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## Defence Policy Briefing

# Sajjan says Canadian Armed Forces should reflect Canadian population and be gender balanced

Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan says the procurement of the Canadian Surface Combatant, the most complex one in Canadian defence history, is 'going extremely well.'

BY NEIL MOSS

Canada's Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan says the Canadian Armed Forces is striving to reflect its population, and that means gender parity.

The current goal is for the Forces to be composed of 25 per cent women by 2025, but Mr. Sajjan (Vancouver South, B.C.) said that is "just the start." That includes making the Armed Forces more inclusive, and fixing a culture that in 2015 former Supreme Court justice Marie Deschamps said was "sexualized" and "hostile" to women and members of the LGBT community.

Mr. Sajjan said the Department of National Defence is looking at the barriers faced by women in the Forces and wants to make sure it has the right environment by looking at what uniforms and equipment would be best for women.

In a 15-minute telephone interview with *The Hill Times* on Aug. 29, Mr. Sajjan said the national shipbuilding strategy still remains a priority for the government and Canada has the "right expertise" to meet its made-in-Canada approach.

Part of that strategy, is the Canadian Surface Combatant procurement, the most expensive defence procurement in Canadian history, which will have 15 vessels replacing the aging 12 Halifax-class frigates and the four decommissioned Iroquois-class ships.



Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, pictured in this file photograph on the Hill, spoke to *The Hill Times* for a 15-minute interview on Aug. 29 on the national shipbuilding strategy, Canada's Mali peacekeeping mission, gender parity in the Forces, among others. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

There are three bids competing in the procurement, estimated to cost between \$56-billion and \$60-billion, and Mr. Sajjan said it is going "extremely well."

Mr. Sajjan said the winning bid will be selected by the end of the year.

As Canada started a year-long peacekeeping mission in Mali, described by the *Washington Post* as the "the world's most

dangerous UN mission," where more than 150 peacekeepers have been killed since the missions beginning in 2013, Mr. Sajjan said the Canadian peacekeepers have "enough flexibility" to carry out their mission. It has been a concern from a former Canadian Armed Forces general that the inflexibility of Ottawa, reduces a commander's ability to adapt to the challenges of a specific mission.

Mr. Sajjan, a former lieutenant-colonel in the Canadian Armed Forces from 1989 to 2015 and a veteran of the Afghanistan war, said the mission, named Operation Presence, is fully operational and is actively conducting missions, but he doesn't keep track of the day-to-day of the nuances of each specific mission.

*The Q&A has been edited for style and clarity. It is published in its entirety.*

**What are two of three of your key defence priorities that you are looking forward to in this upcoming fall?**

"One thing I can tell you, our No. 1 priority of the government is to look after the women and men of the Canadian Armed Forces and that's been the guiding principle since we created the defence policy. And we have a number of things that we want to achieve but this is a core message we want to [stand on] because we know if we invest in our people, give them the right tools, they're going to be able to carry out the

mission on our behalf. And it allows me, in a privileged manner, to be able to tell the wonderful stories of what they have accomplished."

**On the national shipbuilding strategy, does it still remain a priority of this government?**

"The national shipbuilding strategy is a priority for our government and the reason for it is we need to make sure that we have the right equipment; as we focus on the women and men in the Canadian Armed Forces, we need to make sure they have the right tools to do so. I've visited a number of ships in our Navy and got to see our women and men do some tremendous things. The training that they have and hard work that they put into it and having the ships of the future is going to make them even better. And the national shipbuilding strategy is very important part of that and I look forward to making sure the Canadian Armed Forces are well served. The Arctic patrol vessels, right now currently, is built and is number two and number three has already been started."

**There's been some discussion that the government has hit a refresh on the strategy due to some delays, some cost increases, could you set the record straight if there has been somewhat of a refresh?**

"Well when we started on the defence policy review, we were also doing a good evaluation in making sure that by putting people as our No. 1 priority, how are we going to make sure that they have the right equipment on time. And so we wanted to make sure that the national shipbuilding strategy met that test. So we wanted to look at how we could improve it and one of the things we did do, right from the beginning, I'll give you an example, is the Combat Surface Combatant, by going into a competition to pick a design, we saved two years on that and that's very important for our members of the Canadian Armed Forces to making sure that they're going to get not only equipment on time, but fast as well. So we will always look at improvements to the national shipbuilding strategy and also procurement in general because having timely equipment delivered for our women and men is extremely important for them."

**A key proponent of the strategy was its 'made-in-Canada' approach. Is that still a commitment of the government?**

"As part of our consultations with Canadians, when we conducted the policy

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DEFENCE

# Policy Briefing Defence

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review, we heard from industry that Canadian companies wanted a better opportunity to be able to compete and we know given the tremendous capabilities of the Canadian Armed Forces, we know we have the right expertise located in Canada. Having industry involved was very important, hence the reason why we made some of the changes and investments into procurement. The IDEaS program is just one example that we're using to galvanize the Canadian industry, allowing the talent we have in Canada to support our defence infrastructure."

## On the previously mentioned Canadian Surface Combatant procurement, what's the latest update on that?

"The [inaudible] surface combatant is going to replace our current frigates and the destroyers that we have, and the new technology within is going to support our women and men in the Canadian Armed Forces. And the process is going extremely well. We wanted to make sure that we gave industry enough time so that the right bid process is done correctly. And we're hoping that by the end of this year, we will be able to make the announcement and a selection will be made on the design."

## With a ship like the Type 26 being chosen by both Britain and Australia, two of Canada's key military allies, does that give an advantage to the Type 26 in the competition?

"I would get back to what I said earlier, our No. 1 priority goes back to making sure that the women and men in the Canadian Armed Forces have the right equipment and the only way we're going to be able to do this is to stay focused on the requirements and allow a proper competition to happen, so we are not looking and putting direction to any one ship. We want to make sure that we have a proper competition and that's been ongoing, hence the reason why we've taken some extra time to making sure the right selection is done because we know that if we provide the right tools to for our women and men in the Canadian Armed Forces, they're going to be able to accomplish, not the only the missions on our behalf because they're going to be able to do it in a manner that's going to make Canadian extremely proud and they've demonstrated this, not only historically, but they do this every single day, whether its in Europe, in the Pacific Ocean, in the Atlantic, or even in the Middle East."

## Will the Halifax-class frigates have to go through a second refit before the surface combatant procurement is fully completed?

"We're always going to be looking at opportunities to modernize our equipment because that's something that we need to do. The security challenges are

constantly evolving and we need to make sure that our women and men of the Canadian Armed Forces have the right tools, so we'll always look at any opportunities to modernize and this will be an ongoing and evolving process as we look at replacing all the frigates."

## Are there any plans currently in the books to modernize the frigates?

"In fact, we've made a number of announcements of modernization, all of the frigates have been modernized and our Canadian Armed Forces members have been putting that modernization to good use. When I got to visit HMCS Calgary two years ago I saw the tremendous ability that, that one ship provides. That is only possible because of our people are highly trained and they well equipped. But we've made some additional modernization announcements and I've just made one recently on the [inaudible] system because while they do some very challenging things on our behalf, we need to make sure they are protected. We've already made a number of announcements on modernization some of the defensive systems that will protect the ships against the threats that they face."

