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RUSI VI

*To promote national defence and security issues
through discussion and engagement*

**Newsletter of the Royal United Services Institute
of Vancouver Island**

The Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island is a member of the Conference of Defence Associations. The CDA is the oldest and most influential advocacy group in Canada's defence community, consisting of associations from all parts of the country.

The CDA expresses its ideas and opinions with a view to influencing government security and defence policy. It is a non-partisan, independent, and non-profit organization.



Mar 2023

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President's Message

The Russo-Ukrainian War continues, as we await each sides' promised spring offensive and NATO further raises the stakes by sending Ukraine more advanced weaponry. Fortunately, the Russians have little ability to counter-escalate in kind, but President Putin has suspended participation in Russia's last nuclear arms control treaty with the United States. Russia has provided no indication that it will lift the cap on the production of nuclear-armed ballistic missiles, so this announcement represents little change. But it does continue a slow, but steady rise in tension between Russia and the US.

Iran, North Korea and China now realize that a defeated Russia is not in their best interest. Some sort of Russian victory or in lieu of that, a protracted war is in their interest. If Russia is clearly defeated, they know they could be next. A continuing conflict strategically distracts the US (and NATO) from focusing on any one of them.

With new weapons and combined arms training for the Ukrainians, campaign season 2023 may be their last chance to liberate Russian occupied territory. But liberating Crimea is likely beyond their capabilities, as it is also likely a red line for Putin. If the Ukrainian spring offensive yields only a limited success and another stalemate, then the war must end in negotiation, as many analysts predict. Can President Biden then create a sustainable peace that saves Ukraine from another war in five or ten years?

Scott H. Osborne
President
Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island

Upcoming Speakers:

- **8 March, 2023** Rear-Admiral Christopher Robinson, Commander MARPAC- ***Update on MARPAC and the Indo-Pacific***
- **12 April, 2023** LCol (Ret'd) Adele Donaldson and Capt (N) (Ret'd) Gary Paulson- ***100 Years of Service: The Canadian Corps of Commissionaires***
- **10 May, 2023** Dr. Serhy Yekelchuk- ***Understanding Ukraine's History as an Independent State***. Books may be available for sale, TBC

Editor's Comment:

The RUSI Nova Scotia Security Affairs Committee observed recently:

Canada's first of four tanks made world headlines as video showed the first Leopard 2 being loaded aboard a Globemaster III at Halifax for the move to Europe. It showed that Canada was doing something to support Ukraine - that was very clear. Canada has done what it can with its limited abilities and crippled military. It also shows that Canada chose to send the tank by the most expensive way possible, 68 tons of tank by aircraft. As General Hillier stated early in his tenure as the Chief of Defence Staff: "We need a honkin' big ship." Once again, we chose image over capability.

While this may be true, there is much to be said for a 'rapid putting your money where your mouth is' action on our part. We have been keeping up our speed of response if not the quantity required. It would not surprise me that there is some in-country tweaking required to make this troop of tanks ready to work with other such NATO tanks being donated.

'Tis the season for putting out Strategies, with The CAF and Airforce launching theirs. I'm sure the other arms will have theirs out soon if not already published. (The old editor is frantically packing the car in southern climes, to hit a gap in the weather on our drive home, so I may have missed them.)

I think that enough has been said about the balloon situation. Some articles note that the operational ceiling of current CF-18 aircraft and weapons might not match the altitude the balloons were transiting. I hope the new batch (F35s) and new missiles (see article below) will meet this new threat.

Keep a stiff upper lip RUSI VI members, Spring is surely just around the corner.

Canada Yet to Receive Same Missiles U.S. Used to Shoot Down Airborne Objects

By Lee Berthiaume **The Canadian Press**
February 13, 2023

Canadian fighter jets still have not been armed with the type of missiles used by the American military to bring down four airborne objects in recent weeks, more than two years after such missiles were ordered.

The U.S. government first approved the sale of AIM-9X Sidewinder missiles and advanced radars to Canada in June 2020, as part of a package of new equipment to upgrade weaponry and combat systems and keep the CF-18s flying through 2032.

The upgrades were deemed necessary after the federal government delayed plans to replace the fleet with F-35s and following a report from Canada's auditor general in 2018 that warned the CF-18s were outdated.

Yet while Canada has since ordered 36 of the missiles, Department of National Defence spokesman Daniel Le Bouthillier said Monday that none have been delivered, let alone mounted on the Royal Canadian Air Force's CF-18s.

In the meantime, the Pentagon says American fighter jets have used AIM-9Xs to shoot down four airborne objects since Feb. 4. That includes a still-unidentified object taken down over the northern coast of Alaska on Friday, one over central Yukon on Saturday and another over Lake Huron on Sunday.

While the government has said that Canadian jets were deployed to intercept and track the object over the Yukon, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau again defended the decision to have an American fighter jet shoot it down.

"There were Canadian and American fighter jets scrambled to intercept the object and to take it down," Trudeau said Monday during a news conference in Whitehorse, as search crews worked to recover wreckage from the object.

"It was a very much based on the context and the situation of who was there, who had the capacity to do it before we lost the object into darkness. Our focus was not on which side gets credit for what. Our focus was on running the operation smoothly and successfully."

Trudeau also noted the binational characteristics of the North American Aerospace Defence Command, the joint U.S.-Canadian air surveillance and defence organization known as NORAD, "which means we do things together over North America."

During a briefing late Sunday, the American commander of NORAD described some of the challenges that fighter pilots faced tracking and shooting down the object over Lake Huron, which is believed to have crashed in Canadian waters.

"Maintaining a radar track on an object this small is very hard," U.S. Gen. Glen Van Herck told reporters. He added that while pilots considered using guns or radar-guided missiles to shoot the objects, they ultimately felt the heat-seeking AIM-9X was the best option.

