

RCAF Strength Is Now 125,052; 232,585 at Peak

Ottawa, Oct. 4 (CP).—The RCAF has been cut from its peak strength of 232,585 to its present strength of 125,052 and release centres handled more than 1,000 personnel a day in September, Air Minister Gibson said today in the Commons.

The peak strength which provided men for 48 all-Canadian squadrons overseas, was cut to 181,489 by VE-Day, May 8, Col. Gibson disclosed in presenting his departmental estimates.

Between VE-Day, May 8, and the official announcement of V-Day, Aug. 14, 17,556 personnel had been retired, while from V-Day to Sept. 30, 37,396 more left the service. During September 30,627 passed through the release centres into civilian life—more than 1,000 a day.

The RCAF strength now was 124,052, made of 27,910 overseas and 96,142 in Canada. Of these 28,071 were awaiting release.

The big Commonwealth Training Plan which had 100 schools and 182 other units established across Canada during the peak period, was cut to 29 schools at VE-Day, 17 on V-Day and only four major schools now remain open, pending operation of the interim force.

Cuts in operational units have been no less drastic. On VE-Day there were 26 operational squadrons in Canada and on Sept. 30 only nine remained. Only five of the 24 original operational stations in Canada remain open.

From VE-Day to Oct. 1, 37,907 personnel have been repatriated from overseas and of this number 6,455 were brought home in September.

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