Fibre-glass boat firm hopes to employ 50% more men

WORK on Halmatic's new factory at Hatston is almost complete, making it the most northerly company in the U.K. engaged in the construction of large Glass Reinforced Plastic Fishing and Commercial vessels.

The ex-wartime hangar of 18,000 square feet floor space has now virtually been reconstructed to provide up-to-date facilities for the production of large G.R.P. structures to the requirements of Lloyds Register of Shipping and the White Fish Authority, etc.

The new factory is heated by two large oil-fired blown hot air heaters capable of maintaining a temperature of 60°F throughout the year, and a new purpose-built 15-ton mobile lifting gantry has been installed to handle the large reinforced plastic structures.

The Orcadian labour force currently employed, having undergone four months training at the parent company Halmatic Ltd., Havant, are now engaged upon the manufacture of the hull male plug for the new Halmatic/Watson 50'/54' inshore fishing vessel and also the final preparation work required before the new Halmatic 36' fishing boat goes into production.

At present a direct work force of ten Orcadians is employed who have adapted themselves to the new skills involved in the manufacture of large moulds and mouldings.

Interest in the new vessels is such that it is hoped by the end of 1971 the work force will be increased 50% to meet both home and overseas demands.

FISHERMEN'S INTEREST

Since Halmatic became involved in the Scottish fishing scene interest in G.R.P. shown by fishermen has gathered considerable impetus such that it is hoped to have four 36' G.R.P. lobster boats completed and in service by the end of 1971 ,and two of the new 50'/54' multi-purpose fishing vessels completed and fishing by midsummer 1972. A very encouraging level of interest was also shown by Irish fishermen in reinforced plastic in both types of vessels as was evident by the number of visitors at Halmatic's stand at the World Fishing Exhibition Dublin this year.

Considerable interest has also been shown locally in G.R.P. for general industrial moulding work in the Highlands area in view of its advantages over steel and other materials in terms of annual maintenance costs. Halmatic (Scotland) Ltd. will continue to maintain the high quality of moulding work set down by the parent company Halmatic Ltd., Havant and all vessels moulded will be under Lloyds Register of Shipping's supervision and to the requirements set down by the White Fish Authority.