The Deck Log

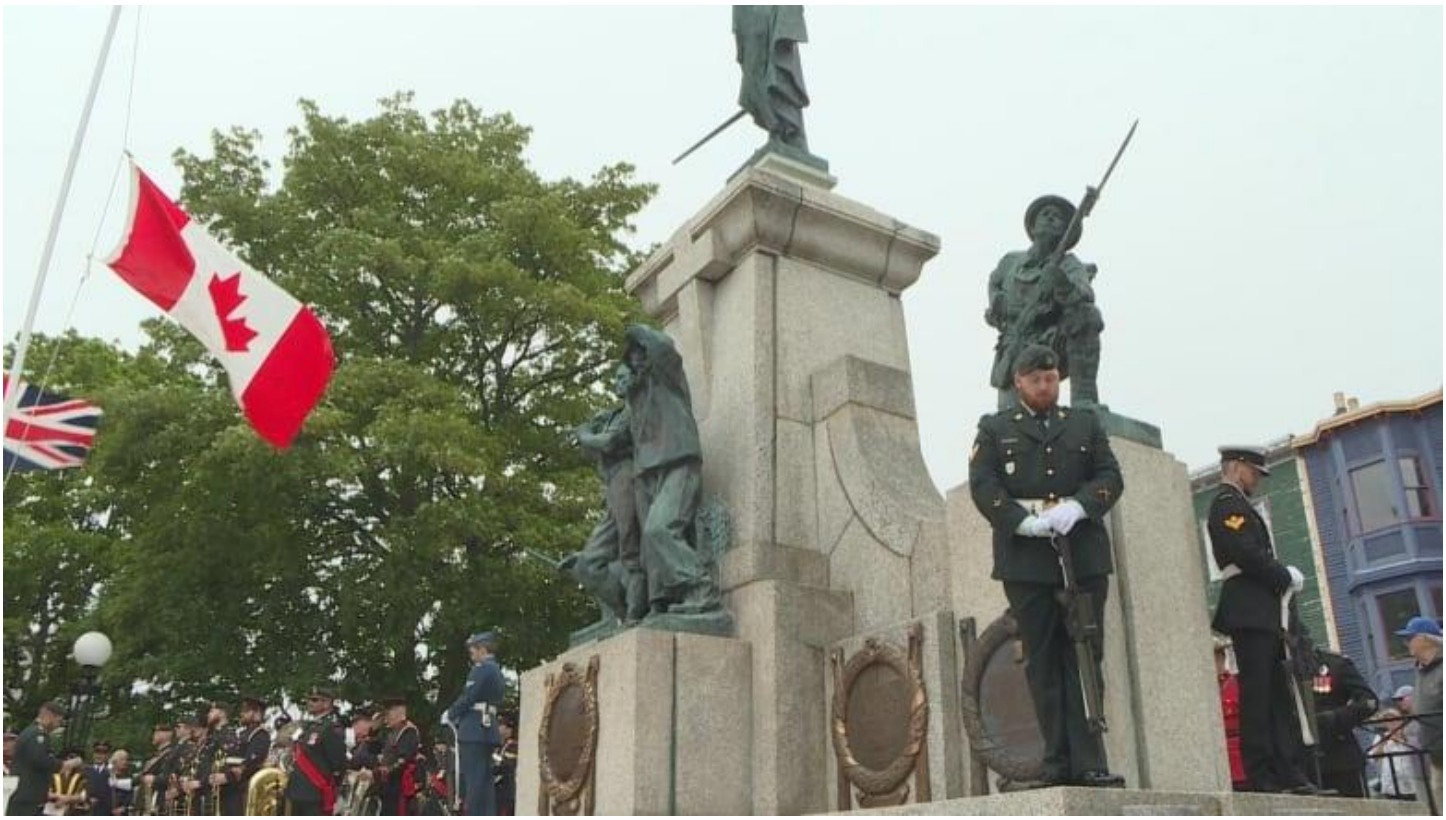
Newsletter of the Master Mariners of Canada (MMC)

NL Division

July – September 2022

July 1st , 2022

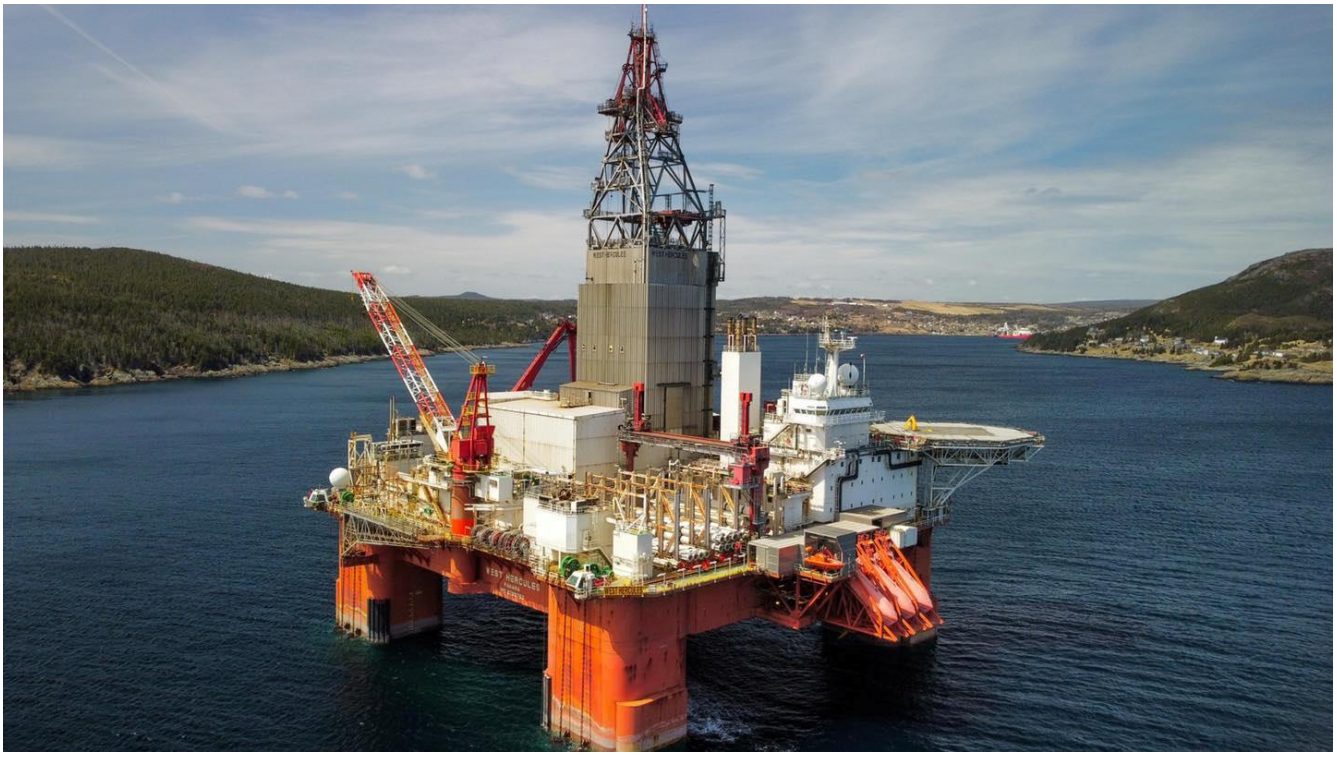
Canada Day. A day to celebrate Canada's 155th birthday. For Newfoundland and Labrador, this day also has a sombre meaning. On this date, we also observe Memorial Day, a time to commemorate the sacrifices of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in times of war. Especially during the July 1st, 1916 Battle of the Somme at Beaumont-Hamel, France.



