

More than 85% of Canada's male population between the ages of 18 and 45 have joined the Canadian navy, army or air force since war began. Growth of the services in four years of war has been as follows:

	1943	1942	1941	1940	(September) 1939
Navy	1,800	10,000	15,000	24,000	34,000
Air Force	4,500	125,000	230,000	330,000	380,000
Army	4,000	80,000	118,000	178,000	200,000
Total	10,300	195,000	324,000	532,000	614,000

Including members of the women's services, the strength of the armed forces in March, 1944, was:

Total	more than 785,000
Air Force	more than 306,000
Army	more than 479,000
Navy	more than 80,000

Enlistments of women in the armed forces have been as follows:

Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service	more than 4,822
Canadian Women's Army Corps	17,008
Royal Canadian Air Force (Women's Division)	16,549
Nursing Services	2,218
Women's Royal Canadian Mounted Police	40
Total	more than 41,237

In this world war, as in the last, the Allies are fighting at the end of supply lines stretching across the world's widest water spaces. Keeping open the North Atlantic route, "the lifeline of Europe", has been of first importance. It is in the work of convoy protection and U-boat hunting that the Royal Canadian Navy has found its chief role.

Six days after the war started, the first Canadian convoy was escorted into the open Atlantic. Since that day, Canadians have escorted over 18,000 ships from North America to Europe - about 114,000 dead-weight tons of shipping - and about 10,000 ships from the United Kingdom to America. Another 80,000 ships in Canadian coastal convoys (going from one port to another on the North American continent) have been escorted almost entirely by ships of the Canadian navy.

After Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States' naval strength has been largely centered in the Pacific, with the result that the protection of the Atlantic routes has rested almost entirely on the United Kingdom and Canada. It has been estimated that about 70% of the world's convoys have been supplied in this hemisphere:

United States	3%
Canada	47%
United Kingdom	50%

In the last two years, Canadian convoy escort has sometimes risen as high as 45% and has never fallen below 40%.

Other tasks of the Canadian navy are to guard Canadian shores, to destroy or capture enemy merchant and fighting ships, and to assist in blockade operations.