

9. Escort Ships in Operation and Under Repair

The following table shows the average number of R.C.N. escort ships and other escort ships under R.C.N. control day by day during the past quarter, and the average number and percentage in service and under repair during the period.

	Number of Ships	Percentage
Ready for service (including ships refitting or boiler cleaning over periods of 7 days or less)	206	79.8
Refitting or repairing over periods of 7 days or more	52	20.2
	258	100.0

In addition there was an average number of 17 new construction escort ships working up time as a result of the time from 6 to 7 days cycles for fast convoys and from 12 to 15 days for slow ones.

10. DECOMMISSIONINGS

Three ships were removed from the active list during the quarter: H.M.C.S. "CHEDABUCTO" (Bengor Minesweeper) collided with the cable ship "LORD KELVIN" on October 21st off Red Island in the St. Lawrence River and was later beached 12 miles from Bic Island. Salvage was not attempted owing to the lateness of the season and the ship was paid off on the 31st. H.M.C.S. "ST. CLAIR" and H.M.C.S. "HAMILTON" Town Class Destroyers no longer fit to endure the strains of ocean storms without being practically rebuilt, were reclassified. "HAMILTON" is a training ship attached to H.M.C.S. "CORNWALLIS" at Deepbrook, N.S. and "ST. CLAIR" as a Submarine Depot Ship. H.M.C. "ML 095" was paid off on the 22nd October. She had been seriously damaged in collision with H.M.C. "ML 059" off Halifax.

11. DAMAGE TO H.M.C. SHIPS

There were six or seven groundings, collisions and other accidents involving damage to H.M.C. ships during the quarter but in no case was the damage serious with the exception of the collision of H.M.C.S. "CHEDABUCTO" with the cable ship "LORD KELVIN" mentioned above. H.M.C.S. "HALIFAX", corvette was damaged below the water line in a collision with U.S.S. "NANOK" near Cape Breton on November 20th, but the other accidents caused very little damage.

12. ESCORT GROUPS

Early in October the principle was accepted that S.O.'s of all Canadian Escort Groups be relieved of commanding officer's duties in their respective ships in order to concentrate their attention on the handling of the group as a whole. This policy is a logical step in the development of well trained teams of escort groups capable of closest cooperation in attack and defence. S.O.'s will normally be accommodated in frigates since the fuel capacity of these ships ensures that they will rarely, if ever, have to detach for refuelling, and because it may sometimes happen that the destroyers of the usual mixed group have an opportunity to pursue a U-boathunt "to the death" and thus be separated from the group for some time which would not be acceptable for the S.O.'s ship. The problem of accommodation for the S.O. and his staff is still under consideration, the first provisional arrangements not having been completely successful.