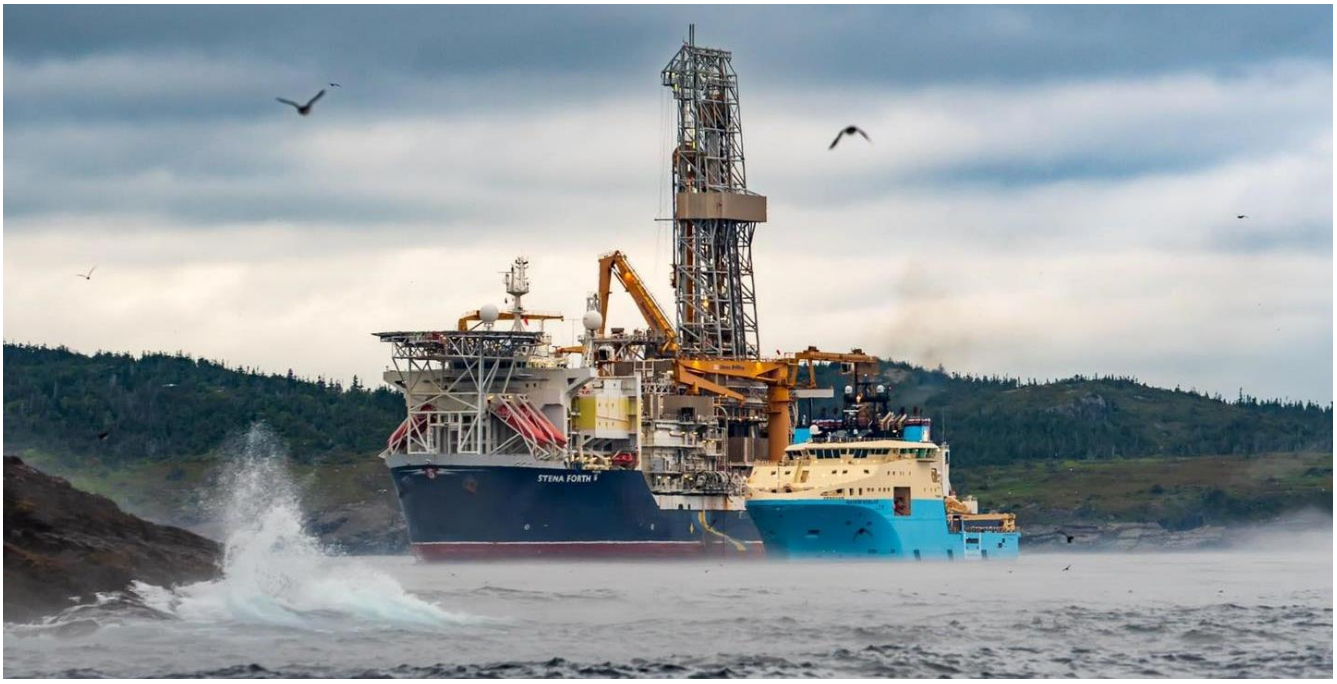
Remembrance service at the National War Memorial in St. John's. Ref:
https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/memorial-day-2022-1.6508332

July & August, 2022

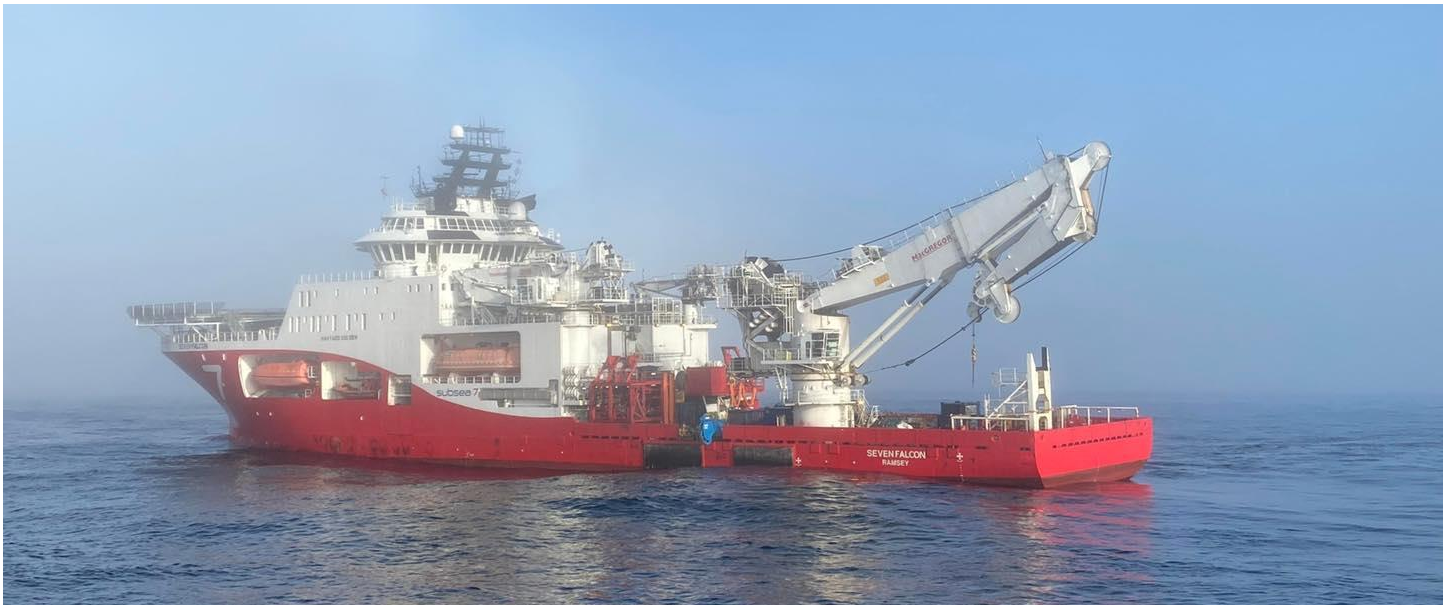
No monthly division meetings were held, during the summer. However, there was an increase in offshore activity. The rig West Hercules and the drillship Stena Forth conducted drilling operations offshore NL. With, at times, up to 6 supply vessels supporting these operations.
In preparation for the return of the Terra Nova FPSO from drydock, the DSV Seven Falcon carried out maintenance work at the Terra Nova field.



