

March 2026

Building closer connections between Canadians and members of our Military Community

From the desk of the President

Introduction

With everything happening in the world today, I find it challenging to even know where to start this report. Current events are unfolding rapidly, making this a difficult time for us all.

International Events

I seem to have missed the news coverage about the American Congress declaring war on Iran. According to the American constitution, it is Congress that has the authority to declare war.

Additionally, I must have missed President Donald Trump's plan regarding the execution of the war. It is difficult to question his intentions or plans for the war when they have not been clearly communicated.

The price of gasoline has increased significantly in Canada and many other countries. Perhaps President Trump will consider providing Canada with a subsidy to help offset the rising gas prices, along with a waiver of all tariffs currently imposed against Canada.

It seems apparent that President Trump's actions have had a negative impact on both Americans and Canadians. Like other global developments, we will have to wait and see how things progress.

GCC Updates and Local Matters

On the local front, the GCC has hosted some topical and informative speakers recently. Your feedback is important and always appreciated. If you would like to share your thoughts, please email me at tomdeangcc@rogers.com. I welcome hearing from all our members.

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2025 Bursary Presentation at HMCS Prevost

Bursary winners S1 Mayerli Carolina Altamirano Lozano and S2 Maya A. Nolan with Cdr Janet Lang, Commanding Officer, HMCS Prevost



Congratulations to all of our GCC 2025 Bursary Program Recipients!

From the desk of the President

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Membership Changes

After several years of dedicated service on the GCC Executive, Mike Leatham has departed from the GCC. Mike served as our Vice President Tracking, faithfully monitoring attendance at all our regular general meetings. We extend our thanks to Mike and wish him every success in his future endeavours.

Meeting Attendance and Format

There has been some concern regarding the low turnout for meetings at the Grove at the Western Fair. Despite reports of excellent food, we require a minimum of 25 paying members in attendance. I recall that there was considerable pressure to return to in-person meetings following Covid. To meet the needs of all our members, we have adopted a hybrid meeting format, offering both an in-person and a Zoom option. We are pleased to see members participating in either format and encourage everyone to actively support the GCC by attending our meetings, whether in person or online.

Audio-Visual Support Needed

The GCC is currently seeking someone to assist with the audio-visual aspect of our meetings. This role includes setting up the GCC laptop to operate both at the Grove and on Zoom, helping us ensure a pleasant experience for all members, regardless of how they attend. If you are interested, please contact me at tomdeangcc@rogers.com. I would be delighted to discuss this opportunity with you.

Tom Dean
President, GCC London and Region

2026 GCC Executive

President	Tom Dean
Past President	Geoff Hutton
VP Communications	Kevin Patterson
VP Special Projects	Eric Thomson
VP Programming	Grant Hopcroft
Secretary	Randy Harden
Treasurer	John Martin

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Connections Editors

Kevin Patterson - VP Communications
Tom Dean - President and Editorial Consultant
On site photos: Eric Thomson, Randy Harden, Grant Hopcroft
Screenshots: Gary Nash, Jim Dean



Every Member should be a GCCPP

(Garrison Community Council Project Person)

Who Can Participate in the GCC? All Of Us!

The Garrison Community Council is open to any individual, or organization representative wishing to participate in any activity to raise awareness of and support for the local military community - past and present.



GCC's Mission to build a greater understanding, support and appreciation of Canada's military.

Our three fundamental tenets are
Support, Assist and Connect.

GCC March General Meeting



Our speaker was **Andrew Service, Business Development Manager at General Dynamics Land Systems London (GDLS).**

Andrew Service is the Manager for Strategy and Business Development for General Dynamics Land Systems–Canada responsible for the Canadian market, appointed in May 2023.

Mr. Service’s responsibilities in this role include building trusted customer relations, developing a detailed understanding of the Canadian Armed Forces security priorities and defence requirements, and promoting the company’s range of combat-proven technologies, platforms and services. Mr. Service works with GDLS teams (Program, Engineering, Supply Chain, Production and Sustainment) across the organization to inform customer requirements and position GDLS’s products and services for future new business opportunities. Andrew is based in London, Ontario, Canada.

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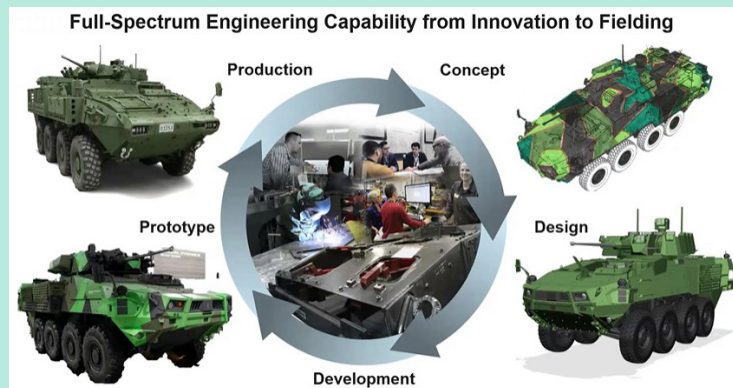


GCC March General Meeting

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Mr. Service brings to this position more than 25 years of experience in the defense industry. Prior to his current role, Andrew was the Project Engineering Manager for GDLS-C's USMC, US Army Stryker, FMS and International contracts. In this position, he managed the development and test of our most networked, light weight and digitally advanced platform; this platform was selected by the USMC for the ARV program. Andrew was previously the Program Manager for the Canadian LAV UP Program from the Definition phase through to the LORIT extension. Previous to that, Andrew was posted in South Africa and held Engineering and Program Management positions on the MRAP program.