## Moving on to Operation Presence, when I spoke to the commander of Canada's Mali mission Col. Chris McKenna, he told me earlier [in August] that the mission can be charged to carry out various aspects, different than the medical evacuation there currently tasked with. Do you foresee that mission shifting or going away from Gao?

"First off, I want to say I'm extremely proud of how the Air Force has been able to set up this mission, having witnessed some of the training that they go through, having seen them operate in different theatres, I know they're going to represent us extremely well. They're trained well, have the appropriate equipment, and the right rules of engagement, not only to protect themselves, their allies, but civilians as well. And to make sure that they have the flexibility, we have given them enough flexibility to carry out their job. So the core priority is for the medical evacuation equipment, but they have enough flexibility on the ground to make those changes, and this is something we have learned over time and when I visited Africa with general [Roméo] Dallaire, this is one thing that he has talked about,

making sure commanders on the ground, not only have the right tools, but also have the right authorities on the ground and that is exactly what we have given the commander there."

## For that mission, when I spoke to Col. McKenna, he said they were deployed and ready to assist when called upon, but they had not been called upon yet. Is there an update on the mission on whether they have actively carrying medical evacuations at this point?

"One thing that myself and our leadership in government approved is we set the right framework, give the right tools, but we pass on that trust to the Canadian Armed Forces, because we need them to take the trust, they're going to be able to carry out the missions far more easily and I'm very happy they were able to come up to full operational capability. We have given them the right tools. They have trained extremely hard and they're having a tremendous impact. They have conducted a number of missions, I don't keep day to day track of exactly what those missions are, but one things I can assure you is that we have faith in trust in them to carry out those mission extremely well."

## It has been a goal for the Armed Forces to have their military composed of 25 per cent women by 2025. How is that process going forward?

"First of all, its extremely important for us to create an environment in the Canadian Armed Forces that's inclusive of all. And hence the reason why we're putting a significance emphasis in our defence policy to making sure that we look after our women and men but also their families as well. The goal is actually to get to representation of our population, which is gender par-

ity and the number we have set out so that we can actually have a plan to work with is the 25 per cent but that is not the end, that is just the start to achieve gender parity because we know if we open up the Canadian Armed Forces as the number one employer of choice for all Canadians that we would not only get the best but the Canadian Armed Forces will also benefit as well."

## Does that boil down to a recruiting strategy?

"Absolutely, we're investing in our people. I've recently just announced, as part of our IDEaS program, part of the research and innovation investment, the IDEaS program is throwing challenges to industry and experts out there. So we put investment into how can we recruit the best, because we know if we put the right investments in direct research, we're going to be able to attract the best. This is one reason we have set out a 25 per cent target because then we can create a plan on how to achieve that and I'm working very hard, not only, to achieve it, but we need to blow right past it so we eventually one day can get to gender parity."

## In 2015, former Supreme Court justice Marie Deschamps said the military had a "sexualized culture" and is

## "hostile" to women and members of the LGBT community. What is being done to address the situation?

"First, I just want to say, any type of misconduct, sexual behaviour, is going to be dealt with extremely seriously. We have an absolute zero tolerance policy. We want to create an environment in the Canadian Armed Forces that is inclusive to all. And we working very hard for that. The chief of defence staff is leading on what we call, Operation Honour, and to boil that down is to make sure that we have an environment in the Canadian Armed Forces that's welcome to all. We're also investing in the right research and development into making sure that we have the right type of uniforms and equipment for women. We're changing policies in the Canadian Armed Forces that will make it easier for women to have a career and a family. We're looking at all the barriers women face and at the same time charging ahead very aggressively in making sure that we stop any type of inappropriate behaviour out of the Canadian Armed Forces."

## With the announcements of the Canadian-led NATO training mission in Iraq and extending Canadian leadership of the Latvian mission until 2023, could that be read as a renewed commitment by Canada into NATO?

"One thing I'll say is, it's also a recognition of the tremendous leadership we have in the Canadian Armed Forces. Our Canadian Armed Forces is sought to take leadership roles, that I can just list off. It's not just leading a battle group in Latvia, now the NATO training mission in Iraq, but we also have the deputy commander position in Korea, which is the first time in its history. This is about, how we have invested into the Canadian Armed Forces, making sure the Canadian Armed Forces, our personnel, have the right tools, and when you give them the right tools they are able to do tremendous things on our behalf. And that's the engagement in the world that we have demonstrated, and from that our leadership is sought in many different ways, and so this is our commitment in action, where our leadership is sought. We were one of the founding members of NATO and we have been part of every single mission and that's the reason why our government and the prime minister has expressed very clearly that NATO is not only important, but it's important to work in a multilateral environment. And we will step up and this is Canada stepping up once again to support peace and security around the world."

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Harjit Sajjan says the \$60-billion procurement for 15 surface combatants ships, which will replace 12 Halifax-class frigates and the four decommissioned Iroquois-class ships, is a priority and that the winning bid will be announced by the end of the year. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade



## Defence Policy Briefing



Canada enters the shipbuilding business after a 'generation' following the closure of Saint John Shipbuilding, which built the now aging Halifax-class frigates (pictured).  
*Photograph by John Clevett, courtesy of the Department of National Defence*

# Delays in CSC procurement to be expected after 'generation' slumber in shipbuilding, defence experts say

Re-entering the shipbuilding business requires a 'fairly steep learning curve' for Canada.

BY NEIL MOSS

The procurement of multi-purpose vessels that will serve as the backbone of the Canadian Navy for decades to come is going about as well as can be expected, say defence observers, as the government re-enters the shipbuilding business after a decades long gap.

The government seeks to procure 15 Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) vessels to replace the Canadian Navy's 12 Halifax-class vessels and four now-decommissioned Iroquois-class ships.

The Halifax-class frigates were already upgraded once in a \$3.1-billion refit program that lasted from 2010 to 2016, but if the timeline on the CSC procurement gets extended the ships may have to go through another second refit.

"In a couple of ways it's [the CSC procurement] a reflection of that we haven't been in this business for a generation," said David Perry, a defence procure-

ment analyst at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, adding that Canada is feeling the effects of not being in the shipbuilding business for so long.

Getting back in the shipbuilding business takes a "fairly steep learning curve," Mr. Perry said.

Canada's largest shipyard, Saint John Shipbuilding, which was owned by the Irving family, closed in 2003 after three years without work. The shipyard built the nine of the now aging Halifax-class ships. When it closed it employed 600 workers, but in the midst of the building of the frigates, it had 3,000 workers.

Irving is also charged with building the new surface combatants in their Halifax shipyard.

The CSC was initially tapped to cost \$28-billion, but the expected cost of the entire program is \$56-billion to \$60-billion.

Norman Jolin, a 37-year veteran of the Canadian Navy, including a commandant of the HMCS Montreal, a Halifax-class frigate, said project costs are 40 to 50 per cent of total program costs, and called the initial estimate "a rough-ass guess."

It will be the most expensive procurement, as well as the most complex, in Canadian defence history.

The first CSC ship is projected to be launched in the mid-2020s and the final ship is set to be finished in late 2040s.

The procurement is also made more complex because of the size of the Canadian Navy, as Canada needs to put many capabilities into one ship, opposed to other navy's that can put different capabilities into various classes of vessels, Mr. Perry said.

