

It is noted that the strategic significance of these ships and facilities far outweighs their financial value. In addition, many such fires present special dangers to life as well as to property, e.g., fires in ammunition ships and magazines.

While it may appear to be late in the war to recommend an additional programme of fire protection, it should be pointed out that the number of Naval ships in Canada and Newfoundland harbours will be very much larger during the entire period of partial and final demobilization than under present war conditions. In addition the movement of troop transports will increase, and the fire risk will be correspondingly augmented, due to the difficulty of enforcing the same strict supervision and discipline as prevails under war conditions. It is therefore considered by the Naval Staff that the danger of harbour and wharf fires will be even greater in the future than it has been in the past.

During the later phases of the present war, the West Coast bases will be of special significance in refitting and supplying H.M.C. ships; in addition ships of the Royal Navy may refit at these ports: accordingly protection against fires will be of operational significance.

It is therefore recommended that seven, sixty foot steel tugs be constructed and equipped as fire boats for use at the following ports:

Halifax, N. S.	1 vessel
St. John's, Nfld.,	2 vessels
Sydney, N. S.	1 vessel
Shelburne, N. S.	1 vessel
Esquimalt, B. C.	1 vessel
Prince Rupert, B. C.	1 vessel

The total cost of this programme is estimated to be approximately \$1,000,000 for which, pending a decision of policy in regard thereto, no provision is being made in the Naval Service Estimates now in the course of preparation for the fiscal year ending 31st March, 1946.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by A.L. MacDonald.

MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE
FOR NAVAL SERVICES.

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