Andrew provided a very informative presentation about GCLS activities along with details about Canada's plans for the army over the next few years. <https://gdmissionsystems.ca/about-us/gd-in-canada> During our meeting Bursary Chair Erik Thomson introduced a facebook presentation by one of our 2025 bursary winners, S2 M A Molan, HMCS Prevost. The presentation provides some insight into the quality of the GCC bursary winners. <https://www.facebook.com/reel/929795722973528>





A tribute to my friend Tim Cook, CM, Ph.D., FRSC

By Patrick Dennis

Dr. Tim Cook, passed away on 26 October 2025 at age 54, after a valiant battle against Hodgkin's disease which he had fought against for more than a dozen years. Tim was Chief Historian and Director of Research at the Canadian War Museum, and a regular television commentator on Remembrance Day and at other major war anniversaries in Europe. His untimely death was not only a great loss to the military history community, but to all Canadians. For his beloved wife and three daughters, the grief is unimaginable. For his colleagues at the War Museum, the shock and sadness of his passing is immeasurably deep. I share their sadness.

Tim Cook was my friend and, more remarkably, considering the age difference, he was also a fine mentor. In the early days of my work as a military historian, he was very encouraging. Indeed, on first reading my paper on the seminal role of Canadian conscripts in the First World War, he declared that I had "turned a new page in Canadian military history. The "bad news," he humorously added, was that I now had to write a book. Truth be known, though, Tim was a friend and mentor to countless historians, while respected and admired by his peers, here and around the world.

Tim's family aside, his greatest legacy will be his enormous body of award-winning books. Indeed, his bright future was cemented by his first scholarly tome: *No Place To Run* (UBC Press, 1999), a superb analysis of the Canadian experience with gas warfare in the First World War. That was when the military history community first learned of this budding star. Educated at Trent University and the Royal Military College, his scholarship was impressive, thanks in no small part due to the fact that he had toiled away for months at a time at Library and Archives Canada, where his father, Dr. Terry Cook, had once been a leading archivist.

Tim soon carved out a unique path. His military history was not only popular with his readers (not to mention commercially successful), but more importantly, it featured impeccable research. And, while his fluid writing style made for page turning easy-reads, his work was regularly a tour-de-force, complete with the most insightful analysis. But it was his focus on individual soldiers that distinguished his work above all else. Their stories, their suffering, and their failures and triumphs were always front and centre, to the delight of his readers.

Over the years, our paths crossed at many history conferences, where I witnessed first hand his passion for military history, which was always evident in his books and manifestly so in his public talks. Perhaps, in this respect, Tim will likely be best remembered for his life-long pursuit of a simple goal, one that he underscored so eloquently in *The Fight For History* (Allen Lane, 2020). There he challenged many in "the ivory towers of universities," whose "fierce if misplaced convictions" about war in general and Canada's role, particularly in the Second World War, reflected an "absurd prejudice by scholars who were supposed to be open-minded." This "fight for history," he wrote, is hard work and must be waged at all levels of Canadian society. "We must push back against apathy and indifference," he added. "We must tell our stories, truthfully and bravely. For if we do not embrace our history, no one else will."

At the Windsor Military Studies Conference in February 2018, Tim was the keynote speaker, there to speak about "The Vimy Legend." Nature intervened, however, with a massive snowstorm, and the conference was postponed a day. Fortunately, this gave me the lucky chance to spend an entire evening alone with Tim, and to learn about many of those things that brought joy to his life, along with a few of the professional concerns that troubled him deeply. What struck me most was his insatiable curiosity, and more remarkably, how humble he was. A raconteur in his own right, he regaled me with humorous stories about his childhood, his beloved parents, and his cherished family. And, after sharing more than a few glasses, Tim insisted that we cross the road to Dieppe Park and visit the iconic Essex Scottish war memorial that is duplicated on Red Beach in France. It was a short but hazardous journey down a steep, slippery slope, after which Tim (a former hockey and rugby player) marched resolutely through two feet of snow to pay his respects at the monument.

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A tribute to my friend Tim Cook, CM, Ph.D., FRSC *Continued from Page 5*



“Tim was a rare and remarkable soul . . . a man who had faced life’s trials time and again, never losing his courage, his spirit, or his hope. . . .He cared deeply about Canadian military history, about bringing to life stories that were truthful, meaningful, and rigorous, never shying away from the darker corners of our history . . . He was also the general we all wanted to follow into battle — a war fought not with swords, but with words, for history pursued with care, rigour, and heart.”

It was a short but hazardous journey down a steep, slippery slope, after which Tim (a former hockey and rugby player) marched resolutely through two feet of snow to pay his respects at the monument. I recall that as he stood there, alone and silent, almost reverentially for a few moments, it was then that I wondered, how much energy and how much history is this brilliant mind channeling right now. Quite a bit as it turned out.

Over the years we continued to stay occasionally in touch, and he continued to offer advice on my writing. Alas, he hosted his final conference at the War Museum on “Oral History and the Veterans’ Experience (Oct. 2–5, 2025), and wrote asking if I would attend. I said no, so he encouraged me to attend online, which I did. Sadly, when Tim gave the closing remarks, I sensed right then that he was struggling physically. More passionate than ever of the important “fight for history,” and eloquent as ever, still I feared he was failing. His voice was not quite right. So I wrote to him straight away, first to praise him for a great conference, but also to note that his “voice was a bit raspy . . . hopefully only for the fact that [he] had been speaking to countless attendees, and not for any other reason.” He replied only a few hours later.

“Funny thing,” he wrote back, “I was touring someone through the galleries and stopped before your [grandfather] in the conscription area,” then added, “such a powerful photo and story. As for my voice, yes, I fear I have another bout of awfulness in front of me. But we’ll see how it all plays out. I am optimistic. Let’s stay in touch, Tim.” Three weeks later he was gone.