The CSC ships will be pushed to the end of their lives, according to Mr. Jolin, who is now a consultant at CFN Consultants, which has done consultancy work for Lockheed Martin.

There are three bidders in the procurement competition: the self-described "Canada's Combat Ship Team," which is a coalition bid by BAE Systems, Lockheed Martin, CAE, MDA, among others; a bid by Spain's Navantia working with Saab; and a bid led by Allion Science and Technology.

The bidders have gone through a curing process to refine their bids after all three bids failed to meet the technical requirements requested by the Canadian government.

The cured bids were submitted in late July.

In May, Conservative MP James Bezan (Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman, Man.), his party's critic, told *The Hill Times* that the requirements were too "prescriptive."

"[The project is] so much burdened with red tape that no one can cut through to actually put together a bid that's going to be

worthwhile for the Royal Canadian Navy," Mr. Bezan said.

If the cured bids don't meet the government's requirements, there could be a second curing process, Mr. Perry said.

Mr. Jolin said the government wouldn't want a bid to win by default by being the only bid to meet the technical requirements.

National Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan (Vancouver South, B.C.) told *The Hill Times* in an interview that the procurement is going "extremely well" and said he is "hoping" that a winning bid announcement is made by the end of the year.

"We want to make sure that we have a proper competition and that's been ongoing, hence the reason why we've taken some extra time to making sure the right selection is done because we know that if we provide the right tools for our women and men in the Canadian Armed Forces, they're going to be able to accomplish," Mr. Sajjan said.

"We wanted to make sure that we gave industry enough time so that the right bid process is done correctly"

If the winning bid doesn't get selected by the end of this year, the program will cost an additional \$3-billion due to inflation, according to a report by Jean-Denis Fréchette, the now former parliamentary budget officer.

Mr. Perry said if a bidder isn't picked by the end of the year, it would hurt the confidence in the shipbuilding strategy, but also said it would also depend on the reasons why a bidder wasn't selected.

Mr. Jolin said most shipyards around the world would be amazed at the speed of Canada's rejuvenated shipbuilding program, but said Canadians have an "Eeyore" syndrome on procurement, referencing the terminally gloomy and pessimistic Winnie the Pooh character.

He said the first ship will always take the longest to build, given the start-up issues, but by the time a few more get built, they will start to be built in quicker succession.

**Type 26 not necessarily favoured because of their procurement by the British and Australian navies: Sajjan**

The Type 26 design was chosen by the both the British and Australian navies—two of Canada's five eyes partners—as their future frigates, which was emphasized in a July 20 media briefing by Lockheed Martin and BAE in Kanata.

Mr. Sajjan said the the priority is on getting the "right equipment" for the Canadian Armed Forces and the "only way" to do that is to allow a "proper competition" to happen.

He said the Canadian Armed Forces aren't looking at any one of the bidders over the others.

Just because the framework of the ship may be the same, it doesn't mean the technical details match, which is the key component of the ship.

The Type 26 doesn't necessarily have everything in it that Canada wants, according to public information that has been distributed, Mr. Perry says.

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## Defence Policy Briefing

# Cybersecurity talent gap 'mission critical' for innovation sector, as feds move on national strategy

Canada has ambitious plans to make the country's cybersecurity industry world-leading. But finding enough cyber talent, as is the case in many countries, is hard to do.

BY JOLSON LIM

The federal government is betting on its half-a-billion-dollar national cybersecurity strategy to help make Canada a global hub for the growing cyber protection industry, but advocates warn that goal will be impossible to achieve without addressing Canada's shortage of skilled cyber talent.

"It's mission critical," Katherine Thompson, chair of the Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance's (CATA) cyber council, told *The Hill Times*. "I have clients who call me on a daily basis, who are basically pulling their hair out because they can't find skilled talent."

Ms. Thompson, who belongs to an association representing a large share of companies in the innovation economy, said there's a "zero percentage" jobless rate in the cybersecurity industry in Canada right now.

As most Canadians and businesses plug into the internet and digital technology, new threats of hacking and online intrusions have emerged, creating a fast-growing need for cyber protection services. Threats can range from online nuisances to system-wide attacks affecting national security.

Demand for cyber talent, however, has exceeded supply, creating a crunch that experts warn could leave Canada's home-grown industry trailing behind other countries unless the gap is addressed, never mind the risk of exposing more Canadians to online threats.

Ms. Thompson pointed to a 2017 multi-million-dollar investment by TD and Scotiabank into a cybersecurity innovation hub in Israel as an example.

"You've got two large North American banks that say, 'Hey, I can find more skilled cybersecurity expertise in a country of 8.4 million people than in a continent of 340 million people.' We have a problem," Ms. Thompson said.

In June, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale (Regina-Wascana, Sask.) provided the public more details on Canada's five-year \$507-million cybersecurity strategy, first announced through the 2018 federal budget, and aimed at modernizing federal governments and providing resources for small businesses.

The strategy acknowledges a "shortage of cybersecurity talent" that makes it difficult for both the federal government and companies operating in Canada to attract and retain the people needed to improve security and prevent cyber attacks.

"Better cybersecurity knowledge and skills are needed. This extends from our children to our elderly, and from our small and medium business owners to our law enforcement agencies and corporate executives," the strategy reads.

The June release didn't provide specific solutions to addressing the issue, but at a press conference on June 12, Mr. Goodale had described it then as both a "huge challenge and huge opportunity."

While void of solutions, Ms. Thompson said the strategy struck the right tone and hit on the right issues. However, she said the federal government ought to play a "supporting role" in enhancing cybersecurity for Canadians, rather than dictating it.

"It's a strategy, not a solution," she said. "And for industry, academia, it's all issues on a daily basis, so we shouldn't be looking to the federal government to solve them."

A pillar of the national strategy is a one-stop website offering small- and medium-sized enterprises information on how to secure their businesses. Under the plan, the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, housed in the Communications Security Establishment, will also cover protection for the entire federal government. It will be headed by Scott Jones, assistant deputy minister of IT security. Legislation is required to enact this national strategy; the government has not yet introduced a bill to do so.



Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale, centre, pictured June 12 on the Hill, flanked by RCMP superintendent Jeff Adams, left, Parliamentary Secretary for Innovation David Lametti, Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, and head of the new Canadian Centre for Cyber Security Scott Jones. Together they announced more details about the federal government's cybersecurity strategy. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

Meanwhile, a recent Deloitte report, commissioned by the Toronto Financial Services Association, found the demand for cyber talent is increasing by seven per cent annually, and estimates that there will be more than 5,000 jobs in the cyber security sector to fill between now and 2021.

The report notes that the skills shortage is happening in other parts of the world as well, but that Canadian schools aren't training enough people for the growing global field, which is expected to stand at 1.8 million employees by 2022.

Greg Wolfond, CEO of Toronto-based SecureKey, which provides identity and authentication networks for companies and is affiliated with the Council of Canadian Innovators, said even for his company, which is directly focused on cyber protection, finding talent can be a challenge.

"It's a crunch all over," said Mr. Wolfond. "It takes you to be diligent and spend the time to get the right people onto your team."

"Demand for [cybersecurity talent], like in all of tech, clearly outstrips supply."

The federal government currently deploys SecureKey Concierge, an authentication system that allows Canadians to log into more than 80 government sites securely, including the Canada Revenue Agency website.

