

CANADIAN COAST GUARD

The Department of Transport fleet will be known in future as the Canadian Coast Guard, it was announced recently by Mr. Léon Balcer, the Minister of Transport. The decision to adopt the new name was made in recognition of the tremendous expansion the fleet had undergone in the previous several years, both in the scope of its operations and in number of vessels, and in the standards of operation that had been achieved. The fleet has hitherto been known as the Canadian Marine Service.

It has also been decided to adopt a new color scheme for the Coast Guard vessels and a distinctive insignia for their funnels. They will have red hulls and white superstructure and funnels instead of the former black, white and yellow combination. A moderately stylized red-maple leaf and band on the funnels will make them easily recognizable at a distance as Canadian Coast Guard vessels.

The use of red is of significant practical utility, particularly for icebreakers, for they will be more easily seen from other vessels they may be escorting and by pilots of their own ice-reconnaissance helicopters under conditions of poor visibility.

The same need for visibility and ready identification applies to the Canadian Coast Guard vessels which are on search and rescue duties.

The essentially civilian nature of the fleet will remain unchanged.

New types of uniforms will be issued, which will provide comfortable, smart clothing appropriate to the conditions of the service. They are modelled on the wartime battle dress. Berets will be provided.

SIZE OF FLEET

The Canadian Coast Guard now has a total of 241 vessels of all types, including some 50 ships of larger size, from around 400 tons gross to more than 6,000 tons gross. These include 10 fully strengthened icebreakers and seven lighter supply and buoy vessels capable of icebreaking. These 17 vessels comprise the second-largest icebreaker fleet in the world.

In addition, there are eight other vessels designed for special service in the Arctic, 11 lighthouse-supply and buoy ships, weather-ships, lightships, a Great Lakes research vessel, shallow-draft ships for the Mackenzie River, St. Lawrence Ship Channel survey vessels, shore-based lifeboats and more than 180 steel landing craft for various types of Arctic use.

The present large fleet came into being largely during the past eight years, when the Department

of Transport's expanding responsibilities in the Arctic, plus increasing demands for all-winter shipping movement in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, brought about the construction of more than a dozen new vessels capable of such duty. Increased marine traffic added greatly to undertakings in the maintenance of aids to navigation and in the need for more vessels designed for this type of work.

Most of the new ships carry helicopters for ice reconnaissance and ship-to-shore operations. The Department's Air Services are now providing 18 such aircraft for marine duty.

SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE DUTIES

The Canadian Coast Guard, besides carrying out the icebreaking and escort duties mentioned, carries supply cargoes to weather, defence and other outposts in the Arctic each summer and in 1961 handled 110,000 tons of northbound cargo. It is also responsible for lighthouse and buoy tending in coastal waters, the Great Lakes system, the Mackenzie River system, and in the Canadian Arctic.

The ships, both in Arctic and in "home" waters are used by scientific groups from other government departments in the study of hydrography, oceanography and related scientific matters relating to Canada's waterways.

The Canadian Coast Guard co-ordinates and provides much of the marine element in the national air-sea rescue set-up, which is under the control of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Eight search-and-rescue cutters are being built specifically for this service.

The fleet maintains Weather Station "Papa" in mid-Pacific. Its vessels are also engaged in survey work relative to maintenance of the St. Lawrence Ship Channel from Montreal to the sea.

Expansion of the Canadian Coast Guard continues. Apart from new construction already mentioned, the following vessels are under construction or in the planning stages: a triple-screw icebreaker of 18,000 horsepower, larger than any of the present icebreakers; an icebreaking cable repair ship, a new depot ship for Arctic use, two light icebreaker-supply-and-buoy vessels, another shallow-draught buoy vessel for the Mackenzie River, and other smaller craft.

Other vessels which will continue to be operated by the Department as separate units are 15 pilotage vessels and more than 70 tugs, barges and other craft used in maintenance of Canada's secondary canals.

FIRE PREVENTION AWARD

The National Research Council of Canada has been declared the Grand Award winner in the Government Division of the 1961 International Fire Prevention Contest. A Grand Award Plaque is presented to the agency ranking highest in this Division of the Contest, which is an international event covering all North America. Some 402 facilities competed in this year's event, of which 135 were Canadian.

SPONSORSHIP OF CONTEST

The contest is sponsored annually by the National Fire Protection Association (International). Its purpose is to encourage the widest possible use of modern methods in fire-prevention education and to give recognition to outstanding fire-prevention programmes. Liaison with the National Fire Protection Association is carried out by the Fire Prevention Branch of the Department of Public Works in Ottawa.