His passing was covered by all major newspapers and electronic media in Canada. One tribute in particular struck me as more poignant than most. In this regard, it is revealing I think what two of his close colleagues, Dr Mélanie Morin-Pelletier and Dr Andrew Burtch, thought. “A defining historian of his generation,” they wrote,

I second these sentiments. I would have followed Tim into battle. He was the bravest person I have ever known. I too will miss him.

Other tributes I would strongly recommend are Frank B. Edwards: Public historian Tim Cook told compelling stories about Canada’s soldiers - *The Globe and Mail*, Andrew Cohen’s Farewell to the finest Canadian military historian of his generation | *TVO Today*, and Alan Williams’s “History Matters” podcast: A Tribute to Historian Tim Cook - *CIHE*. For other similar responses to the passing of Tim Cook, members might wish to log on to Paul Woodage of *WW2TV* who hosted an online tribute to Tim Cook: *A Titan of History - A Tribute Show* on 28 November 2025. That website helpfully notes that “Tim Cook was one of Canada’s most prolific, best known, and influential historians and authors. He published 19 books and dozens of scholarly articles and contributed hundreds of conference presentations, public addresses, and media interviews. Some of his books won the Ottawa Book Award for Literary Non-Fiction (four-time winner), the J. W. Dafoe Book Prize (two-time winner), the C. P. Stacey Award (two-time winner), and the Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction. His book *The Good Allies* was one of five shortlisted for the 2025 Lionel Gelber Prize for the world’s best non-fiction works about foreign policy. He served as editor of *Studies in Canadian Military History*, a book series published by the University of British Columbia (UBC) Press in partnership with the Museum. For his contributions to Canadian history, he has been recognized with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation, and the Governor General’s History Award. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and a Member of the Order of Canada.”

Patrick Dennis is a retired Col. in the RCAF, a Canadian military history author and a member of the GCC.

GCC February AGM Meeting



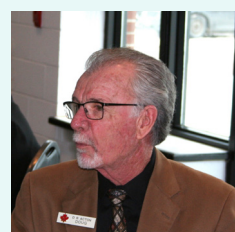
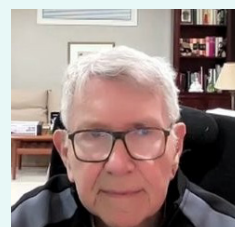
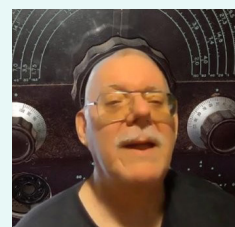
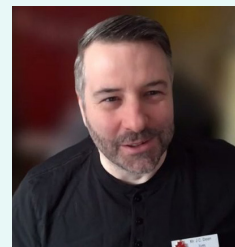
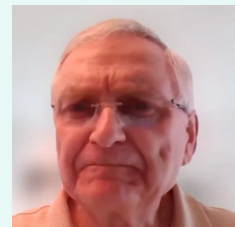
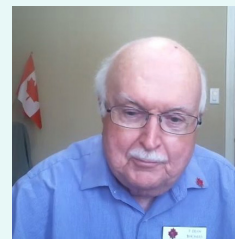
Our guest speaker was **Kim Shippey, National Director of Development for the Homes for Heroes Foundation.**

Kim Shippey brings over 20 years of experience in nonprofit fundraising, with expertise in capital campaign management, major giving, organizational strategy, and branding and communications. With a personal connection to the military through her family, Kim is committed to advocating for the challenges faced by Veterans. Her passion drives her to deliver impactful solutions that meet their needs. In addition, Kim has successfully led several multimillion dollar fundraising initiatives and capital campaigns.

Before joining Homes for Heroes, she held key roles in social service agencies, post-secondary institutions, arts organizations, and independent schools. A firm believer in the power of collaboration and relationship-building, Kim works to cultivate meaningful connections with donors and stakeholders, ensuring every contribution has a lasting impact including; empowering Homes for Heroes to advance its important mission.

Kim holds a Master of Music degree from Western University and the Royal College of Music, U.K., and proudly serves as a board member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals Golden Horseshoe Chapter and is the Chair of the Government Relations Committee.

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GCC February AGM Meeting

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Homes for Heroes Foundation

The Homes For Heroes Foundation was developed in response to the growing number of military Veterans who are facing crisis as they return to civilian life and find themselves on the path to homelessness.

Our mission is to integrate all our homeless military Veterans into the community through the provision of housing and support services across Canada.

Our Program

Homes For Heroes Foundation (H4HF) delivers a comprehensive supportive housing program for Veterans. Our on-site case workers provide individualized reintegration support tailored to each resident's specific needs and goals. The key focus of the H4HF Veterans' Village Program is to furnish supportive housing within a dedicated "Veterans' Village" community while also providing residents with comprehensive, customized programming.

Visit homesforheroesfoundation.ca for more information

10,000 Veterans are living in a state of homelessness accross Canada.



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Every Hero Deserves A Home



Homes For Heroes has one powerful goal:
End Veteran Homelessness.

We believe that no Veteran should be left behind.



Our Impact



75%+ of donated funds goes directly back into our programs.



87% success rate with Veterans who have graduated from our program.



\$80,000 – estimated annual cost of social services per homeless person

Homes For Heroes supportive model dramatically reduces this burden on the taxpayer.