Mr. Wolfond said the government should look to high school education and getting more students interested in cyber technology. Another issue he noted was Canada's ability to retain the talent coming out of its universities, with California often seen as an ideal destination for top graduates.

"It's Cali or bust, right? We're losing a lot of good talent," he said.

Ms. Thompson said in the short term, it's about getting people who already have ad-

equated cyber skills and training and encouraging them to consider careers in digital protection. Over the long term, it's about "developing the future cyber warrior," and may require changing school curriculums, she said.

CATA is currently collaborating with the U.S. Department of Commerce on a cross-border Kindergarten-to-Grade 12 strategy called the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education. The advocacy group will also soon launch a training program targeting veterans, in partnership with the Canadian Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs Canada, and another for recent graduates.

The spectre of electronic intrusion into government IT infrastructure and during elections has also risen against the backdrop of security concerns over foreign companies like Chinese company Huawei's attempts to get into Canada's 5G market, as well as Russian meddling during the 2016 U.S. presidential elections. The federal government is currently trying to ready the country for potential cyber meddling during the 2019 federal election.

The RCMP also noted that police departments across Canada have received 24,000 reports of cybercrime in 2016, a 58 per cent increase from 2014. The agency is planning to hire hundreds of workers to staff its \$201-million National Cybercrime Coordination Unit, also announced in the 2018 budget, and stakeholders expect it may run into hiring issues. The unit will act as a hub for law enforcement to co-ordinate investigating cyber crimes.

Ms. Thompson also pointed to the lack of data and tracking about the need for cybersecurity in Canada. That's in comparison the U.S. Department of Commerce, which does tracking so precise there's a national heat map showing the concentration

of unfilled cybersecurity jobs on display in its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

"We simply know we have a gap that's growing, we just haven't quantified it," she said. "It's kind of like shooting fish in a barrel."

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### Highlights of the National Cybersecurity Strategy

- Creating a new Canadian Centre for Cyber Security, housed within the CSE, to support leadership and collaboration within and between different levels of government, while providing a clear and trusted resource for Canadian citizens and businesses.
- The creation of the National Cybercrime Coordination Unit to expand the RCMP's capacity to investigate cybercrime, establishing a co-ordination hub for both domestic and international partners.
- An unspecified amount of funding to foster innovation and economic growth, and the development of Canadian cyber talent.

### Canada's cybersecurity industry, at a glance

- Contributes \$1.7-billion to Canada's GDP and employs more than 11,000 people.
- Global cyber security industry forecasted to grow by 66 per cent by 2021.
- The federal government anticipates thousands of cyber protection jobs could be created for Canadians in the years ahead.
- Demand for cyber talent is increasing by seven per cent annually in Canada. There will be more than 5,000 jobs in the cyber security sector to fill in Canada between now and 2021.

—Public Safety Canada and Deloitte



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## Defence Policy Briefing



Andrew Scheer's Conservatives will ensure that those who serve our country day in and day out are equipped with the necessary resources, while working towards meeting our NATO commitments, says Conservative MP James Bezan. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

# Liberals mismanage defence procurement

The men and women who bravely serve our country deserve better than the Trudeau government which has failed to deliver on a single major military procurement.



Conservative MP James Bezan

*Opinion*

Justin Trudeau is making a mess of military procurement. He and his Liberal government continue to mismanage and underfund the Canadian Armed Forces. Trudeau is failing to provide the equipment the Canadian Armed Forces needs to defend Canada at home and abroad.

The Trudeau government isn't taking Canada's national defence seriously. Things have gotten so bad that members of the Canadian Armed Forces have had to return their sleeping bags and rucksacks due to equipment shortages. It is clear that the men and women who serve this country are not a priority for this Liberal government.

We saw this coming over the course of the Liberals' first two record setting deficit budgets, when the one department the Liberals did cut was National Defence. In addition to the billions cut, lapsed and punted down the road in the defence budget during the first two years of Trudeau's mandate, the Prime Minister is now underspending his brand new defence policy by \$2.3-billion in its very first year.

There is no better example of this Liberal mismanagement than Justin Trudeau's decision to purchase used F-18 fighter jets from Australia. Prime Minister Trudeau and Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan are trying to justify this interim purchase by unilaterally changing decades old defence policy by saying the Royal Canadian Air Force cannot meet both its NORAD and NATO commitments simultaneously, thus creating their fabricated 'capability gap'.

This so called 'capability gap' is not a military creation, but

rather a political one aimed at providing cover for Prime Minister Trudeau for his misguided campaign promises. A study by the Macdonald-Laurier Institute found that 67.5 per cent of defence experts say that there is no capability gap.

When Justin Trudeau first announced his fabricated capability gap, my colleagues and I wrote the auditor general asking that he immediately investigate this issue. The Office of the Auditor General has been looking into the Liberals' claim that the Royal Canadian Air Force is facing a fighter jet capability gap. It is my hope that the auditor general investigation is unimpeded by the Liberal government and his report this fall will shine a light on both the Liberals' asinine capability gap policy and their unnecessary and wasteful interim purchase.

As part of Justin Trudeau's mismanagement on the fighter jet file is the Liberal government's exacerbated timeline for the complete replacement for our fleet of aging CF-18s. The Liberals have stated that the competition to select the replacement for our CF-18's will end in 2021-2022. While other countries have held a competition to select a replacement for their legacy fighter jets in about a year, Trudeau will potentially take several years to select a new fighter. There is ab-

solutely no justification or excuse why a competition like this would take up to seven years.

Justin Trudeau is also failing to build new warships for the Royal Canadian Navy. We've already seen numerous delays in the shipbuilding program because of the Liberal government's mismanagement. This includes repeated extensions to the design competition for the Canadian Surface Combatant. Now documents that were recently made public state that Justin Trudeau and his Liberal government are looking to 'refresh' the National Shipbuilding Strategy.

This comes after already massive delays in the process to select Canada's new surface combatants. Repeated extensions in the process to select a new ship design have cost taxpayers millions of dollars while pushing the delivery date for completed ships even further in the future.

Any gaps in the surface combatants' production schedule is first and foremost a creation of Justin Trudeau and his Liberal government. This is completely unacceptable to both the families of the workers at the shipyards as well as to Canadian taxpayers who, according to the Parliamentary Budget Office, will be saddled with increased costs. Conservatives will continue holding Justin Trudeau to ac-

count and ensuring that Canada's shipbuilding program achieves its goals of producing warships for the Royal Canadian Navy, while supporting high paying jobs for Canadians.

The National Shipbuilding Strategy doesn't need a 'refresh'. The Liberals have to stop manipulating the process, quit being so risk adverse and make a selection. But the Liberals can't help themselves. It's in their DNA. They are famous for dithering and delaying when it comes to military procurement.

The men and women who bravely serve our country deserve better than the Trudeau government which has failed to deliver on a single major military procurement. They deserve better than a government which continually cuts defence spending. And they deserve better than this Liberal government which fails to prioritize the Canadian Armed Forces.

Andrew Scheer's Conservatives will ensure that those who serve our country day in and day out are equipped with the necessary resources, while working towards meeting our NATO commitments.

Conservative MP James Bezan, who represents Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman, Man., is his party's defence critic.

