

all mariners within the radius of each boat, which means within 50 miles.

The release stated that the new three man lifeboats to join the Canadian coastguard would incorporate the latest technology and electronic aids to navigation and had been fitted with a complete range of life saving and rescue equipment.

When two fishermen are lost in the immediate vicinity of one of the bases, however, I must ask—and I put a question on the order paper—what action did the base in the locality take when that incident occurred? I am told that the lifeboat could not react because it could not operate except under conditions when the ice was less than a couple of inches thick. This is absolutely ridiculous, Mr. Speaker. What in the name of heaven is the purpose in having the bases and/or the lifeboats if they cannot react other than when conditions are perfect—when they are not needed.

How was the decision made to add new locations to an already concentrated area when some 300 to 400 miles of coastline in western Newfoundland were completely ignored? To my mind this shows complete inefficiency or lack of knowledge on the part of those who are supposed to know the situation.

Today I proposed a motion to focus attention on the fact that within the space of one week three fishermen were lost on the west coast of Newfoundland, two of them were lost just yesterday. Months ago I pointed out that this area would not be covered by the establishment of the four new bases. The only answer I ever received to my representations was that this would be taken into consideration in the review of national search and rescue policy and that the necessary documents for implementation are being prepared in consultation with the Department of Transport and the Department of National Defence and would be submitted to the cabinet with the policy.

In the meantime, however, we continue to lose fishermen. The latest figures indicate that the average rescue is one out of seven. No one seems to care or pay any attention to the fact that realistic representations are being made by members from Newfoundland who have sensible solutions to the problem.

The activity of the fishing season dictates that, unfortunately, more losses will occur, but it seems impossible to convince the government of the need for immediate action. The deployment of lifeboat bases must be reconsidered and action taken to cover areas not presently provided for. There must be a review of the location of new bases and a review of the capability of the present lifeboats to ensure that they can perform their mission, and that further losses can be avoided. I hope that whoever is going to answer will give me obvious, fundamental, and reasonable answers.

**Mr. Lloyd Francis (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, the recommendations resulting from an MOT task force report on marine search and rescue are now being finalized. The matter has been given high priority and I hope that it will be possible for the minister to make a detailed announcement shortly.

With regard to the lifeboat bases in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, 11 44-foot self-righting lifeboats have been in service with the Canadian coast guard since 1967, of

#### *Adjournment Debate*

which three are based in Newfoundland with one each in Burgeo, Twillingate, and St. Anthony. These self-righting craft were designed in the United States and adapted for use in Canada, and are now widely in use by the Royal National Lifeboat Institute in the United Kingdom.

These craft are tasked to operate as a shore based rescue craft to save life at sea and render aid to craft in distress in inshore coastal waters. They are kept either afloat, in a sheltered haven, or under cover on a slip. Their operation involves launching the boat, proceeding to the scene of an incident, probably not more than at a range of 30 to 40 miles, rescuing survivors from the sea or from another craft, some of whom may be injured, going alongside a broken down or stranded vessel, giving shelter and elementary care to injured people on board, taking in two and towing small craft, returning to base, and being hauled out. These close inshore operations can take place under most adverse weather conditions of wind and sea to be found on our coasts and in shallow water conditions of very heavy surf.

They have no secondary function and incorporate no features to interfere with the effective conduct of their primary mission for which they are eminently successful and suitable, and I would like to emphasize that the major characteristic which makes this craft so suitable operationally is the exceptional seaworthiness expected of a lifeboat. With a speed of 16 knots and an endurance of 20 hours, these craft are able to maintain way and perform their mission in extreme weather conditions, which is of overriding importance.

Manned by a crew of three men and capable of sheltering at least ten survivors, these craft are also fitted with fire-fighting equipment and towing bits to meet emergencies at sea.

An examination of marine search and rescue incidents reported through the rescue co-ordination centres in Canada for 1974 may be of interest. Out of a total of 2,588 incidents across Canada, 122 were mercy and medical evacuation matters, 517 were in answer to distress calls, and 1,949 for other purposes such as towing.

Of the above figures, the number of incidents on the east coast in 1974 were 500, of which 28 were mercy and medical evacuation matters, 67 were in answer to distress calls, and 405 for other purposes. The number of incidents on the Newfoundland coast form part of the above, with two mercy and medical evacuation matters, 18 in response to distress calls, and 22 for other purposes.

We believe that these vessels are both successful and suitable for the task for which they are intended, that is, to aid fishermen during the fishing season.

However, Mr. Speaker, as has been mentioned before, we are not satisfied with our over-all marine search and rescue capacity in Canada, and we are hopeful that the task force recommendations will lead us quickly to a more satisfactory situation.