GCC February AGM Meeting

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London Veterans Village Rendering: Houses



58%
OF HOMELESS VETERANS WERE NOT AWARE OF GOV'T BENEFITS AND NEARLY HALF ASKED FOR HELP TO RECEIVE THEM

2X
VETERANS ARE TWO TIMES AS LIKELY AS NON-VETERANS TO EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS

AS MANY AS 10,000 VETERANS ARE HOMELESS AND LIVING ON THE STREETS IN CANADA

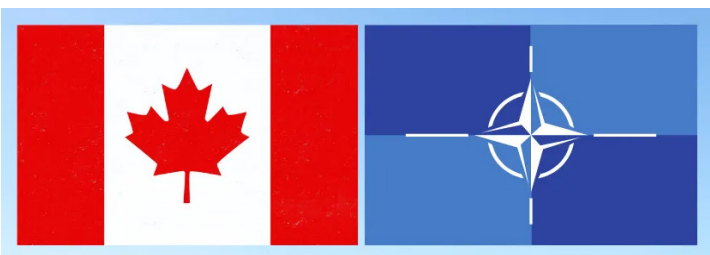
THE TYPE OF SUPPORT MOST FREQUENTLY REQUESTED BY HOMELESS VETERANS IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING

49
THE AVERAGE AGE OF A HOMELESS VETERAN IS 49 YEARS

2X
FEMALE VETERANS ARE TWO TIMES AS LIKELY THAN MALE VETS TO EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS

Now Is the Time to Take Action

Canada, NATO reaffirm their support to the sovereignty of Greenland



Canada, NATO, reaffirmed their mutual commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Denmark, including Greenland.

Prime Minister, Mark Carney, met with the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Mark Rutte, on the margins of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland.

Canada's Prime Minister Carney and NATO Secretary General Rutte reaffirmed their mutual commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Denmark, including Greenland. They underscored that decisions on the future of Greenland are for Greenland and Denmark to make.

Earlier this week, Carney considered sending Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) troops to Greenland after concerns on U.S's Greenland announcement, with U.S. President Donald Trump's threat to impose tariffs on eight European countries (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Finland) that oppose U.S. purchase of Greenland.

The leaders recognised the test facing the NATO Alliance and emphasised the first response to that test must be to ensure the security of the Arctic, including accelerating

new investments in the Alliance's northwestern flank. The Prime Minister noted Canada's mission to quadruple defence spending over the next decade, with significant investments to reinforce Canada's Arctic sovereignty. This includes the Arctic Over-the-Horizon Radar, year-round presence across land, air, and sea, and new critical infrastructure.

The Prime Minister and the Secretary General discussed ongoing peace talks on Ukraine. Building on the Coalition of the Willing meeting in Paris, France, earlier this month, they underscored the importance of the Alliance's support for advancing Ukraine's peace and security. Through the Coalition of the Willing and other partnerships, Canada is working to strengthen Ukraine's defence capabilities, secure the return of unlawfully deported Ukrainian children, and support long-term recovery and prosperity for the Ukrainian people.

Together with allies and partners, Canada will continue to deter Russian aggression and defend peace and security. Prime Minister Carney and Secretary General Rutte agreed to remain in close contact.



WWW.CANADIANDEFENCEREVIEW.COM

Canada Achieves NATO 2% Target, Invests \$3 Billion in Halifax Infrastructure



In an increasingly dangerous and divided world, Canada must be prepared – to defend ourselves and our values, to secure our sovereignty, and to stand with our Allies. For too long, Canada did not sufficiently build that strength. By 2014, Canada’s defence spending had fallen to just 1% of our GDP, half of our obligations as a NATO member.

The world has changed, and Canada must change with it. That is why, six weeks after the election, Canada’s new government released an ambitious plan to rebuild, rearm, and reinvest in the Canadian Armed Forces. A core objective is to achieve the NATO 2% defence spending target this year. For the past 10 months, we have moved at unprecedented speed and scale – working across over a dozen federal departments and agencies to spend more than \$63 billion, the largest year-over-year increase to Canada’s defence spending in generations.

As a result of that work, **Canada has achieved the 2% defence expenditure target – half a decade ahead of the previous government’s schedule.** The 2% target is a foundation for an even stronger, more independent, more secure country.

As we accelerate our path to NATO’s new target of 3.5% on core defence spending and an additional 1.5% of GDP on defence and security-related investments by 2035, Prime Minister Carney announced **more than \$3 billion in infrastructure and defence-related investments across Atlantic Canada:**

- In Nova Scotia, we are making major, targeted investments to modernise critical infrastructure, build new facilities to support the next generation of naval and air fleets, and expand training and operational capacity. We are investing:

- **\$1.2 billion to modernise critical power and municipal service infrastructure at CFB Halifax Dockyard and Stadacona** – upgrading essential services and facilities to ensure the base has sufficient power and utilities to support new capabilities and future naval operations.
- **\$648 million to construct two new aviation support facilities at 14 Wing Greenwood** – supporting the Royal Canadian Air Force’s CP-8A Poseidon fleet and CQ-9B Guardian with modern hangars, maintenance, and operational infrastructure.
- **Over \$180 million to build the Combatant Training and Integration Centre** – supporting training, operations, and integration for the Royal Canadian Navy’s future river-class destroyers.
- **\$82.5 million to acquire Halifax Gate** – a 475-acre waterfront industrial site that will support current and future Royal Canadian Navy operations, including the movement of personnel, ships, and supplies.
- **\$60 million for a new, 140-unit apartment complex for Canadian Armed Forces members, near 12 Wing Shearwater** – because every member of our Armed Forces deserves a safe, high-quality place to call home.
- In New Brunswick, we are investing more than \$1 billion in the CFB Gagetown Range and Training Area – introducing new ground-based air defence systems and ensuring our soldiers train on infrastructure built to last the next century. We are also investing \$20.2 million to upgrade transition centres at CFB Gagetown, improving support for Canadian Armed Forces members as they transition to civilian life.

