

Mar. 31, 1945, aircraft of air transport units flew 13,097,563 air miles in 95,227 hours, carrying 61,007 passengers, 13,831,951 lb. of general cargo and 4,118,911 lb. of mail, a total payload of 28,721,748 lb.; 9,152 aircraft of widely varied types were ferried. Regular mail service to the United Kingdom, Mediterranean and the Middle East was maintained and a daily service between the United Kingdom and the Canadian Army on the Western Front was initiated after the invasion of Western Europe. On these trips, mail, cargo and passengers were carried on eastbound flights and evacuated casualties on the westbound flights. Towards the end of the year, a semi-weekly service was commenced to Iceland to service an R.C.A.F. squadron in that country.

The few submarines, which were always present off the Canadian east coast throughout the year, necessitated protective air coverage being given to convoys and coastal shipping at all times. In addition, anti-submarine sweeps were carried out in areas where the presence of a submarine was indicated. These searches were intensified with night patrols by aircraft equipped with the British Leigh light. With the introduction of this equipment, submarines were never secure from attack by our aircraft. One entire squadron and part of a second were eventually employed on hunting out the enemy in this manner. The re-equipment of an additional squadron of Eastern Air Command with four-engine, very long-range aircraft further strengthened the air cover which in the previous year had been extended to mid-Atlantic. The lack of submarine activity off the Pacific Coast reduced coastal operations in that area to routine reconnaissance and anti-submarine patrols and the occasional escorting of shipping. The constant possibility of Japanese activity also necessitated the maintenance of fighter and strike squadrons.

With the reduction in B.C.A.T.P. training, Nos. 2 and 4 Training Commands were amalgamated to form No. 2 Air Command in December, 1944, and Nos. 1 and 3 Training Commands merged to form No. 1 Air Command effective January, 1945.

Every effort was made during the period to release personnel as rapidly as the reduction in personnel requirements would permit. Aircrew graduates whose services were not required at the moment were transferred to a special aircrew reserve. In the five months ended Mar. 31, 1945, the release from Active Service of more than 37,000 personnel was authorized and a net reduction of over 4,000 in civilian strength was effected. Effective May 31, 1945, the total strength of the Royal Canadian Air Force on Active Service, including the Women's Division, was 167,858 composed of 35,799 officers and 132,059 other ranks.

**Honours and Decorations.**—The following tabulation shows the awards to Naval, Army and Air Force personnel and to civilians for the period from the outbreak of war to Mar. 31, 1945. At p. 871 a reference appears in regard to the Department of Veterans Affairs having, by Order in Council, assumed the payment of certain grants formerly paid by the United Kingdom Government to Canadians who have won gallantry awards.