were all wearing lifejackets.

One of the shipwrecked hunters decided to swim to shore to seek help, since no one had witnessed the accident. Despite the combination of wet clothing, rocks and the cold making it very difficult to do so, he managed to reach the beach. The local fire fighters and the provincial police were alerted and recovered the three other hunters from of the water just as a CCG helicopter and CG STERNE arrived at the scene.

### **The tide... once again**

2000/10/10 St. Lawrence River, near Neuville. As two hunters were recuperating their decoys around 15:30, they found themselves isolated: the tide was rising where they were, on the Ilets Dombourg reef, and their canoe began to drift away. One man tried to recover it but after having swum a few meters, he realized that he would never reach it and made it back just in time. The cellular telephone they had with them enabled them to request Coast Guard assistance. The pilot of helicopter CG 356 brilliantly executed a delicate landing on the reef, which was soon to be submerged. Ambulance attendants took charge of the hunters who, having been on the reef since 05:00 that day, were suffering from hypothermia. The reef was completely underwater within minutes of the rescue.

### **Aircraft in distress**

After having made a low-altitude manœuvre, a float plane crashed into Lac des Deux-Montagnes. The one passenger on board suffered multiple fractures to his legs but nonetheless managed to exit the aircraft, which had overturned. The pilot, however, remained imprisoned in the cockpit. The rescue craft CG 1202 and auxiliary boats AUX 1240 and CHAN D'OR went to their rescue. Numerous other resources from the neighbouring municipalities had arrived at the scene of the accident: recreational boaters, police officers, fire fighters and ambulance attendants. The rescuers worked hard to extract the pilot from the aircraft, and succeeded in doing so, but efforts to resuscitate him were of no avail.

# PRESS REVIEW

## Trop d'accidents nautiques au Canada

**STRÉCHAMONT**  
Au Canada, chaque année, environ 200 personnes perdent la vie à cause d'accidents nautiques. Selon la Société de sauvetage du Canada, 6000 autres accidents mortels ne sont jamais signalés. Pour pallier cette situation tragique, le gouvernement du Canada a adopté de nouveaux règlements concernant la navigation. La police maritime était étonnée de la saison de cette année.

Un bateau de plaisance a coulé au large de Québec, hier après-midi, près du bas de la rivière Richelieu. Trois personnes ont été secourues et ramenées à l'hôtel-Dieu de Québec. Les trois victimes ont été transportées à l'hôtel-Dieu de Québec, souffrant de blessures graves.

## Deux survivants d'un naufrage racontent leur aventure

**PIRÉLÉ**  
Lorsque les eaux glacées du lac Saint-Pierre ont emporté dans la mort Valérie Jacques, Frédéric Bourret et Robert Jones le 11 octobre 1999 au terme d'une excursion de pêche, Mario Jacques et Roger Auger ont vu disparaître une partie d'eux-mêmes.

Pour eux, le cauchemar a peut-être pris fin après 18 heures de souffrances accrochés sur une chaise, mais les mauvais rêves continuent de hanter leur vie.

**QUÉBEC**  
Il se tue en plongeant dans

## Sont échoués en masse l'été dernier, à cause du bas niveau du fleuve

**RIVIÈRE RICHELIEU**  
**Naufrage**  
Un bateau de plaisance de 21 pieds a coulé samedi soir sur la rivière Richelieu, après être entré en collision avec une bouée à l'entrée de la rivière. Trois personnes ont été secourues et ramenées à l'hôtel-Dieu de Québec. Les trois victimes ont été transportées à l'hôtel-Dieu de Québec, souffrant de blessures graves.

## Échoué dans le fleuve

**QUÉBEC** — Les jambes molles d'avoir trop ploué, un homme de 45 ans est tombé dans le fleuve la nuit du mardi soir. Il a été secouru et ramené à l'hôtel-Dieu de Québec.

## Sauvetage sur le St-Laurent

**QUÉBEC** — Trois femmes ont été secourues des eaux du fleuve Saint-Laurent, hier après-midi, près du bas de la rivière Richelieu. Les trois femmes ont été transportées à l'hôtel-Dieu de Québec, souffrant de blessures graves.



## Un hydravion s'abîme au large

Un homme est mort et un autre a été gravement blessé hier après-midi dans les eaux du lac des Deux-Montagnes, au large de l'île-BI.

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## Bonne leçon pour un chasseur de canards

**NEUVILLE** — Le chasseur de canards Christian Thibault a bien failli mourir mardi, prisonnier d'une île au large de Neuville. Un peu de détermination et beaucoup de malchance.

## La sécurité nautique s'améliore

## Un pêcheur coulé, les trois pêcheurs rescapés

Un pêcheur a coulé au large de Havre-Saint-Pierre, jeudi. Les trois pêcheurs qui se trouvaient à bord de l'embarcation ont été secourus et ramenés à l'hôtel-Dieu de Québec.

## Deux jeunes kayakistes secourus

**BELLECHASSE**  
Deux jeunes kayakistes ont été secourus après que leur embarcation ait chaviré près de l'île de Bellechasse, au large de Berthier-sur-Mer.

## Hypothermie

Les deux hommes, qui ont été secourus grâce aux signes qu'ils faisaient, ont été ramenés à l'hôtel-Dieu de Québec.