This \$3 billion package further builds on Canada’s mission to rebuild, rearm, and reinvest in the Canadian Armed Forces. That strategy rests on four pillars: investing in the foundations of defence – the women and men who serve, and the equipment and the infrastructure they use; expanding and enhancing our military capabilities; strengthening Canada’s defence industry; and diversifying Canada’s defence partnerships.

Canada Achieves NATO 2% Target *Continued from Page 10*

Over the next decade, Canada will unleash half a trillion dollars in defence investment – from submarines and aircraft to drones, sensors, and radar systems. In October, we launched the Defence Investment Agency to overhaul and streamline Canada’s defence procurement so the Canadian Armed Forces have the world-class equipment they need. And last month, we announced Canada’s first-ever Defence Industrial Strategy – a bold plan to get our Armed Forces what they need, when they need it; scale Canadian defence companies; and put hundreds of billions of dollars to work in the strategic sectors of our economy.

Canada’s new government is delivering on its promise – to make generational investments in the women and men of the Canadian Armed Forces and to further accelerate these investments in the years to come. In a more dangerous and divided world, Canada is taking full responsibility for defending our sovereignty and building our strength as a reliable partner and Ally.

“In moments of crisis, when people see the Maple Leaf on a sleeve, they see hope. They get help. Canada’s new government made a promise to rebuild, rearm, and reinvest in the Canadian Armed Forces – and we’re getting it done. In this more fractured and darker world, Canadian leadership will be defined not just by the strength of our values, but also by the value of our strength. The Canadian Armed Forces are the foundation of the strength on which we are building Canada strong and free.”

– The Rt. Hon. Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada

“Reaching the 2% benchmark is a foundational step in renewing Canada’s defence and a clear statement of resolve in a more dangerous world. Over the past year, we have made sustained investments in our people, our readiness, and the capabilities the Canadian Armed Forces need to defend this country. These efforts are strengthening Canada at its core – protecting our sovereignty, securing our continent, and reinforcing our role among Allies. At its heart, this is about trust: that Canadians can rely on their country to be ready, resilient, and prepared for what lies ahead.”

– The Hon. David J. McGuinty, Minister of National Defence

“Atlantic Canada has always punched above its weight when it comes to defending Canada, at home and abroad. For the first time since the Cold War, Canada is making the kind of investment our military needs.

Here in Nova Scotia, that means good jobs, growing industries, and a defence sector that continues to lead. I’m proud of the men and women who serve, and of the communities here that stand behind them.”

– The Hon. Sean Fraser, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

“Canada achieving the 2% commitment half a decade ahead of schedule lays the groundwork for a stronger and more prepared Canadian Armed Forces. The Defence Investment Agency will play an increasingly important role in streamlining procurement and growing our defence industrial base to deliver equipment faster to those who serve. Our generational investments in defence will reinforce Canada’s ability to protect our sovereignty, support our Allies, and respond decisively to a rapidly evolving global security environment.”

– The Hon. Stephen Fuhr, Secretary of State (Defence Procurement)

ADDITIONAL INFO

- At the 2025 NATO Summit in The Hague, Canada and our NATO Allies agreed to a new Defence Investment Pledge of investing 5% of annual GDP by 2035 to ensure our individual and collective security. As part of this pledge, Canada will invest 3.5% of GDP in defence spending and 1.5% of GDP in critical defence and security-related investments.
- Canada officially joined the European Union’s Security Action for Europe (SAFE) initiative at the Munich Security Conference in February 2026. SAFE is a key pillar of the EU’s Readiness 2030 plan, and Canada’s participation in SAFE will enhance defence readiness on both sides of the Atlantic.
- Atlantic Canada plays a critical role in advancing Canada’s economic and national security – home to nearly 10,000 direct aerospace and defence jobs, representing 20% of Canada’s defence industry employment.

ON TARGET: The F-35 Versus Gripen Debate Intensifies



By Scott Taylor

Nobody likes a bully, and at his recent World Economic Forum speech in Davos, Switzerland Prime Minister Mark Carney garnered international kudos in calling for middle powers to stand-up to would be super power bullies.

Carney deliberately refrained from naming the US in his brief address, but President Donald J. Trump was astute enough to know Carney's words were aimed at him.

In his verbal backlash at the perceived criticism, Trump made the crass remark that NATO allies such as Canada had stayed "a little off the front-lines" during the decades long conflict in Afghanistan. Naturally, such a statement drew rebukes from all the NATO countries whose soldiers had spilled blood fighting in that US led occupation.

Trump then singled out Canada and Carney for not being 'grateful' enough for the protection the US will provide with Trump's proposed new Golden Dome missile defence shield.

To revive all the old insults, Trump also referred to Carney as 'Governor' in a recent Truth Social post. This is ofcourse reflecting Trump's oft repeated claim of forcibly submitting Canada into becoming the 51st state, either through economic pressure or military force.

Under normal circumstances Ambassadors would attempt to de-escalate inter-state tensions by making apologies or sane-splaining the rantings of the US President.

However, incumbent US Ambassador Pete Hoekstra has decided instead to double down and fan the flames of unnecessary instigation.

In a January 26 interview with CBC, Hoekstra said that Canadians could face dire consequences if the decision is made not to move forward with the full purchase of Lockheed Martin F-35 fighter jets.

Hoekstra went so far as to state that if Canada opts out of the F-35 purchase, the long standing NORAD agreement would

be null and void. As a result, Canada would need to accept US fighter jets flying in our airspace at their own discretion.

