

# Navy rethinks sub training

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in Carradale

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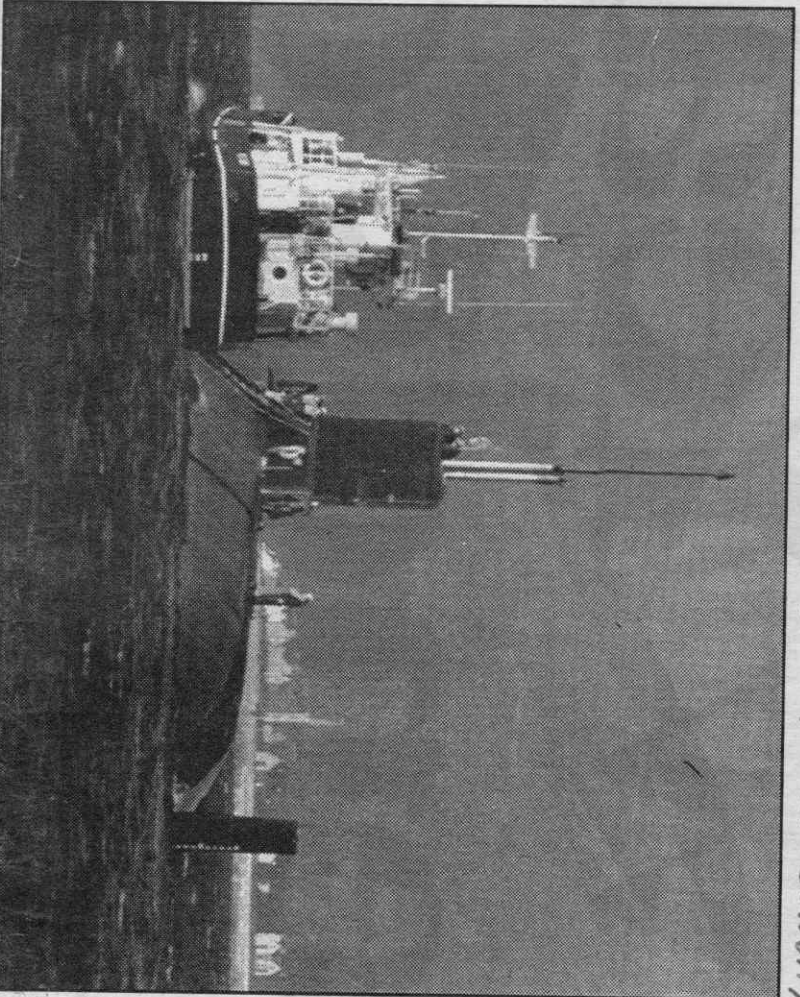
TRAINEE submarine commanders will be required to spend time on fishing boats as part of their "perishers" training course. It is one measure to be introduced by the Navy in the wake of the sinking of the trawler *Antares* — dragged underwater by a submarine on exercise — with the loss of four men. Yesterday, the bodies of three of the crewmen were recovered from the wreckage.

Fishermen hope that prospective submarine commanders on the command qualifying course will be able to learn procedures followed by the industry. When disaster struck last month, the commander of the HMS *Trenchant* was in the final stages of the eight-day perisher course.

Although a secret Naval Board of Inquiry has yet to conclude how the *Antares* was sunk, speculation is mounting in Carradale that the two craft were sailing on parallel courses when a turn at the end of a trawl by the *Antares* was mirrored in the opposite direction by the *Trenchant*, sending the submarine into the nets and sinking the fishing boat.

It has also been confirmed that the signals picked up by the passive sonar system used by Royal Navy submarines to detect and avoid fishing vessels tend to break up close to land. The Armed Forces Minister, Archie Hamilton, was told this at a meeting with leaders of the Clyde Fishermen's Association last Wednesday, called to discuss the sinking of the Carradale fishing boat the *Antares*, by the *Trenchant*, a hunter-killer submarine.

Commodore Jim Taylor, the chief of staff to the flag officer submariners, confirmed that the operation of the sonar



Conflict in the Clyde: a nuclear submarine and supply vessel in a busy fishing area

system was unreliable in certain circumstances because the engine noises the system depends on bounce off the shore.

Last night, preparations were underway to continue the search for the fourth body, that of William Martindale, thought to be still inside the *Antares*. The hull is still lying in over 400 feet of water after earlier attempts failed to lift it to shallows of Sannox Bay, Arran.

In Carradale, the villagers were distressed and relieved that the bodies of three of the crewmen had been found. Relatives of the deceased were too upset to talk about the tragedy but a local minister, the Rev Alastair Dunlop, said

the finding of the bodies was likely to prove cathartic.

"To begin with there was numbness and shock, it quickly became anger. But the healing process which began was artificial. Today we are back to where we were before — three bodies found and one still missing. The healing will begin with the funerals," he said.

Some CFA branches met yesterday to discuss a draft agreement thrashed out with the Navy on Friday which is designed to minimise the possibility of similar tragedies. Early indications from the fishermen were that while the concessions did not go far enough, they would be enough initially to

prevent the threatened blockade by the fishermen of the Gareloch submarine base. The branch at Carradale agreed unanimously to adopt the agreement which provides for the Navy to tell the fishermen where the submarines will be.

In Campbelltown, fishermen's leaders were optimistic over the breakthrough. Addressing the CFA branch, Patrick Stewart said the previous 18 days' events had seen a complete about face by the government and the Navy.

"In a week we've got them to agree to reveal exactly what their intentions are, what they are going to do and when they are going to do it."

The draft code of practice agreed on Friday provides for four hourly bulletins to be broadcast on VHF Channel 6, informing fishermen in which areas of the Clyde submarines will be active in the following 12 hours. A minimum of four hours' notice will be given of submarine movements.

Additionally, as a submarine reaches a new area, it will surface and broadcast on Channel 6 that it is about to enter the area, the path it will follow and how long it expects to take. The agreement covers all Nato forces and will apply to French and Dutch submarines.

An additional concession wrung from naval chiefs is that in future, submarines undertaking trials in the Clyde will be accompanied by a surface tender vessel. Meetings of naval personnel and fishermen are also being planned.

Active consideration is being given to the use of underwater pingers attached either to the nets or trailed from trawling fishing boats.

While it would not enable the submarine to tell precisely where boats and their nets were, it would leave them in no doubt that they were in the vicinity.

The agreement only covers operations in the Clyde. Submarine operations in the Irish Sea and other areas will continue as before, with no information being made available. It is understood that there will be no submerged satellite marine activity in the Clyde until Monday, December 1 the day the new code of practice comes into operation. The marks, according to Stewart, ... a lifting of the veil

secretly over submarine operations. That veil must now be allowed again to serve shroud for any more fishermen."