April 22nd.,2022. West Hercules mobilizing for drilling operations, in Bay Bulls. Ref: https://www.facebook.com/NLMaritimeOfficial/photos/a.1323177887833904/2215333005285050



July 3rd.,2022. Stena Forth mobilizing for drilling operations, in Bay Bulls. Ref: https://www.facebook.com/NLMaritimeOfficial/photos/a.1323177887833904/2275287945956222



DSV Seven Falcon on the Terra Nova field. Ref:
https://www.facebook.com/NLMaritimeOfficial/photos/a.1323177887833904/2267538693397814

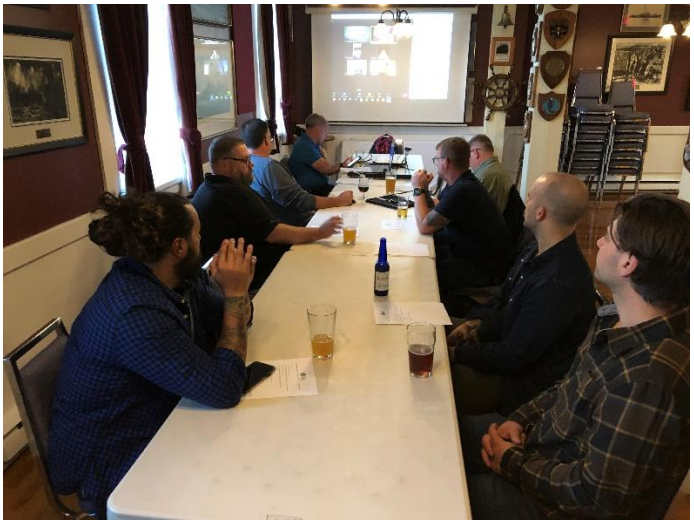
September 8th, 2022

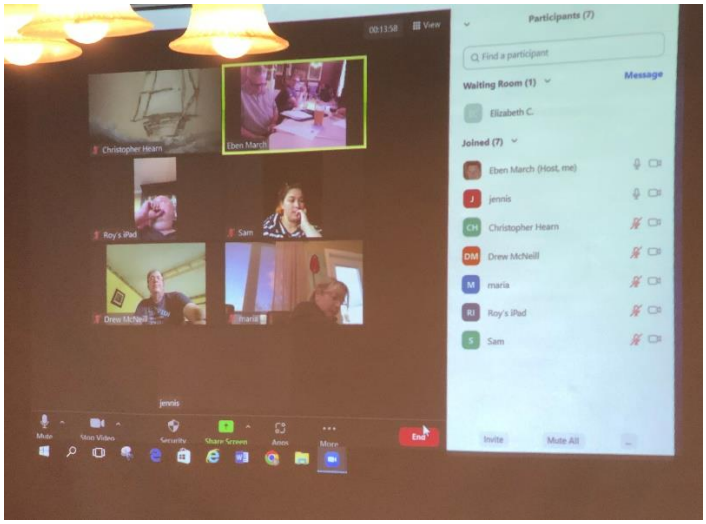
The monthly meeting, for September, took place at the Crow's Nest (9 present) and was also conducted by Zoom (8 present).

The Women Offshore Virtual Conference will take place October 7-14, 2022. As a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization, Women Offshore propels women+ into meaningful careers through access to a worldwide community and professional development resources, while raising awareness amongst industry leaders and decision makers about issues affecting women on the water. The MMC NL DIV will sponsor one full member and one cadet member to attend this great conference. Details on the conference can be found here: **https://womenoffshore.org/women-offshore-conference-2022/**

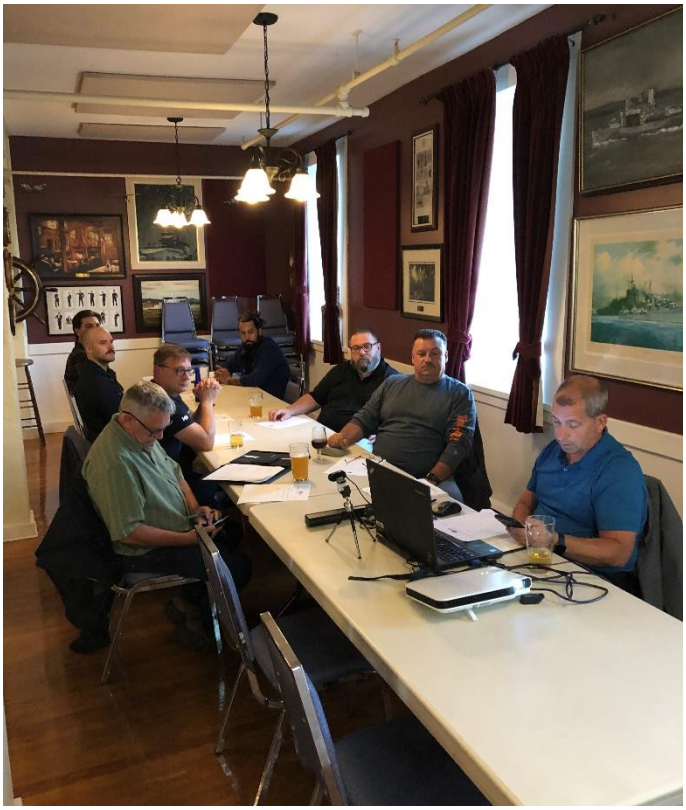
Merchant Navy Remembrance Day was held on September 3, 2022 to recognize the contribution and sacrifice of Canadian merchant seafarers to the victory in World War II. The MMC NL DIV feel this could be better organized locally and would like some volunteers to help organize the ceremony for 2023, in conjunction with the Marine Institute. Captain Chris Hearn has agreed to talk to our Special Events Coordinator, Captain Jim Parsons, to form a planning committee. Any additional members, willing to assist, are welcome and should contact the Secretary.

The National AGM and associated board meetings will be held virtually for 2022, over the Oct 13th -16th weekend. The schedule will be as last year. Captain March stated that there will be an open session on October 15th and if there were any members that wanted to participate, he could host it at the Crow's Nest like last year. More details to follow.