*The Hill Times*





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## Defence Policy Briefing

# Canada's peacekeeping mission in Mali

While the commitment to Mali by the Liberal government is welcome, it still fails to meet the government's promises made during the 2015 election campaign or the promises made during the 2017 UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Conference in Vancouver.



NDP MP Randall Garrison

Opinion

Taking on a support role for the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali is an important mission both for Mali and for Canada. This mission marks a good starting point

for the recommitment to international peacekeeping promised by the Liberals during the 2015 election campaign. Canada now has 250 personnel in Mali to provide medical evacuations and other critical transportation services using three Chinook transport helicopters and five armed Griffon helicopters as armed escorts. The delivery on that promise to take on a peacekeeping mission was slow and Canada's contribution still falls short of the 600 troops and 150 police that the Liberals promised to commit to peace operations nearly four years ago. Yet Canada is once again making a contribution to international peacekeeping.

Saying that participating in this mission is not in Canada's national interest ignores both Canada's long commitment to development programs in Mali and the value of promoting peace and stability in countries like Mali. Success in Mali means that the international community can help avoid a massive humanitarian catastrophe and at the same time deny operating space and recruiting opportunities for international terrorist organizations, the drug trade, and the human trafficking operations that grow out of failed states. Canada has a proud history of peacekeeping because Canadians understand the common benefits of participating in these kinds of peace operations.

Saying that there is no peace to keep in Mali misrepresents

the complex and difficult situation on the ground. Peacekeeping operations are always complex, difficult, and dangerous and in that Mali is no different. Since 2013, there have been 162 casualties among international peacekeepers.

Yet very few of these deaths were the result of direct combat. Rather they have been accidental deaths resulting from ground and air transport accidents and deaths from ongoing failures to detect improvised explosive devices during patrols. Canadian troops have had extensive training for and experience in operating in the conditions present in Mali. New Democrats, for our part, have been calling on the Government of Canada to ensure our troops continue to have the equipment, training, and support they need to successfully achieve their objectives while minimizing the risks undoubtedly present in this mission.

Peacekeeping operations offer the best chance for a society to emerge from prolonged conflict by creating the necessary political, socio-economic, and security conditions. Peacekeeping not only creates the space for the peace process to succeed, in addition to providing security support, peacekeepers can also assist in rebuilding social services such as health and education which are vital to the long-term successful transition from conflict to peace. Security and social development



The United Nations' Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix and his delegation, pictured Sept. 2, 2018, meeting with Canadian helicopter crews prior to departing on a flight to Gao, Mali. Photograph courtesy of DND/ Corporal Ken Beliwicz

must be given equal weight to ensure countries like Mali do not descend further into conflict and become failed states.

While the commitment to Mali by the Liberal government is welcome, it still fails to meet the government's promises made during the 2015 election campaign or the promises made during the 2017 UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Conference in Vancouver. There are also concerns that Canada's commitment to Mali is too short term in comparison to the three years that the Netherlands and Germany committed to before. Many experts agree that a one year commitment is not long enough to allow sufficient progress towards peace.

In fact, when you factor in the length of time it takes for the

forces to deploy to the region, moving in all of the equipment and personnel, followed by the time it takes to conclude operations, Canadian peacekeepers may effectively be in Mali for less than the promised 12 months. Peacekeeping takes considerable time and resources and one year is not the kind of engagement that Canadians expected when the prime minister announced that "Canada was back."

New Democrats strongly support this involvement in Mali but we also call on the government to keep their promise of committing considerable resources to peace operations in Mali and other areas.

NDP MP Randall Garrison, who represents Equimant-Saanich-Sooke, B.C., is his party's defence critic.  
*The Hill Times*

## Enhancing national security and protecting our rights: Bill C-59 in the Senate

Bill C-59 is a reasonable, responsible, and necessary response to the real security threats we face, and one which enhances our security while respecting the constitutional rights and freedoms of Canadians. That is why I am proud to be the Senate sponsor of this bill.



ISG Senator Marc Gold

Opinion

Following a lengthy period of study and debate in the House of Commons, Bill C-59, the National Security Act, has arrived in the Senate for consideration. The bill represents a comprehensive and much-needed modernization of the law governing our national security agencies, designed to en-

hance the security of Canadians while safeguarding our constitutional rights and freedoms.

The threats facing our national security are real, complex, and growing, but our current legislation falls short in two important respects.

In some cases, our security agencies simply lack the tools to do the job. This is especially acute in the cyber area, where our legislation has not kept up with the new and evolving threats facing Canada. Bill C-59 clarifies the mandate of the Communications Security Establishment (CSE) and provides it with the necessary powers to protect our national security from cyber-attack.

In other cases, the mandate and powers that the *Anti-terrorism Act, 2015* (former Bill C-51) granted to our security agencies were poorly drafted and over-broad, rendering them constitutionally suspect. This is especially acute with respect to certain roles conferred on the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), but is true in other areas as well. Bill C-59 addresses these issues by putting the mandate and powers of our security and intelligence agencies on a more solid constitutional footing, thereby enabling them to act appropriately and effectively in defence of our national security. In addition, the bill also narrows the definition of certain terrorism offences to ensure that they comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The centrepiece of Bill C-59 is the creation of two new institutions to provide critical review and oversight of all our security agencies. These represent a major step forward in enhancing the transparency and accountability of our national security infrastructure to both constitutional norms and democratic scrutiny.

The bill creates the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency (NSIRA), with a broad mandate to review and report on the lawfulness of all national security and intelligence activities across government. The bill also establishes an independent, quasi-judicial intelligence commissioner, with the responsibility to assess and review certain ministerial decisions regarding intelligence gathering and cyber security activities. This would ensure an independent consideration of the important privacy and other interests implicated by these activities, in a manner that is appropriately adapted to the sensitive national security context. These review and oversight structures will ensure a regular and critical scrutiny of our security agencies and their actions, and bring Canada up to date with the best practices of our democratic allies.

More generally, C-59 takes the administration of our national security out of the shadows and establishes clear definitions in law for what actions are appropriate to safeguard Canadians. In this way, the bill better

protects our national security by addressing the constitutional vulnerabilities that the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2015 introduced into the law, thereby providing a proper legal foundation for the actions that our security and intelligence agencies may need to take.

Bill C-59 was the product of extensive consultation, and was carefully studied by the Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, which introduced several significant amendments to improve the bill. Now that it is before the Senate, it will benefit from further critical review to ensure that it achieves its objectives and respects our fundamental constitutional values. That is the added value that the Senate brings to the legislative process, and I am confident that my colleagues will approach the study of this important bill in a serious, principled, and open-minded manner.

In my view, Bill C-59 is a reasonable, responsible, and necessary response to the real security threats we face, and one which enhances our security while respecting the constitutional rights and freedoms of Canadians. That is why I am proud to be the Senate sponsor of this bill.

Quebec Senator Marc Gold, who was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, is member of the Independent Senators Group.  
*The Hill Times*

## Policy Briefing Defence



National Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, pictured July 16, 2018, arriving at a Canadian Army change of command ceremony on Parliament Hill. Since 2009, DND has lapsed \$12-billion, representing seven per cent of its budget. While this may not seem like an earth-shattering figure, 60 per cent of the lapse comes from the funding of capital projects, writes Alex Reeves.

