

XV      The Committee recommends that the government undertake to redraft an oceans policy for Canada that takes into account the importance of Canada's Armed Forces in guaranteeing national sovereignty and how the Armed Forces may be of greater use in addressing newly emerging security issues.

## B. ENHANCING GOVERNMENTAL EFFECTIVENESS

### 1. A New Chain of Command and Control

A larger solution suggested before the Committee to the problems of interdepartmental coordination is that a single organization could be made responsible for command and control of government maritime operations. One specific suggestion was made with regard to marine emergencies. Rear-Admiral Crickard stated:

It is my belief that there should be a common operations centre on [all] coasts, run by the Department of National Defence, in which the RCMP, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Canadian Coast Guard, and all the other marine agencies that have fleets could sit and work together during an emergency like the *Concordia*.<sup>(54)</sup>

The Committee believes that such an arrangement has considerable merit. The centres would be informed of the movements and plans of departmental resources and would be able to communicate with them. Departmental resources encountering emergency situations such as uncooperative fishing vessels or oil spills would report them to the centres which could immediately determine the availability of resources to assist.<sup>(55)</sup> The emergency centres could then contact departments and ministers to effect top-level consultation and obtain necessary authorizations. Similarly, departments requiring platform support or other kinds of assistance could contact the emergency centres and rapidly determine what resources are available. The centres would have to maintain communication with the Rescue Coordination Centres and with vessel and air traffic management centres. The centres would be able to establish government-wide inventories and priorities for resources and thereby ensure that individual departmental priorities would not interfere with larger objectives.

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(54) *Ibid.*, 13:28.

(55) A spill response network already exists whereby marine pollution incidents can be reported to 24-hour reporting offices at Coast Guard Vessel Traffic Management Centres. Those offices' functions would be transferred to the new emergency centres.