September 8th Monthly Meeting



Discussion was held regarding plans for the upcoming year for speakers, cadet mentorship and upcoming events. The tentative plan is to have two cadets as guest speaker for the October meeting.

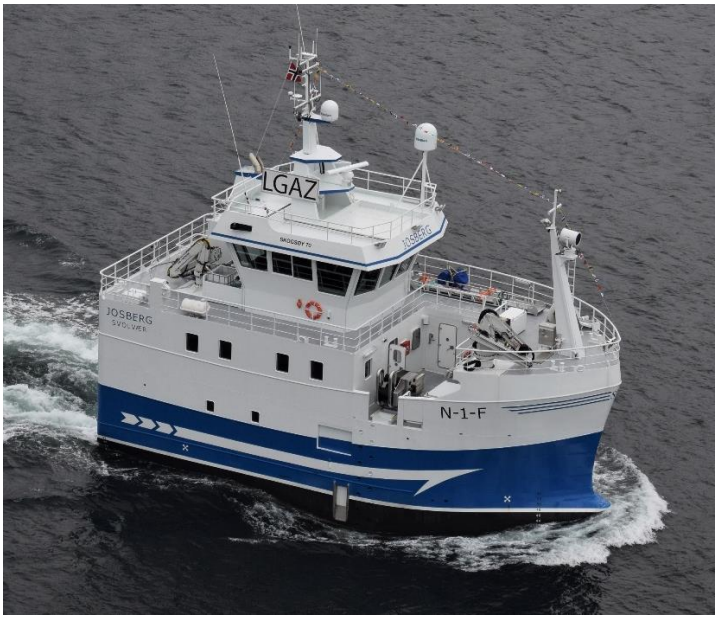
Captain Eben March gave an update on the mentorship program and stated it is slowly getting setup and the initiative is at the national level.

The 10th year of the Nautical Skills Competition (NSC) was a huge success. Maria Halfyard gave an update on the NSC that consisted of seven teams and 42 participants and an additional 8 high schools students. There were 20 industry sponsors and 4 industry awards and a leadership award.

Captain Andrew McNeill (NSC treasurer) provided a draft financial statement, for the competition. There are a couple of items to be finalized and will be sent to Maria when completed.

Length to Beam Ratio

Here in Newfoundland and Labrador, there are many examples of fishing vessels being built or modified to obtain a larger beam to length ratio. To stay within mandated maximum lengths, vessels are being built with a larger beam to increase carrying capacity. Seems the fishing industry in Norway may be doing the same. The photos on the next page show the Norwegian fishing vessel Josberg N-1-F. It is 21m long and 9m wide. More resembling a box than a ship shape. The freeboard would seem to indicate that extra volume is also being obtained by also building upwards.



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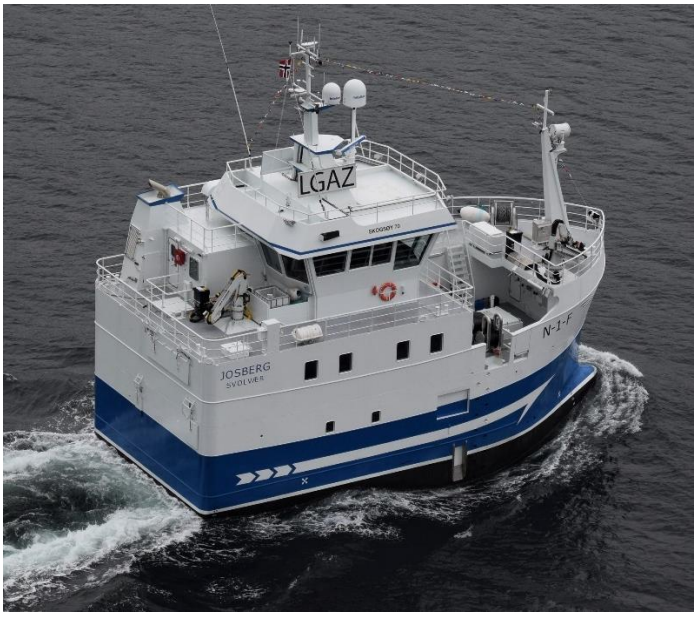
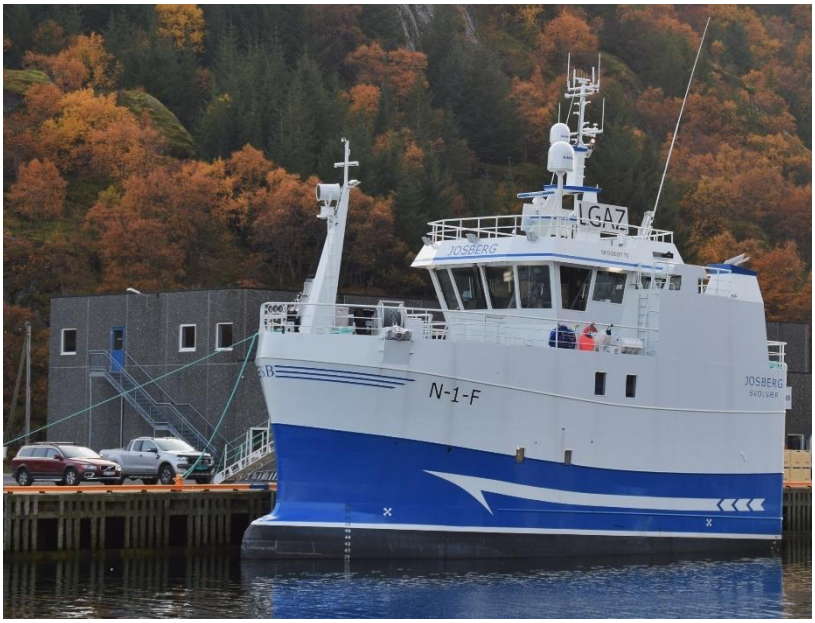