In other words, Canada either buys the US built F-35's or we forfeit the sovereignty of our own air space. That is the logic and tactics of a mob boss.

However, given Carney's brave words of standing up to bullies, Hoekstra has just handed the Prime Minister a golden opportunity to actually get his elbows up and deliver a blow to Trump's bottom line.

For those who have not been following this ongoing saga closely, here is a brief recap. The RCAF announced that it intended to purchase 88 Lockheed Martin F-35 Fighter jets in December 2022 at a total projected cost of \$19 billion. That cost would later jump to more than \$27 billion.

However, Canada actually only committed to buying the first 16 F-35s for a price tag of \$7 billion. The first of those aircraft will be delivered this year, 2026, but will not enter actual operations in Canada until 2027.

In March of 2025 during the opening rounds of Trump's tariff wars, Carney ordered the RCAF to review the overall F-35 project. Yes, we are well into the first contracted phase of the deal and we will undoubtedly take delivery of those first 16 F-35's.

In March of 2025 during the opening rounds of Trump's tariff wars, Carney ordered the RCAF to review the overall F-35 project. Yes, we are well into the first contracted phase of the deal and we will undoubtedly take delivery of those first 16 F-35's.

However, Canada has the option of walking away from the remainder of that program. During the competition to find a replacement for Canada's aged out fleet of CF-18 Hornet fighters, the Saab Gripen had finished a close second to the F-35.

Since the moment Carney ordered the F-35 review,

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ON TARGET: The F-35 Versus Gripen Debate Intensifies *Continued from page 12*

Saab has dusted off their proposal and sharpened their pencils. Last week they offered to sell Canada a package of 72 Gripen fighters along with 6 GlobalEye Surveillance aircraft. The airframe for the GlobalEye are already produced in Canada by Bombardier and Saab has offered to assemble the fleet of Gripens in Canada.

The latest estimate on this deal is that it would create 12,600 jobs in Canada's aviation industry. No specific dollar figure was made public by Saab on this latest offer.

However, even if it is the same ballpark as the remainder of the F-35 purchase, roughly \$21 billion, the Gripens are far more economical to operate. The cost to fly a Gripen is estimated at \$8-12K per hour, whereas the complex F-35 sucks up between \$33-50K for every flying hour.

As for the longer term sustainability of those aviation jobs moving forward, Ukraine has expressed interest in acquiring up to 100 Gripens to re-equip any post-war Ukraine Air Force, and the potential world wide market for GlobalEye is substantial.

That said, stalwart RCAF proponents of the F-35 and only the F-35 need to concede the fact that the Gripen is an excellent Arctic interceptor fighter with an availability rate that puts the complex, maintenance heavy F-35 to shame.

The two fighters are purpose built for different purposes.

The F-35 is a stealth strike aircraft meant to take out a near-peer's air defences on day one of a conflict. On the other hand the Gripen excels at intercepting hostile threats in the high Arctic from remote landing strips. There is no reason that the RCAF would not be able to operate a mixed fleet of fighters.

But, it was Ambassador Hoekstra himself who told Canadians that we are not able to sustain a mixed fleet.

Let's prove him wrong. We need to cancel the remainder of the F-35 purchase, pivot to Saab, bolster our domestic aviation industry and in doing so show the world that Carney walks the walk.

As for Hoekstra's threats about NORAD airspace being controlled by the US, I suggest we hastily invest in some serious Surface to Air Missile systems, such as the French-Italian Aster family of missiles.

Once we actually possess those, we could tell Ambassador Hoekstra and President Trump to FAFO.



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CANADIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

New system sharpens training realism



CAPTION: A soldier from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment aligns the transmitter from the Enhanced Personal Area Network during a live integrated systems display at Townsville Field Training Area, Queensland. Story by Leading Aircraftman Chris Tsakisiris. Photos by Lance Corporal Jessica Gray.

A new system that allows soldiers and vehicles to simulate hits, casualties and damage during training was used on Exercise Keldie Cup 25 in Townsville late last year.

Known as the Enhanced Personal Area Network (EPAN), the wearable laser-based training equipment provides feedback when fighting simulated enemies.

It also digitally replicates sound and recoil traditionally achieved with blanks.

Cubic, the Defence contractor, employed drones to oversee the activity and monitored the system's use.

2nd Cavalry Regiment troop leader Lieutenant Harry Carson was the officer in charge of the EPAN during the training.

"Cubic monitored the drone's area through its camera feed and simulated mortar strikes by tracking friendly and enemy positions," Lieutenant Carson said.

"When activated, soldiers received the corresponding sound cues through their modules."

EPAN integrates with small arms and can simulate a laser from a 120mm main gun to indicate when and where soldiers and vehicles are hit.

New system sharpens training realism *Continued from Page 13*



CAPTION: A soldier from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment aligns the transmitter from the Enhanced Personal Area Network during a live integrated systems display at Townsville Field Training Area, Queensland. Story by Leading Aircraftman Chris Tsakisiris. Photos by Lance Corporal Jessica Gray.



CAPTION: Drones were used to oversee the live integrated systems display.

Armoured vehicles are fitted with a rear-mounted visual indicator releasing smoke and flashing lights when struck, providing crews with confirmation of a hit.

Vehicle crews and commanders also receive data through rear-mounted displays and tablets.

The system provides immediate awareness of impacts and virtual damage states, supporting faster decision-making during missions.

By removing the need for adjudicators, it enables a more autonomous training environment.

As a digital system, it can be used in non-Defence training areas, expanding flexibility where blank and live fires are restricted.



CAPTION: A soldier from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment is issued an Enhanced Personal Area Network by Cubic Defence Australia during the live integrated systems display.