## The known unknowns in the Canadian defence budget

Unless the current government can address the core challenges that have vexed many prior governments on the defence file, SSE may not be able to meet the high standard it has set for itself.



Alex Reeves

Opinion

Historically, the Canadian government has promised big things to the Department of National Defence, but has consistently struggled to deliver on its commitments. This problem spans multiple governments, during both war and peacetime and stems from a self-imposed challenge to concurrently deliver on the Canadian Forces' requirements, create jobs and industrial benefits for Canadians, and to fit it all in a tight, fixed budget enve-

lope. This brings us to the question: is the current government any different from its predecessors? And, as such, will *Strong, Secure, Engaged*—the federal government's long-term plan for the Canadian military—leave no man behind or will it continue to stumble where so many have in the past?

In order to determine whether the Government of Canada is meeting the defence spending commitments it has set for itself, it is important to drill down into what are known as lapses. Lapses occur when government departments spend less than what was authorized by Parliament in a given fiscal year.

Lapses are a normal part of the way the Canadian government operates. For instance, the PBO report "*Why Does the Government Lapse Money and Why Does It Matter?*" shows that as direct program expenses grow and government funds are shifted to capital spending, lapse rates are expected to increase. This is particularly true in the case of the capital-intensive military, where the amount of money lapsed by the federal government has continued to be a large portion of DND's budget.

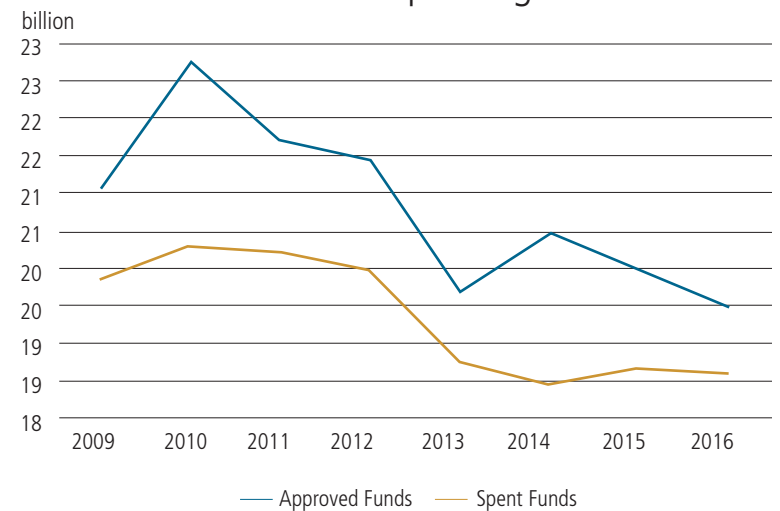
While lapses could mean that the government is finding savings, it can also mean that internal processes are gummed-up or they are simply underfunding programs. In the specific case of DND, significant lapses can lead to under-equipped soldiers, armed with aging equipment, and less training. Historically, there has been a large diver-

gence between what was authorized by Parliament and what was spent by DND (Chart 1). Between 2009 and 2016, nearly \$12-billion dollars had been lapsed from DND's approved budget. This is equivalent to about seven per cent of its budget every year.

While this may not seem like an earth-shattering figure, 60 per cent of the lapse comes from the funding of capital projects. So, when compared to the seven per cent that was lapsed from the overall budget each year, the average lapse from capital spending over this period was a whopping 21 per cent (Chart 2). While the capital projects of most departments are fairly limited, DND's capital projects encompass the purchase and upkeep of vehicles, weapons systems, and installations. This means that lapses in capital spending can lead to (or stem from) problems in the procurement of vital equipment, and in turn the operational capacity of the Canadian Armed Forces.

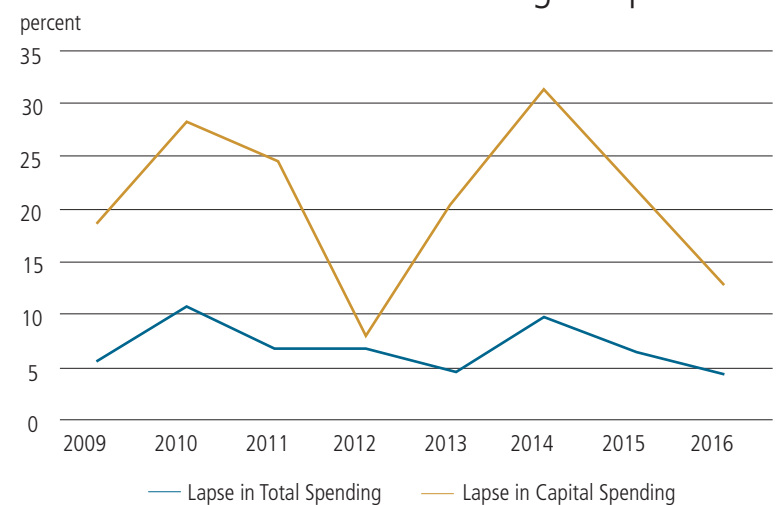
As outlined in *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, the federal government expects equipment spending to rise to higher levels than was achieved during both the end of the Cold war and during combat deployments in Afghanistan (Chart 3). This would imply a 300 per cent increase in the equipment budget in under eight years. This rate of investment would suggest that over \$10.2 billion would be going to buy and upkeep equipment. However, unless the government can lower the amount lapsed

Chart 1: DND Spending trends



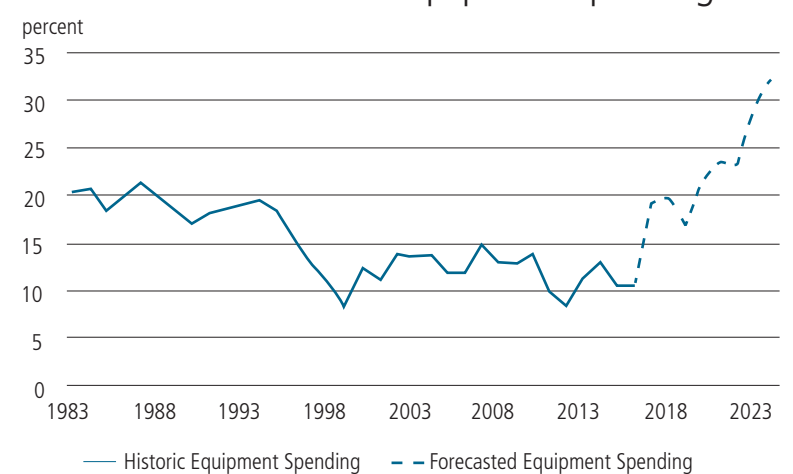
Source: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Chart 2: Percent of Budget Lapsed



Source: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Chart 3: Defence Equipment Spending



Source: North American Treaty Organization, Department of National Defence

in capital spending by then, it's possible that over \$2-billion of funding in 2024 alone will never get to the troops it is intended to support.

So, what's the prognosis on *Strong, Secure, Engaged*? Unless the current government can address the core challenges that have vexed many prior governments on the defence file, SSE may not be able to meet the high standard it has set for itself. Indeed, the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy has previously pointed out the complexities of increasing the defence budget so quickly and with the ambition forecasted

in SSE. But even if the federal government is able to increase defence spending as sustainably as it has telegraphed, the lapses in funding are likely to continue to get larger. The problem with defence spending isn't only with the level to which it is budgeted by the government and appropriated by Parliament, but ultimately the degree to which the funding reaches the troops.