#2

Fishing Vessel Josberg N-1-F

#3



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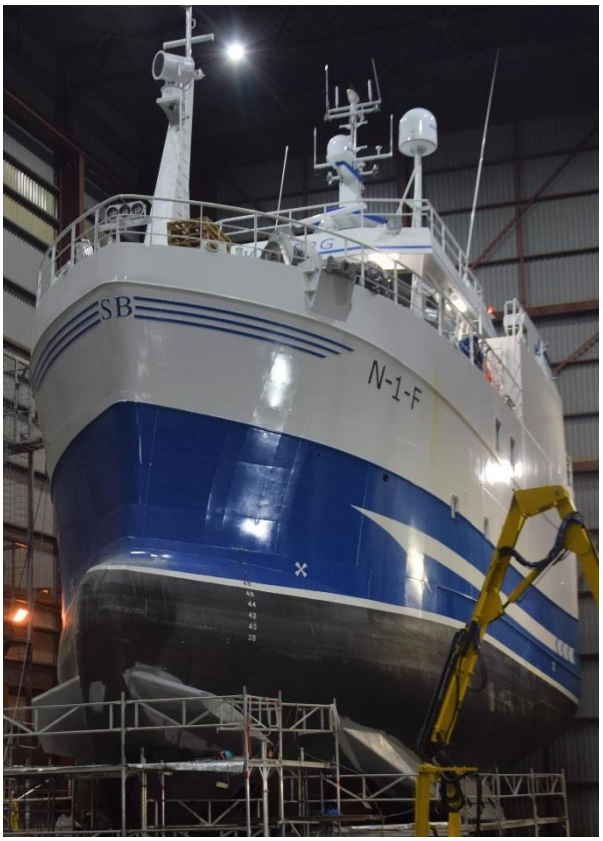


Refs: #1 https://www.shipspotting.com/photos/3202721?navList=gallery&shipName=Josberg+N-1-F&page=1&viewType=normal&sortBy=newest

#2 https://www.shipspotting.com/photos/3202719?navList=gallery&shipName=Josberg+N-1-F&page=1&viewType=normal&sortBy=newest

#3 https://www.shipspotting.com/photos/3215705?navList=gallery&shipName=Josberg+N-1-F&page=1&viewType=normal&sortBy=newest

#4 https://www.shipspotting.com/photos/3241798

(continued next page)

Note strange looking bilge keels ?? in photo #4. The caption with the online photo indicates the vessel "got extra keel fitted, due to a lot of wobbling". Perhaps directional stability is not what it should be and they are needed to keep the physics of this vessel under control. Looks like its twin screw, as well. Wonder how this thing behaves in rough weather?

Three Used Icebreakers

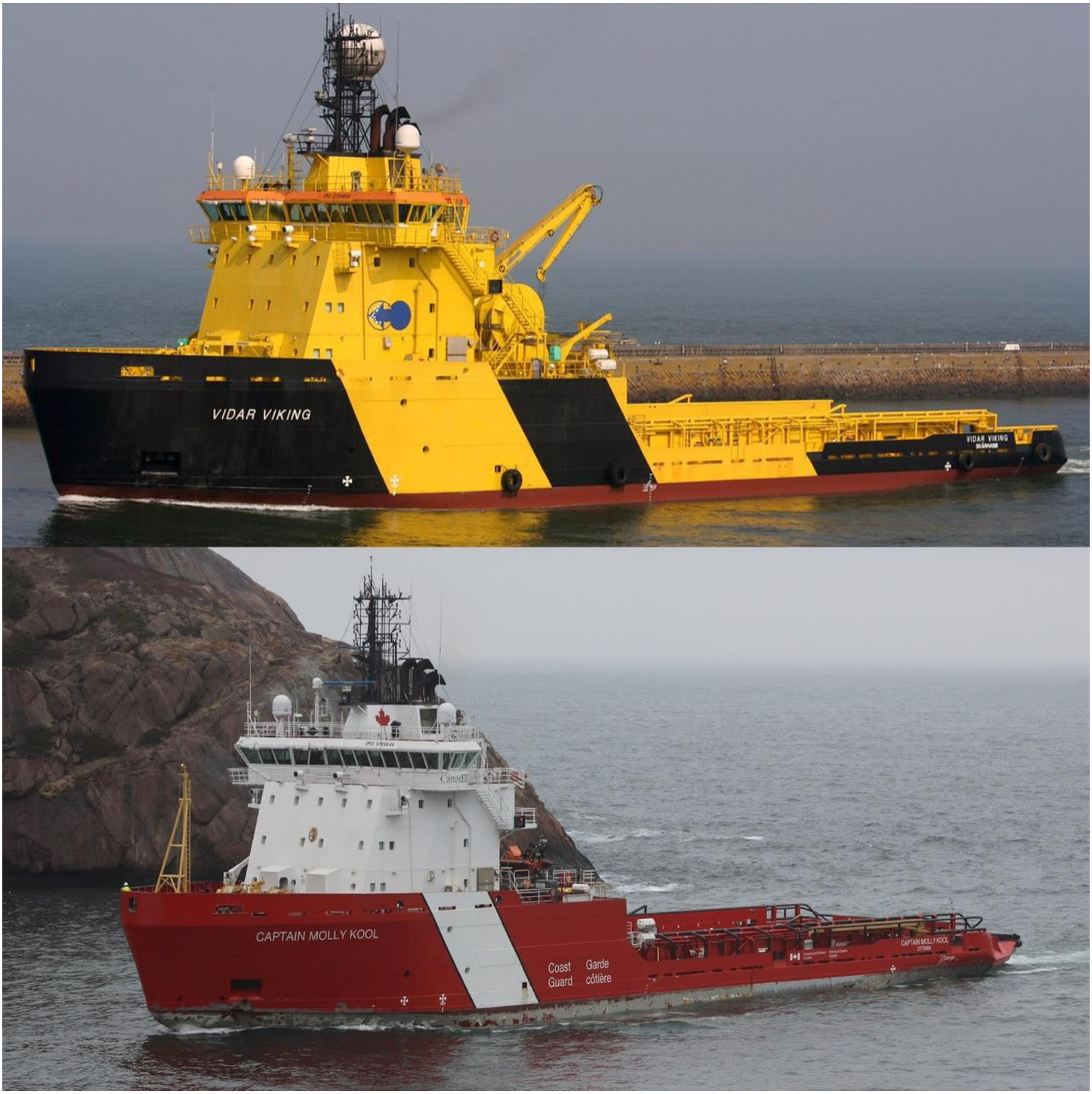
In August 2018, due to delays in delivering new vessels under the National Shipbuilding Strategy, the Canadian Coast Guard purchased 3 used commercial icebreakers through Chantier Davie. The ships were required to ensure the continuation of essential icebreaking services during vessel life extension and repair periods for the aging vessels within existing fleet. In preparation for service, all 3 vessels underwent refit and conversion work at Chantier Davie shipyard in Quebec City.

The vessels were built in 2000/2001 to meet the requirements of a contract with the Swedish Maritime Authority (SMA). The Swedish government had need for extra icebreaking capacity during years with severe ice conditions. However, they did not require the vessels on a permanent basis. The vessels are offshore supply vessels (AHTS) that have an icebreaking bow, ice strengthening, propulsion system modifications and a removal towing notch. Features needed to carry out the required icebreaking duties. They are a compromise between a pure icebreaker and an offshore supply vessel. The contract with the SMA, entailed that the vessels would have be available during the first quarter of the year, as required, and within ten days for icebreaking in the Baltic Sea. In return, the owners received an annual basic fee, regardless of whether icebreaking was conducted or not. If icebreaking was conducted, the fee was increased. For the remainder of the year, the owners were free to charter the vessels to other clients. Other work mainly involved the offshore supply industry but there were some charters for icebreaking services. The contract with the SMA expired in 2015.