CONTACT Newsletter #322

<https://www.contactairlandandsea.com/2026/03/13/new-system-sharpens-training-realism/>

GCC January General Meeting

The guest speaker for our January Meeting was John Walsh, Associate Professor of Classical Studies and Director of the School of Languages and Literatures at the University of Guelph.

His talk, ***Arma et Litterae: the Serving Scholar Program***, will discuss the intellectual origins and practical aims of the Serving Scholar Program, as well as ***Project Reunion***, a commemorative

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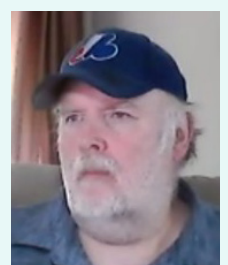
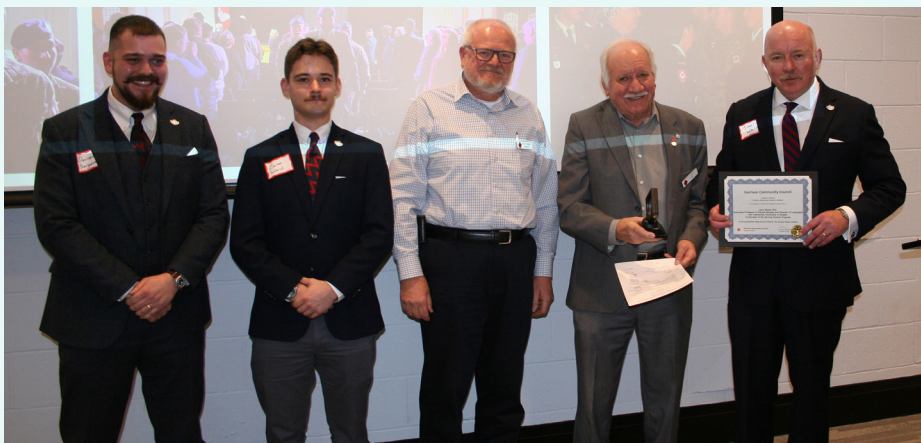
GCC January General Meeting

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scholarly initiative that will take students who are serving members of the Armed Forces to WW1 battlefields and memorials as the culminating academic and civic project marking the 100th anniversary of War Memorial Hall.

John Walsh is the co-founder of the Serving Scholar Program, which supports members of the Canadian Armed Forces pursuing higher education and strengthens civil-military relations within the university.

His scholarly work focuses on ancient political thought, war, leadership, and the relationship between education and civic authority. His peer-reviewed research examines how classical societies understood citizenship, military obligation, and the moral limits of power, with particular attention to the ways states use history, ritual, and commemoration to sustain political order in times of strain.



Defence Investment Agency awards contract to Colt Canada to replace CAF assault rifles



DIA – Defence Investment Agency AWARDS contract to Colt Canada to acquire up to 65,402 assault rifle systems

The Honourable Stephen Fuhr, Secretary of State (Defence Procurement), and the Minister of National Defence, the Honourable David J. McGuinty, announced that the Defence Investment Agency has awarded a contract to Colt Canada of Kitchener, Ontario, to acquire up to 65,402 assault rifle systems under the Canadian Modular Assault Rifle (CMAR) initiative. By awarding this contract to Colt Canada, the Government of Canada is reinforcing the recently announced Defence Industrial Strategy and its commitment to invest in Canadian innovation.

Canada is committed to rebuilding, rearming and reinvesting in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to ensure they receive the equipment they need to achieve mission success and protect Canadians.

The CMAR project will be delivered through 2 phases:

- Phase 1 includes procuring 30,000 General Service (GS) rifles over a three-year period. The estimated value of this initial phase is approximately \$307 million, including applicable taxes.
- Phase 2, which is expected to begin in year four under an optional provision, will include procuring the remaining 19,207 GS rifles, 16,195 Full Spectrum (FS) rifles, as well as associated ancillaries.

This contract will provide a modern replacement for the current C7/C8 assault rifle fleet, which has been in service for more than 35 years. The new rifles will enhance the

awareness, protection, and reliability of deployed CAF members. The project also includes system integration and engineering support.

The investment will bolster Canada's defence industrial base for years to come, creating good-paying jobs and contributing roughly \$10 million annually to Canada's GDP over the next five years. Colt Canada's commitment to include at least 80% Canadian content will also generate opportunities for suppliers across the country. Further economic benefits are expected under the Industrial and Technological Benefits (ITB) Policy, which ensures that defence procurements generate long-term, high-value investments in Canada.

This contract is part of the first wave of high-priority defence procurements to be implemented by the Defence Investment Agency. The Agency play a central role in implementing Canada's Defence Industrial Strategy by engaging industry earlier in the procurement process, supporting innovation and aligning procurement strategies with long-term military and industrial priorities.

Together, the Defence Investment Agency and the Defence Industrial Strategy are making generational investments in Canada's defence ecosystem—transforming how Canada equips its military, strengthening domestic supply chains, and ensuring the Canadian Armed Forces have the equipment they need to keep Canada safe and sovereign.

To replace the current service rifle, the DIA made a deliberate decision to advance CMAR through a direct acquisition for asset replacement, and advanced the procurement using a Risk-Based Approach (RBA). These acquisition for asset replacement, and advanced the procurement using a Risk-Based Approach (RBA). These actions reflect Canada's commitment to streamlining processes and accelerating the delivery of equipment to the CAF. This investment supports Canada's efforts to meet its NATO defence spending targets, while ensuring the CAF has the modern equipment needed to respond to evolving operational demands.