Alex Reeves works as an analyst at the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy. He focuses on national and provincial economics, and government policy.

The Hill Times

## Defence Policy Briefing

# Less grandstanding, more quiet diplomacy

Less grandstanding and a return to quiet diplomacy is urgently required if the interests of Canadians are to be effectively protected and advanced on the world stage.



Conservative Sen. Leo Housakos

Opinion

Given the foreign policy background that Chrystia Freeland brings to her job as Canada's foreign affairs minister, one might have thought that she would have paid particular attention to policies that have been successful in advancing Canada's influence

on the world stage; including policies of quiet diplomacy that were pioneered under the leadership of the late Lester Pearson.

Yet, for some reason much of this experience has been rather cavalierly tossed aside by the current government. A case in point is Canada's relationship with Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is certainly not a liberal or democratic state. However, Saudi Arabia is situated in a part of the world where, to put it colloquially, there are few "good guys." Apart from Israel, the region has no liberal democracies. It is a region in which wars and armed conflict are common place. Yet, Saudi Arabia, like other more moderate states in the region, is threatened by even more extremist actors, including terrorist groups that have the support of the most radical state in the region, Iran. Any Canadian relationship with countries in the region must take these factors into account.

This is a dynamic which Lester Pearson would certainly have understood. He would have recognized that unless a particular state threatens Canada or its friends and allies, then engagement is a prerequisite if Canada expects to have any positive influence.

This was also understood by the former Harper government. On the economic side, it meant actively pursuing market opportunities through the Global Commerce Strategy. That strategy, launched in 2007, identified several regions of the world, including the Middle East, as regions of opportunity for Canadian business.



Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland, pictured in this file photograph. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

In the case of Saudi Arabia, pursuit of the Global Commerce Strategy led to a significant growth in Canadian exports, including through the sale of armoured vehicles to that country. That sale, necessary to support Saudi security, created hundreds of high paying and high quality jobs in southwestern Ontario.

Equally importantly it created a basis on which to not only build broader market opportunities, but to exercise positive influence on both political and human rights issues.

I speak from personal experience, through discussions that I had with Saudi officials when I was Speaker of the Senate, that one can be forceful and direct on political and human rights matters when engaged in bilateral discussions without simultaneously obliterating Canada's broader security and economic interests in that part of the world.

Unfortunately, that ability to exercise meaningful influence has been carelessly abandoned by the Trudeau government. For the past three years the government has done almost nothing to build on the diplomatic foundation put in place by the former Harper government with Saudi Arabia. Then, a few weeks ago a careless tweet by Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland sparked a disproportionate Saudi reaction which, however unjustified, has undone nearly all of the gains in the bilateral relationship that had been made prior to 2015.

Any Canadian capacity to exercise influence on human rights issues in the Kingdom has now all but disappeared. This has real

repercussions for human rights activists in that country, including in very serious cases such as that of Israa al-Ghomgham, who might otherwise have benefitted from quiet but determined Canadian diplomatic support.

This type of foreign policy mismanagement has become a pattern under the current Government. There have been too many flippant and entirely avoidable international gaffes—in China, in India, in the Middle East and with respect to the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Canadian interests have suffered as a result.

While it may not correspond with the DNA of the prime minister and others in the Liberal Party who gravitate toward showmanship rather than substance, it would be wise for the government to rediscover the diplomatic tradition that began under Lester Pearson and which other Canadian governments have continued.

Less grandstanding and a return to quiet diplomacy are urgently required if the interests of Canadians are to be effectively protected and advanced on the world stage.

*Quebec Conservative Senator Leo Housakos is a member of the Senate's Foreign Affairs and International Trade Committee.*  
*The Hill Times*

## Rethinking the Taiwan question: how Canada can update its rigid 'One-China' policy for the 21st century

A growing number of states want to take concrete security steps to send a clearer signal to a China that has not responded to engagement and is taking increasingly risky action against Taiwan. It's time for Canada to join them.



Eric Lerhe

Opinion

Taiwan has faced a steadily deteriorating security situation, especially following the election of the more independence-oriented Tsai Ing-wen government in 2016. Since then, China has undertaken provocative military actions—from live fire exercises to "Island Encirclement Patrols" by its missile-armed bombers around Taiwan.

The United States has taken these threats quite seriously. Indeed, under the Trump administration, the U.S. has passed legislation allowing for U.S. naval port visits to Taiwan and senior military and government official visits, while exploring other ways to strengthen Taiwan's armed forces and improve military-to-military ties.

Despite these developments, Canada's timid approach to Taiwan remains heavily rooted in the past—a "One-China" policy designed in 1970, when the goal was to bring hina out of isolation and sideline a Taiwanese dictatorship. The current situation is very different. China is now an economic powerhouse under an increasingly authoritarian and belligerent leadership, while Taiwan is a lively democracy with a vibrant economy.

When the Trudeau government voiced support for Taiwan's inclusion in the World Health Assembly earlier this year, it made an important first step in loosening its otherwise rigid one-China stance. Canada would do well to expand on this initial step.

Security cooperation remains a particularly underappreciated avenue to strengthen Canada-Taiwan relations. The 1970 Sino-Canadian joint communiqué says nothing against security cooperation. Yet, despite the example of the U.S., France, and Japan, there is absolutely no Canadian contact or cooperation with Taiwan or with our allies on its security problems.

Canada is in a good position to pursue such cooperation. After a long pause, Canada has started to redeploy regularly to the Western Pacific with naval ship patrols and a six-month submarine deployment to Japan in 2017. In addition, a CP-140 patrol aircraft is flying in support of North Korean sanctions monitoring.

These initiatives establish important links with the major security players in the region and allow us to assess any potential opening towards Taiwan, such as the U.S., Japan, Singapore, or

India inviting Taiwanese forces to one of their multinational exercises. Canada could also push for Taiwan's inclusion in Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC), given our decades-long support for this important multinational exercise.

In addition, Canada should be open to having its naval ships make port calls in Taiwan, ideally within a multinational framework. Such a framework is already forming in the South China Sea, with Canada, the U.S., Australia, France, Japan, and soon the United Kingdom informally agreeing to conduct regular naval transits to ensure freedom of navigation. Should Taiwan be attacked these are also the nations most likely to respond.

Canada could also join the Netherlands and the U.S. in helping to upgrade Taiwan's existing fleet of submarines, to fill the gap until the eventual Taiwanese-built replacement submarine are built. Notably, Canada has extensive experience in this type of conventional submarine upgrading and international success in selling and installing key naval combat systems.

Taiwan is also regularly tested by Chinese military probes, cyber attacks, and espionage. Canada

would be wise to join the U.S. intelligence effort there. If a more cautious route is desired, however, Canada could follow recent muted Taiwanese-Japanese initiatives to establish a more formal intelligence-sharing agreement.

This effort would be aided by having a full-time security liaison officer or military attaché at the Canadian Trade Office Taipei. A multi-tasked diplomat has neither the time nor the qualifications to deal with the range of cyber and espionage activities confronting Taiwan's authorities.

A range of small incremental steps could also be pursued—from conducting full immersion Chinese language training in Taiwan to increasing closer contact and researcher exchanges between Canadian and Taiwanese think tanks.