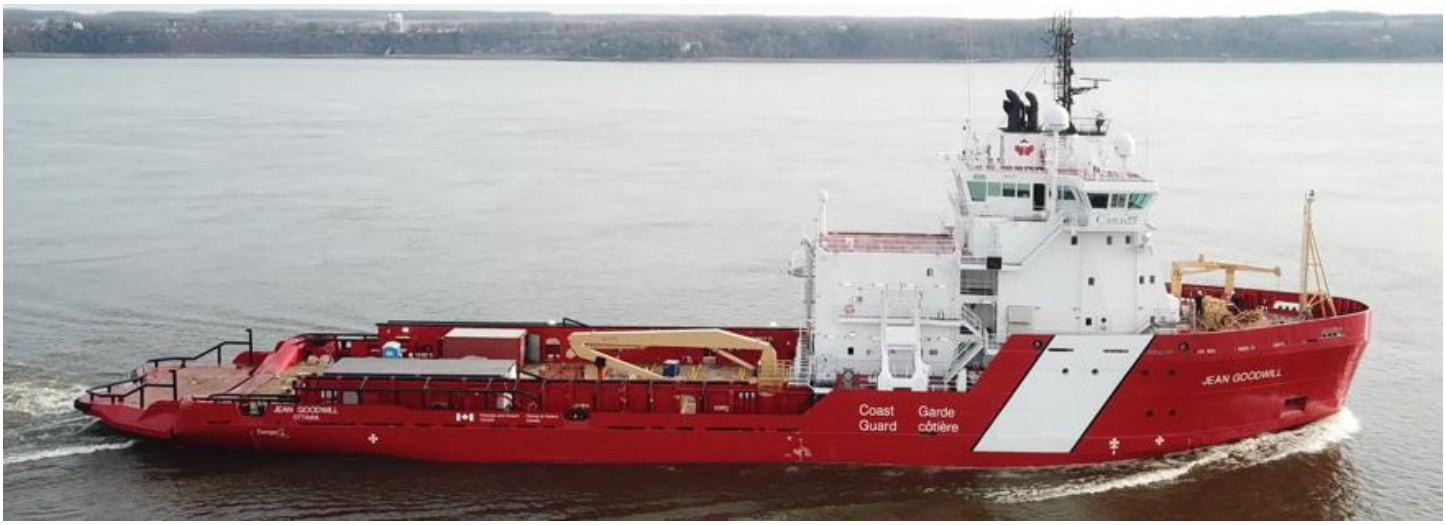
The 3 vessels were available for purchase when Canada went shopping for "interim" icebreaking capability. The vessels must comply with Canadian regulatory and Coast Guard operational standards. To meet those requirements, after purchase, the vessels were scheduled for conversion and refit work. Some of this work included:

- improving the galley
- upgrading the propulsion control system
- increasing crew accommodation capacity
- enhancing endurance and icebreaking capabilities
- adding heavy lift crane (on CCGS Vincent Massey only)

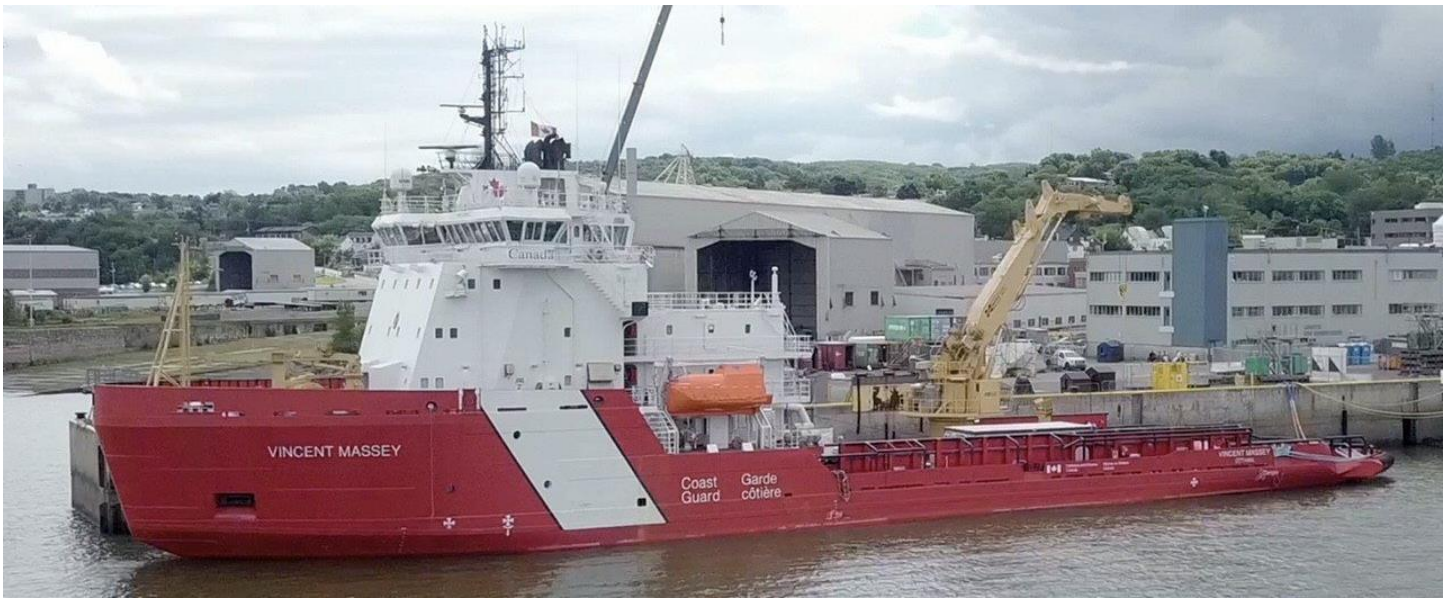
The 1st vessel was required to provide icebreaking services during the winter of 2019. After arrival in Canada, in August 2018, CCGS Captain Molly Kool underwent a short refit to allow her to meet Canadian requirements. It entered service Dec. 2018. The CCGS Jean Goodwill (in service Nov. 2020) and CCGS Vincent Massey (in service Oct. 2022) received more extensive refits. The original plan was for the Captain Molly Kool to return to the shipyard, for a more extensive refit, after here 2 sister vessels were in service. Uncertain as to whether this is still the plan.



