1918 set the Admiralty's program at 540 trawlers and 335 drifters at a projected cost of almost £11,960,000.[10]

Growing concern over the transatlantic reach of U-cruisers led to Canada's direct involvement in the construction of trawlers and drifters. On 2 February 1917, the Dominion government approved construction of twelve steel trawlers for patrol work with Canada's Department of Naval Service on the Atlantic coast. Contracts for six of the vessels went to Canadian Vickers Limited of Montreal (which then subcontracted two hulls to the Kingston Shipbuilding Company), and the remainder to the Polson Iron Works in Toronto. Keels for the Battle class trawlers (named after engagements in France that involved the Canadian Corps) were laid in 1917, but delays in the arrival of engines and machinery prevented delivery until 1918. This decision was soon followed by a request from the Admiralty on 5 February 1917 for the Dominion government to administer the construction of thirty-six Castle class trawlers[11] and one hundred drifters at the expense of Britain, with a supplementary order for an additional twenty-four trawlers, known as Lot B, placed by the Admiralty in December 1917. Although all work on the trawlers was to be completed by the end of 1918, delivery of several vessels in Lot B did not occur until the summer of 1919.

The construction of trawlers and drifters has been the focus of study and commentary for almost a century. A detailed overview of the program appeared in *Canadian Railway and Marine World* in February 1919.[12] It was likely written by Commander Joseph William Skentelbery, an engineer with the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve who was loaned to the Department of Naval Service on 23 February 1917 to supervise the construction of trawlers and drifters, and who stayed with the program until his return to England for demobilization on 30 August 1919.[13] The article was strong on technical details set in the context of British requirements for minesweeping and coastal patrol, and provided an explanation for the reliance upon trawlers: being of comparatively low value with a crew of only twelve, losses had minimal impact. Trawlers and drifters received only passing mention in Gilbert Tucker's official history of the Naval Service.[14] More detail was provided by Daniel G. Harris almost twenty-five years later in a pair of articles that have become the standard sources on this subject.[15] Subsequent work by Michael Hadley, Roger Sarty, Brian Tennyson, and the authorial team of *The Seabound*

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[10] TNA, ADM 1/8597/1, 11-12.

[11] This name was taken from the type of vessel predominantly used by Castle Steam Trawlers Limited of Swansea, Wales, and built by its parent firm, Smith's Dock Company.

[12] "Trawler and Drifter Construction in Canada for British Government, Through the Canadian Naval Service Department," *Canadian Railway and Marine World*, February 1919, 89-95.

[13] TNA, Records of the Admiralty, ADM 337/123/261, RNVR officers service record, 131.

[14] Gilbert Norman Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada: Its Official History. Volume 1: Origins and Early Years* (Ottawa, 1962), 237-238, 254-261.

[15] Dan G. Harris, "Canadian Warship Construction on the Great Lakes and Upper St. Lawrence," *Inland Seas* 42:2 (Summer 1986), 115-126, which was republished with minor changes as "Canadian Warship Construction 1917-19: The Great Lakes and Upper St. Lawrence River Areas," *The Mariner's Mirror* 75:2 (1989), 149-158.