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Big ship-building program for fisheries and marine service

A new, five-year vessel-construction program estimated at a cost of \$50 million, to modernize and increase the effectiveness of Canada's fishery-protection and -research fleets, has been announced by Fisheries Minister Jack Davis. Plans are also announced for construction of new vessels to support increasingly important requirements for ocean-mapping and geophysical surveys, particularly related to offshore exploration for oil and other minerals, as well as Arctic pollution hazards.

"If Canada is to effectively manage the renewable and mineral resources of our vast offshore territory, it's apparent that our scientific and fisheries patrol vessels must be capable of operating 100 miles and more off the coasts for extended periods," says Mr. Davis. "This in turn demands greater seaworthiness and, consequently, larger vessels with higher speeds to carry out the task."

National and international commitments

Several factors point up the need for expanding the Fisheries and Marine Service fleet. The decision in 1970 by Canada to establish a 12-mile territorial sea and exclusive fishing zones on the East and West Coasts has created a much larger area for surveillance to guard against foreign fishing-fleet encroachment. This area will be increased considerably if Canada is supported before the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference later this year for international recognition of the responsibility of coastal states for effective management of the continental shelf resources. This would involve Canadian supervision of coastal waters up to 300 miles offshore.

In addition, the recent decision by member countries of the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic

Fisheries (ICNAF) to implement national-catch quotas for herring, cod and other species, has resulted in increased offshore activity for fisheries-research and -patrol vessels. Another contributing factor calling for expanded activity is the increasing task of the Canadian Hydrographic Service in undertaking the mapping of the entire continental shelf.

The total amount provisionally budgeted for replacement or construction of new vessels in the Fisheries and Marine Service over the next five years is about \$53 million.

Fisheries conservation and protection
Top priority will be given to construction of a \$4.15-million 200-foot offshore patrol vessel for Newfoundland, to be ready in 1975-76. Work will also start on plans for two similar vessels, one for the Pacific and one for the Atlantic coast, with completion expected by 1978.

Plans are already well advanced for a new 95-foot protection vessel for the Atlantic region, due for completion in 1974-75 at an estimated cost of \$700,000. Work will proceed on replacements for three 48-foot Newfoundland-based patrol vessels and a number of smaller craft. In all, 17 medium-sized patrol vessels operating on the East and West coasts and in the Northwest Territories are to be replaced by new vessels over the next five years at a total estimated cost of some \$4.1 million.

Fisheries research

Planning will start immediately on an ice-strengthened offshore research vessel for the Atlantic region, to be built at an estimated cost of \$7 million. Construction is expected to be completed in 1974 of an 85-foot research vessel, costing \$1 million, for East Coast operations and a start will be