Quotes

“Providing modern, reliable capabilities to the Canadian Armed Forces is central to the Defence Investment Agency's mission, and our streamlined approach will deliver this capability to our troops faster.”

Defence Investment Agency awards contract to Colt Canada *Continued from Page 16*

This contract with Colt Canada advances Canada's new Defence Industrial Strategy by strengthening domestic production, creating good-paying jobs, and growing our economy. By investing in advanced systems and Canadian expertise, we are ensuring our Forces remain ready for the challenges ahead while building a stronger, more resilient defence industry at home."

- The Honourable Stephen Fuhr
Secretary of State (Defence Procurement)

"Today's announcement reflects our government's ongoing commitment to ensuring the Canadian Armed Forces have the capabilities they need to protect Canadians and contribute to global security. The Canadian Modular Assault Rifle project is an important step in modernizing the equipment our service members rely on every day. By investing in modern, reliable tools and working with a trusted Canadian partner, we are supporting the operational readiness of our Armed Forces while strengthening Canada's defence industry and the skilled workforce behind it."

- The Honourable David J. McGuinty
Minister of National Defence

"Today's announcement is a win for Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces. Rifles remain foundational to soldier effectiveness in the field, and this development brings over 40 years of technology evolution to Canada's fighting forces. This represents tangible progress, and a clear example of how we can move with greater agility to bring modern, reliable equipment to soldiers. It is about delivering the Army Canada needs, today, and into the future."

- Lieutenant-General M.C. Wright
Commander Canadian Army



Minister Joly Tours KSS-III submarine that was recently launched for the Republic of Korea Navy and is one of the leading contenders for the Canadian Patrol Submarine Project

Press Release

Hanwha Ocean was extremely pleased to host the Honourable Melanie Joly, Canada's Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions. During her visit, Minister Joly toured one of the largest and most advanced shipbuilding facilities in the world, including the active production line for the KSS-III submarine. She also boarded and toured the KSS-III that was launched for the Republic of Korea Navy on October 22 – the exact same submarine that Hanwha is proposing for the Canadian Patrol Submarine Project (CPSP).

In discussions with Minister Joly, Hanwha emphasized its commitment to establishing a robust and long-term strategic partnership with the Government of Canada and Canadian industry in the areas of defence, space, sustainable energy, critical minerals and other areas that will create jobs and economic growth, accelerate Canada's defence capabilities, and enhance cooperation, partnership and supply chains between Canada and South Korea – a relationship that is becoming more and more important, and one that supports the objectives of Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy. Already, Hanwha has MOUs and Teaming Agreements in place with more than a dozen Canadian companies.

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Minister Joly Tours KSS-III submarine that was recently launched for the Republic of Korea Navy *Continued from Page 17*

Minister Joly, responsible for Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada and Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, discussed the strategic and economic aspects of Hanwha's CPSP proposal. The visit provided an opportunity to assess South Korea's industrial capabilities and explore potential collaboration that could support job creation and economic growth in Canada.

In August 2025, Hanwha Ocean's KSS-III was selected by the Government of Canada as a qualified supplier for CPSP. The KSS-III is a proven, in-service, in-active production submarine that fully meets and exceeds all High-Level Mandatory Requirements (HLMRs) set by the Government of Canada for CPSP. These include superior underwater surveillance capability and deployability in the Arctic with extended range and endurance that will provide stealth, persistence and lethality to ensure that Canada can detect, track, deter and, if necessary, defeat adversaries in all 3 of its oceans.

Importantly, Hanwha Ocean has the fastest delivery schedule, able to deliver four KSS-III submarines to fully replace Canada's current Victoria Class fleet before 2035 if on contract in 2026. Earlier retirement of the Victoria Class fleet will result in estimated savings of approximately \$1 Billion on maintenance and support costs. The additional 8 submarines will be delivered at a rate of one per year, meaning the entire fleet of 12 submarines will be delivered to Canada by 2043. No other option can come anywhere close to this delivery schedule.

Quotes

"It was a great pleasure to host Minister Joly at our shipyard today and show her the proven, in-service and in-production KSS-III submarine that we feel is the best submarine for the Canadian Patrol Submarine Project. Equally important was our discussion on the economic benefits we plan to bring to Canada as part of this project as well as how Canada and South Korea can enhance their relationship in a number of areas that are of strategic importance to both nations."

-VAdm (Ret) Steve SK Jeong, Senior Executive Vice President, Head of Naval Ship International Business, Hanwha Ocean



First production test flight of a RCAF CT-157 Siskin II (Pilatus PC-21) for FAcT program



Press Release

On February 26, the first production test flight of the first CT-157 Siskin II (Pilatus PC-21), destined for the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), successfully took place at the Pilatus production facility in Stans, Switzerland.

The flight, lasting approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes, included advanced mechanical and avionics testing to ensure smooth flight operations and optimal system performance. This included functional testing of the engine, aircraft systems, and flight controls that are a part of Pilatus' manufacturing processes.

"This is a very exciting milestone in the progression of the program," said Charles Caldwell, SkyAlyne's Program Manager for the Future Aircrew Training (FAcT) program. "PC-21s (CT-157s) have been identified as the ideal advanced training platform for RCAF pilots and are an integral piece of the FAcT program."

On the FAcT program, the CT-157 will support two courses: the Advanced Flying Training – Fixed Wing (AFT-FW) course, as well as the Advanced Flying Training – Jet (AFT-Jet) course.

The two-seat aircraft, featuring a 1,600 horsepower PT6A Pratt & Whitney Canada turboprop engine, can reach speeds of 685 km/h. The aircraft can sustain g-forces from positive 8G to negative 4G, ensuring capability to fully meet the demands of military aviation.