CCGS Captain Molly Cool, formerly Vidar Viking. Ref: https://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/fleet-flotte/icebreaker-brise-glace-eng.html?wbdisable=true



CCGS Jean Goodwill, former Balder Viking. Ref: https://maritimemag.com/davie-canada-delivers-ccgs-jean-goodwill-to-canadian-coast-guard/

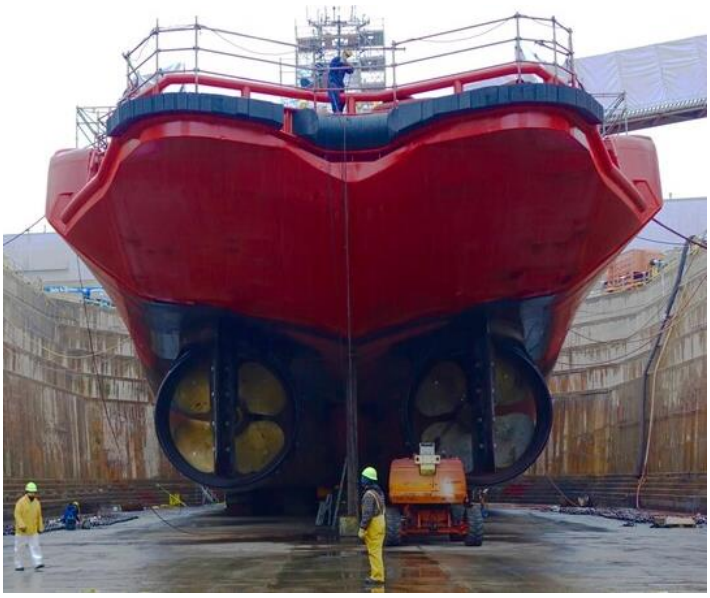


CCGS Vincent Massey, former Tor Viking/Tor Viking II. Ref: https://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/fleet-flotte/icebreaker-brise-glace-eng.html?wbdisable=true

The following quote is found online at: https://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/fleet-flotte/icebreaker-brise-glace-eng.html?wbdisable=true

"The icebreakers are also equipped with a removable towing notch. The notch allows the ship to safely break ice and tow another vessel at the same time. These icebreakers are the first in the Coast Guard fleet to have this unique towing capability."

The towing notch is utilized to employ an escort method known as close coupled towing. A winch line from the icebreaker is connected to the bow of the escorted the vessel. The escorted vessel is then pulled into the heavily fendered notch.

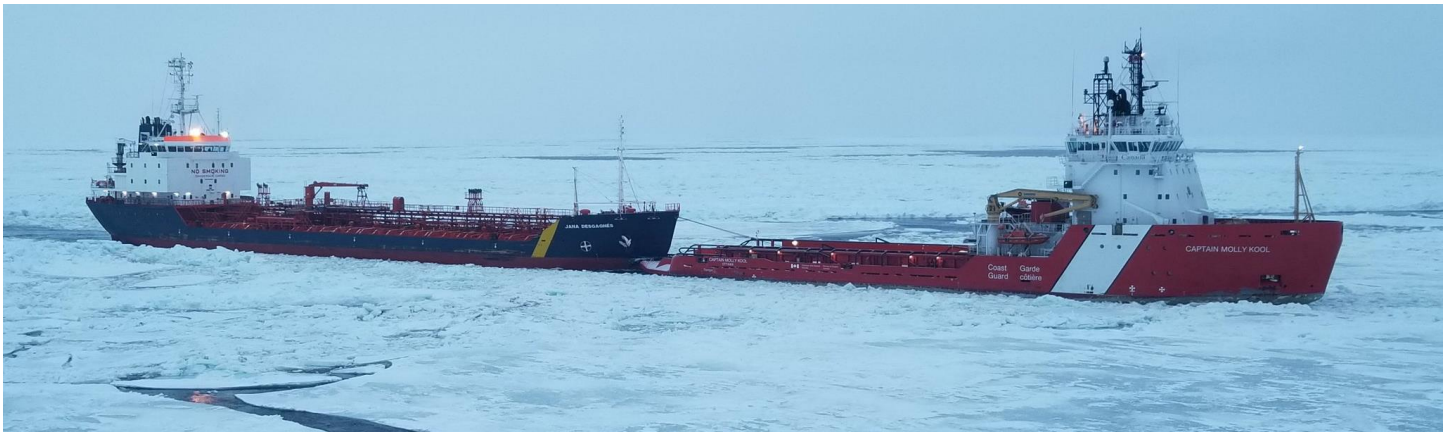


Towing notch. Ref: https://s.yimg.com/ny/api/res/1.2/x.FSir_PeflUgRL.wKZmmQ--/YXBwaWQ9aGlnaGxhbmRlcjt3PTY0MDtoPTM2MA--/https://s.yimg.com/uu/api/res/1.2/NfRb4fOp9ICx7dUUwKPZ_A--B/aD0zNDk7dz02MjA7YXBwaWQ9eXRhY2h5b24-/https://media.zenfs.com/en/cbc.ca/7721b191bace4a228a7ad60c342fd9ac

The notch is removal on the 3 vessels purchased because the vessels performed anchor handling operations during the non-icebreaking season. The notch covers the stern roller and interferes with anchor handling. As there is no longer a need for anchor handling, it is likely to remain fitted on a permanent basis for CCG operations.

Under some circumstances, close coupled towing is a more effective method of escort. The method is used regularly in the Baltic and in Russia. Until the Captain Molly Kool entered service, the CCG did not have vessels equipped for this method of escort.

In March 2019, 3 months after Captain Molly Kool came into service, the newly acquired towing capability was utilized. The tanker Jana Desgagnes became disabled in heavy ice (damaged rudder), 30 km SW of Port-aux-Basques. The Captain Molly Kool and the Louis S. St-Laurent responded to the vessels request for assistance. CCG normally leaves towing to commercial operators. However, Captain Molly Kool took the vessel under tow, on the grounds of preventing pollution (8 million litres of fuel on the tanker).



CCGS Captain Molly Kool towing Jana Degagnes. Ref: https://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/fleet-flotte/icebreaker-brise-glace-eng.html?wbdisable=true

The photo above is found on the CCG website indicated. The Captain Molly Kool, & the Louis S. St-Laurent, successfully towed/escorted the tanker through 185 km of ice, before reaching open water. Six days after losing its steering, the tanker arrived in Sydney, under tow by a commercial tug.

From Twitter: "4/4 #CCGLive: CCGS Captain Molly Kool used its unique towing notch configuration to keep Jana Desgagnes safe while awaiting commercial tug assistance. This is an example of our renewal efforts in action to modernize the fleet and bringing new capabilities to the Coast Guard."