## SAR ACTIVITIES - RECREATIONAL BOATING – 2000

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### SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

- 842 incidents were reported in 2000 compared to 1068 incidents in 1999.
- The number of recreational boating incidents was 9% below the annual average of 925 incidents<sup>4</sup>.
- 93 incidents were judged serious (11%).
- The lives of 285 persons were endangered, compared to 248 in 1999 (annual average: 284).
- 3 recreational boaters perished (6 fatalities in 1999).
- In 2000, the fatality/incident ratio was 1 fatality per 280 incidents—a very positive record, since the five-year average ratio is 1 fatality per 116 incidents.
- In terms of lives in danger, the ratio for 2000 was 1 fatality for every 95 persons whose lives were in danger (compared to the five-year average of 1 fatality for every 36 persons).
- The problems reported by recreational boaters can be broken down into four categories:
  - \* motor (70%); more than three-quarters of the boats in this category were under 8.0 metres long;
  - \* sailboats (21%)
  - \* personal watercraft (5%)
  - \* small unpowered craft (e.g., paddleboats, inner tubes, canoes, kayaks, etc. ) (4%).
- 43 personal watercraft required assistance, compared to 64 in 1999. In 30% of the incidents, the riders were in distress and three fatalities were reported.
- Fifteen incidents involving 21 kayaks were recorded, compared to 8 incidents and as many kayaks in 1999. For this category, 12 of the 21 kayaks that reported experiencing problems were in distress.
- In terms of the absolute number of incidents, the Port of Montréal ranks first with 147 incidents, followed by the Québec City region with 120 incidents and Lac des Deux Montagnes with 119 incidents.
- Nearly half of the incidents in the Laurentian Region occurred on the waters around the Island of Montréal (44%), whereas Greater Québec accounts for 14% of all recreational boating incidents.
- 27% of the incidents occurred on a Saturday, 24% on a Sunday.
- 2485 recreational boaters in all were involved in incidents reported to the Coast Guard in the year 2000.

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<sup>4</sup> The annual average is based on the five-year period from 1995 to 1999.

## SAR ACTIVITIES - COMMERCIAL FISHERY– 2000

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### SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

- 47 fishing vessels were assisted, compared to 62 in 1999; 43% of the 47 vessels had a gross tonnage of more than 15 tons.
- The annual average is 57 incidents<sup>5</sup>.
- The number of incidents involving fishing was 24% below the annual average.
- 9 incidents were judged serious (19%).
- 143 commercial fishermen were assisted.
- The lives of 31 persons were in danger, compared to 20 in 1999 (annual average: 23). No fatalities were reported.
- Three disabled craft, taking on water, were alone responsible for putting the lives of 12 people in danger.
- The fishers who had reported being in difficulty can be divided into four categories:
  - \* open vessel < 15 GRT (2%);
  - \* 0 to 8.0 m < 15 GRT (6%);
  - \* 8.1 to 12.2 m. < 15 GRT (30%);
  - \* > 12.2 m < 15 GRT (19%);
  - \* > or = 15 GRT (43%).
- 30 % of the incidents involved fishing boats on the North Shore and 47% around the Gaspé Peninsula.

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<sup>5</sup> The annual average is based on the five-year period from 1995 to 1999.

## GLOSSARY

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**ADRIFT:**

Vessel carried by winds/currents with nobody on board.

**CAPSIZED:**

Vessel overturned because of improper loading, taking on water and/or a sudden squall.

**CCG:**

The Canadian Coast Guard.

**CCGA:**

Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (marine sector volunteers).

**DISABLED:**

A situation in which a vessel with people on board is not under command due to human factors, weather conditions or mechanical problems (windsurfer or sailboats in high winds, nets caught in the propeller, mechanical failure, strong currents, adrift, out of fuel, collision, etc).

**DISORIENTED:**

Vessel's operator is unable to fix his or her position (lost by day or night or in fog).

**DISTRESS:**

Any incident where a person's life is in danger or lost.

**FALSE ALARM:**

Any incident resulting in a search/investigation that turns out to be a false alarm. (Distress flares spotted, boat overdue, loss of radio contact, false distress signal, presumed incident that turned out not to be one).

**FIRE:**

Fire on board (includes explosions).

**FOUNDERED:**

Refers to a vessel that has sunk because of complete flooding of the hull.

**GROUNDED:**

Describes a vessel that has struck bottom and all accidental groundings (excludes deliberate groundings to avoid sinking after a collision/taking on water).

**LIVES IN DANGER:**

When lives are threatened during an incident involving distress or potential danger.

**LIVES LOST:**

Involves the victims of an accident recognized as a distress incident.

**LIVES SAVED:**

Persons rescued during a distress incident.

**MEDICAL:**

Evacuating a sick or injured person, transporting a physician, delivering organs.

**MRSC:**

Marine Rescue Sub-Centre.

**OTHER:**

Any incident not included in another defined category (swimmers, automobiles in the water, persons caught in rising tide, etc).

**PERSON OVERBOARD:**

A person who accidentally falls out of a vessel (excludes swimmers and divers).

**POTENTIAL DANGER:**

An incident that could pose risks to the persons involved if assistance is not received in time.

**SAR:**

Search and rescue.

**SUICIDE:**

Person taking his/her life by jumping into the water off a bridge, wharf or vessel, or other other means.

**SUICIDE ATTEMPT:**

Any attempt by a person to take his/her life.

**TAKING ON WATER:**

When water enters the vessel's hull below the water line, but the vessel does not founder.