These actions will undoubtedly produce the usual hyperbolic outrage from China. Notably, however, almost all are based on actions some other Western-oriented nation has already taken. Further, many of the security-related recommendations were selected because they best offer Canada the option of joining a multinational effort in advancing them.

A growing number of states want to take concrete security steps to send a clearer signal to a China that has not responded to engagement and is taking increasingly risky action against Taiwan. It's time for Canada to join them.

*Eric Lerhe is a Munk senior fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, and is author of the MLI paper 'Canada, Taiwan, and the One-China Policy: Time for a Reassessment.'*  
*The Hill Times*

# National Shipbuilding Strategy worth doing right

Examining how the NSS can best address all Canadian shipbuilding requirements at this point is logical, and entirely consistent with the original strategy.



David Perry

Opinion

This past August the CBC's Murray Brewster reported that the federal government was considering a 'refresh' of the National Shipbuilding Strategy (NSS). It's about time.

The work that led to the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy, as it was first called, began a decade ago, and it was officially announced in 2010. The strategy has always had two components, one industrial (rebuilding the shipbuilding industry so the policy of building ships in Canada could be better supported) and the other, one procurement focused (replace the rapidly aging federal fleets with

new ships). Eight years after the strategy's formal launch, it is well past time to assess what changes can be made to better deliver the strategy's objectives.

A fundamental revitalization of the shipbuilding sector has been achieved. The two shipyards selected as strategic sources of supply for large ships—Irving Shipbuilding and Vancouver Shipyards—were rebuilt from the ground up and extensively redesigned. Already direct employment and associated economic spinoff have grown significantly. But the procurement results so far are less impressive. Construction is well underway, but every project is behind schedule, and those schedules continue to slip.

This was somewhat predictable. Building newly designed ships in new shipyards for a government that got out of the shipbuilding business 20 years ago is not conducive to impeccable execution. But, this was never effectively communicated so expectations have been mismanaged from the start. A refresh presents an opportunity to correct this.

It isn't clear though what a refresh means. At one extreme, there seems to be a view that no change should be made. This is absurd. No strategy, never mind one this complicated, could possibly have been conceived of, and then implemented, flawlessly over 10 years. At the other end of the spectrum, there seems to be a view that the NSS should be scrapped entirely, or even that the Buy in Canada policy should be revisited. The first part of that is nonsensical. The strategy is multifaceted; some aspects are going better than others. But one ship has been launched, another will be soon, a



Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, pictured in this file photo on the Hill. *The Hill Times* photograph by Andrew Meade

winner should be selected soon in the Canadian Surface Combatant competition. Blowing up the strategy would affect all of the progress to date. Abandoning the Buy in Canada policy at this point would be even worse. The time to review that policy was a decade ago. At this point, abandoning it would reset the clock on these procurements. Doing so would also presume that all the problems to date are the fault of Canada's shipyards alone, that the Government of Canada has managed the NSS flawlessly, so offshoring the production would fix everything. Canada's shipyards have room to improve (one of them, for example, just replaced its CEO) but the idea that Canada can do no better managing shipbuilding does not hold water.

It is difficult to get a full sense of how Canada's management

is working, or not, because the transparency around shipbuilding decisions and communications about the strategy have both dropped off dramatically. Making improvements in these two areas would be a good place to start.

Another would be to conduct a top to bottom assessment of the government's management of the strategy. One of the strategy's features from day one was having the shipyards agree to independent assessments of their productivity to ensure they are internationally competitive. There was no comparable commitment to ensure the government's management of NSS is being done to a world class standard. The refresh presents a perfect opportunity to rectify that—if there's a willingness to make change.

At the same time, as part of the refresh, it is worth reassessing

whether NSS shipyard capacity as currently configured is appropriate for Canada's requirements for new ship construction (both large and small) and vessel maintenance and refit. The strategy announced eight years ago was broad, but did not cover a full-scale recapitalization of Canada's federal fleets. The Canadian Coast Guard especially, has additional requirements for fleet renewal not announced in 2010. Examining how the NSS can best address all Canadian shipbuilding requirements at this point is logical, and entirely consistent with the original strategy.

The National Shipbuilding Strategy was the right thing to do. It's worth doing right.

David Perry is vice-president and senior analyst with the Canadian Global Affairs Institute.  
*The Hill Times*

## Canada's defence policy a bold, new approach for defence

We ask a lot of our women and men in uniform, and that is why our government will continue to do everything we can to support our Canadian Armed Forces members now, and into the future.



Liberal MP Serge Cormier

Opinion

Every day, the women and men of our Canadian Armed Forces, and the families that support them, make incredible contributions in the service of our country. I have always had great respect for the brave members of Canada's military, and that is why I was honoured when Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recently appointed me parliamentary secretary to Canada's minister of national defence.

Canada's defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, presents a bold new approach for defence. It is a long-term, fully funded plan built around people. Since Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan announced the policy in June 2017, our government, and our defence team, have been hard at work implementing this ambitious plan.

Unlike the Harper Conservatives who cut \$10-billion in funding from our military, through our new policy, we are

investing in our women and men in uniform by increasing defence spending by 70 per cent over the next 10 years. This will allow our military to meet Canada's defence needs and ensure we are strong at home, secure in North America, and engaged in the world.

We know that nothing is more important to our deployed members than their families back home. While the Harper Conservatives cut funding to military families, our government is investing in our Military Family Resource Centres, which means more childcare hours and more youth programs. We are providing an additional \$6-million per year to modernize Military Family Support Programs to provide better support to families when members are deploying or during periods of absence.

We are also helping to stabilize family life for Canadian Armed Forces members and their

families who frequently have to relocate. This past June, Minister Sajjan launched the Seamless Canada initiative, a first of its kind discussion with the provinces and territories to improve the co-ordination of services across provinces to ease the burden of moving. This will help our Canadian Armed Forces members better navigate issues like finding a new family doctor or getting a new health card when they relocate.

Our women and men in uniform are hardworking, middle-class Canadians who proudly serve Canada around the world. We recognize the tremendous sacrifice made by members of the Canadian Armed Forces, and their families, when a member deploys abroad. For this reason, our government introduced tax-free status for all Canadian Armed Forces personnel who are deployed on all named international operations.

We are also ensuring that our women and men have the equipment they need to do the jobs we ask of them. After a decade of broken promises from the previous government, we are moving forward on Fixed Wing Search and Rescue aircraft. The new fleet of Airbus C-295s

is modern, reliable, meets the operational requirements of the Canadian Armed Forces. Building this new fleet will mean good jobs for middle class Canadians and those working hard to join it. It will also improve the search and rescue capabilities of our military.

These are just a few examples of the steps our government is taking to make sure that our women and men in uniform, and the families that serve alongside them, are taken care of.

Whether it is responding to natural disasters, providing expert search and rescue, defending our sovereignty, or contributing to greater peace and security in the world, our military answers the call wherever and whenever it occurs. We ask a lot of our women and men in uniform, and that is why our government will continue to do everything we can to support our Canadian Armed Forces members now, and into the future.

Liberal MP Serge Cormier, who represents Acadie-Bathurst, N.B., is the parliamentary secretary to the minister of national defence.

*The Hill Times*