For those who had advocated for dedicated emergency towing vessels on the East coast, the day had arrived. CCG had acquired 3 vessels with towing ability. An added bonus was the ability to effectively tow in the ice.

In fact, in the same timeframe, the federal government had awarded a contract for emergency towing vessels (offshore supply vessels) for the BC coast. The 2 vessels with towing capability (bollard pull) similar to that of the 3 icebreakers purchased from Sweden.

How much did these 3 used vessels cost the Canadian taxpayer. The answer is, alot. Seems that when there are delays in timely vessel replacement, and there few options available for immediate replacement, the laws of supply and demand come into play. When CCG had the need, the supply was very limited. In fact, other than a single privately owned American icebreaker, they were apparently the only option. The prices below are in Canadian dollars. There have been some conversions from other currencies and the timing/exact conversion rates are unknown. Consequently, some of the values quoted may be out by a few million. Given the dollar values quoted, a few million would seem insignificant.

Costs for 3 used (18 year old) Icebreakers		
Book Value	$136,048,000	Estimated value of the 3 vessels, at 18 years old. From online sources.
Profit on Sale	$356,318,000	Amount (over book value) that the seller claims to have made on the sale. From online sources.
Total Purchase Cost	$492,366,000	Estimated cost that the Canadian government paid for the 3 vessels.
Total Acquisition Cost (Aug. 2018)	$610,000,000	Total cost of the 3 icebreakers, was stated by government, when it announced its plan to buy them from Davie Shipyard, without a competition, to temporarily augment the coast guard's ageing fleet. Includes vessel purchase costs, refits and all other costs. No separate cost for the vessels was stated. Only that it was part of the $610 million.
Total Acquisition Cost (Dec. 2018)	$827,000,000	Costs had risen by $217 million. Apparently, the initial budget only covered purchasing the icebreakers and initial conversions for the 1st ship.
Total Acquisition Cost (Oct. 2022)	$912,500,000	At time of delivery of the 3rd vessel (CCGS Vincent Massey) from the yard, costs had risen again.
Cost to Purchase 3 New Icebreaking Supply Vessels	$370,000,000	Estimated cost to build 3 icebreaking supply vessels, at the same Norwegian yard where the 3 vessels purchased for CCG were built in 2000/2001. From online sources.
Costs to replace the Icebreaker Oden.	$221,000,000	Estimated cost to replace the current Swedish icebreaker Oden with a larger more powerful vessel. From online sources.

In summary, the Canadian taxpayer paid about 3.5 times book value for three 18 year old icebreakers. With enough lead time, the purchase price could have possibly bought 3 similar new vessels, from a Norwegian shipyard, and had about $122 million left over to cover extra costs. Not to mention the extra $420 million used for refits and other costs. Perhaps, for $912.5 million, CCG could have even gotten icebreakers without the limitations imposed by the dual icebreaker/supply vessel role.

Sweden is currently planning to replace the icebreaker Oden. It works as an escort icebreaker in the Baltic during the winter and serves as a research icebreaker during other times of the year. It is larger (displacement 13,000 t versus 6,872 t), more powerful (24,500 hp versus 18,300 hp) and has a higher ice class (DNV Polar-20 versus DNV Polar -10) than the 3 purchased vessels. Oden has capabilities in the range to those of the heavy icebreakers CCGS Louis S. St-Laurent and CCGS Terry Fox. CCG classes the new acquisitions as medium

icebreakers. For $912.5 million, 3 more capable icebreakers might have been acquired. With $250 left over to cover extra costs.

The Oden (left) and Vidar Viking in the Arctic Ocean during the 2004 Arctic Coring Expedition. Ref: https://www.arctictoday.com/with-its-arctic-workhorse-approaching-retirement-sweden-is-considering-whether-building-a-new-research-icebreaker-is-the-path-forward/

In addition, the plan is to have these vessels serve for a further 15 to 20 years. That means an out of service date of about 35 to 40 years. For commercial vessels designed for a 25 to 30 year service life, that means lengthy and expensive refits, later in vessel life, to keep them going.

Let's go back to the good part of this story that highlights the new towing capabilities that the purchase of these vessels brings. Seems, part of the extra $420 million spent, above the purchase price, was used to remove the towing winches from CCGS Jean Goodwill and CCGS Vincent Massey. It appears, from online photos, that a new accommodation block occupies the space where the winch was located. At the time the photo of CCGS Captain Molly Kool towing the tanker was taken, the towing winch had already been removed/preparations were being made for removal of the winch on the Goodwill. In turn, the same was done to the Massey after the refit of the Goodwill was complete. A towing winch is an integral part of the close coupled towing concept. Without a winch, the capability doesn't exist. In addition, irrespective of close coupled towing, an emergency towing vessel without a towing winch is no longer an emergency towing vessel.

CCG had:

- 3 vessels which had the capability to act has emergency towing vessels.
- 3 vessels which could tow in heavy ice conditions.
- demonstrated the new capability in a real life scenario.
- 3 vessels which could provide emergency towing coverage at 3 locations in Eastern Canada.
- the capability to take 1, or 2, of the vessels out of service for drydocking/maintenance and still maintain emergency towing coverage.
- 3 vessels that were multi-purpose. Emergency towing operations, hopefully, are few and far between. These vessels could perform other duties (icebreaking/escort/buoy tending/etc) and step into the emergency towing role when required. No need to pay for chartered towing vessels that are more limited in the other tasks that they can perform.

These capabilities were removed from 2 of the vessels. Now that the CCGS Vincent Massey has been put into service, perhaps the same will be done with CCGS Captain Molly Kool. Even if that vessel retains her towing winch, we are down to 1 vessel and no back-up.

Some questions come to mind:

- Why were the winches removed?
- Was there some urgent reason for the winch removal?
- Was there not a way to make the required vessel modifications and retain the winches?
- Who makes these decisions?
- Who is accountable for these decisions?
- Do those making the decisions, consult with industry before making the decisions?
- Why promote the benefits of a towing capability that is being removed from the vessels?

The information in this article is not breaking news. It is all publicly available at different sites online. Curiously, haven't seen anything regarding the winch removal. Online photos show that the winches have been removed. Do find numerous articles about the purchase costs of these vessels and questions regarding their suitability for intended purpose. Despite many articles being written, sadly, it seems that nobody cares or at least there is no public outcry. Perhaps it's not that nobody cares but collectively have come to the conclusion that this is the way that things are done and there is no hope for change??

I will finish with a quote, on delivery of CCGS Vincent Massey. "With the delivery of these essential vessels, the federal government demonstrates our commitment to the Canadian Coast Guard and its dedicated personnel, by providing the equipment they need to protect Canadian waters and keep mariners safe."