

Reserve would monitor the position of merchant ships and would assist in organizing convoys or take whatever measures the Commander of Maritime Command deemed necessary. The Committee was especially interested in the possibility of using the resources available to the Naval Reserve to monitor emergency situations such as major oil spills and to assist in the coordination of cleanup operations.

The Maritime Coastal Defence role also offers capabilities which can be useful in both military and non-military tasks. From the military point of view, efforts are being made to bolster the mine-clearing capability which had been allowed to almost disappear. The renewed importance for NATO of the sea lines of communication between North America and Europe and the lessons learned in the Persian Gulf during the Iran-Iraq War have raised the priority accorded to mine countermeasures (MCM). Canada announced in June 1989 the selection of two contractors for the project definition phase in the purchase of 12 new Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels (MCDVs), which will have special equipment to clear mines. The equipment to be used is still under study, but the Naval Reserve has been gaining experience with techniques which could be used to detect underwater mines by using a remotely-piloted submersible developed by Sea-I Research Canada Ltd. called the MANTA. The Committee was able to ascertain the capabilities of the MANTA during a demonstration by the Naval Reserve at CFB Esquimalt.

As well as being used on the East and West coasts, the MCDVs will also operate in the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence in order to provide mine-clearing and seamanship training for Naval Reserve divisions such as the ones recently established in the province of Quebec. Pending the delivery of the new vessels, two recently purchased minesweeper auxiliary vessels will fulfill training requirements. These and other small vessels will allow the Naval Reserve not only to receive better training in military tasks, but also to make available a pool of expertise and resources which can be drawn upon during non-military emergencies such as environmental disasters and search and rescue missions. Indeed, coastal defence is an important element of Canada's ability to assert its sovereignty in its waters. The enhancement of Naval Reserve capabilities in recent years is a welcome development, especially at a time when the use of small vessels along Canada's long coastline for drug smuggling is of increasing concern.

**VI The Committee recommends that the enhancement of Naval Reserve capabilities should continue to receive high priority in Canadian defence planning.**