“In each situation, the AIM-9X, a heat-seeking missile or infrared missile that sees contrast, has been the weapon of choice against the objects we’ve been seeing.”

Maj.-Gen. Paul Prevost, director of staff for the Strategic Joint Staff, told reporters during a technical briefing that the CF-18 “can take care of some of those objects.”

“And there are tools as well in the U.S. inventory to take care of those,” Prevost said. “This is really dependent on the objects that we face. And there’s always an ongoing analysis on what’s the best tool to use for the situation we face.”

He added: “At this time, we were not asked to use CF-18s on any of those objects just because of where they were and where our resources in Canada were at the time. But there are capabilities on the CF-18 that will be able to take care of some of those objects, depending on where they are and what they are.”

Prevost later said CF-18s deployed from Cold Lake, Alta., on Saturday were “within minutes” of meeting up with the balloon over the Yukon when an American F-22 shot it down.

“I’m not going to reveal all the details about the sensors and the weapons that were on board,” he said. “But they were set to continue the operation should the U.S. not be able to continue further as it transited through Canadian airspace.”

Retired Canadian general Tom Lawson, who flew CF-18s before serving as NORAD deputy commander and then chief of the defence staff, said Canada’s CF-18s currently use an older version of the AIM-9 Sidewinder.

“When I was flying CF-18s, I did not have a weapon that would shoot down something over 40,000 feet if it was moving too slowly,” he said. “My radar wouldn’t have locked onto it. My heat-seeking missile, my AIM-9, would not have locked onto this thing.”

Officials have said that the first object, a suspected Chinese balloon shot down off the coast of South Carolina last week, was flying at around 60,000 feet. The second and third objects, shot down on Friday and Saturday, were flying at about 40,000 feet. The fourth, on Sunday, was flying lower at about 20,000 feet.

The Opposition Conservatives have used the incident to criticize what they see as the Liberal government’s failure to properly invest in and support the military and protect Canada’s national security.

“Over the last eight years this government has had ample warning from our intelligence agencies and our military,” Conservative foreign affairs critic Michael Chong said in the House of Commons.

“And despite these warnings Canada is vulnerable, vulnerable because this government has failed to counter foreign interference, failed to stop funding of Beijing’s military research, failed to upgrade (the) NORAD early warning system and failed to acquire modern fighter jets.”

The Conservatives were particularly critical of the delay in buying F-35s. The Liberals confirmed plans last month to buy 88 F-35s over the coming years, marking the end of a decade-long search for a new fighter jet that first started under Stephen Harper’s government in 2010.

The Harper government later backed off its plan after facing questions and criticism over the aircraft's cost and design problems, leading to years of delays and partisan bickering.

Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino dismissed the Conservatives' complaints and allegations, saying Canada and the U.S. are "working together seamlessly to ensure continental security."

How to Fix a Howitzer: US Offers Help Line to Ukraine Troops

Lolita C Baldor, Associated Press 27 January, 2023



Ukrainian soldiers prepare a US-supplied M777 howitzer to fire at Russian positions in Kherson region, Ukraine, Jan. 9, 2023. AP Photo

A rapidly expanding group of US and allied troops and contractors are using phones and tablets to communicate in encrypted chat rooms to provide real-time maintenance advice to Ukrainian troops on the battlefield. As the US and other allies provide a growing number of increasingly complex and high-tech weapons, the maintenance demands are expanding. A military base in Southeastern Poland on the front lines in Ukraine, a soldier was having trouble firing his 155 mm howitzer gun. So, he turned to a team of Americans on the other end of his phone line for help. "What do I do?" he asked the US military team member, far away at a base in southeastern Poland. "What are my options?" Using phones and tablets to

communicate in encrypted chatrooms, a rapidly growing group of US and allied troops and contractors is providing real-time maintenance advice — usually speaking through interpreters — to Ukrainian troops on the battlefield.



Ukrainian soldiers fire at Russian positions from a US-supplied M777 howitzer in Kherson region, Ukraine, Jan 9, 2023. AP Photo

A rapidly expanding group of US and allied troops and contractors are using phones and tablets to communicate in encrypted chat rooms to provide real-time maintenance advice to Ukrainian troops on the battlefield. As the US and other allies provide a growing number of increasingly complex and high-tech weapons, the maintenance demands are expanding. In a quick response, the US team member told the Ukrainian to remove the gun's breech at the rear of the howitzer and manually prime the firing pin so the gun could fire. He did it and it worked. The exchange is part of an expanding US military help line aimed at providing repair advice to Ukrainian forces

in the heat of battle. As the US and other allies send more and increasingly complex and high-tech weapons to Ukraine, demands are spiking. And since no US or other NATO nations will send troops into the country to provide hands-on assistance — due to worries about being drawn into a direct conflict with Russia — they've turned to virtual chatrooms.

The US soldier and other team members and leaders stationed at a base in Poland spoke last week to two reporters who were traveling with Army Gen Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, when he visited the facility. Because of the sensitivity of the operation, the troops there spoke on condition of anonymity under guidelines set by the US military. Reporters also

agreed not to reveal the name or location of the base or take photos. Fixing a howitzer, the repair team said, has been a frequent request from Ukrainian troops on the front lines. The need for help with weapons has been growing. Just a few months ago, there were just a bit more than 50 members of what they call the remote maintenance team. That will surge to 150 in the coming weeks, and the number of encrypted chat lines has more than tripled — from about 11 last fall to 38 now. The team includes about 20 soldiers now, supplemented by civilians and contractors, but the military number may dip a bit, as more civilians come on board. And they expect it will continue to evolve as new sophisticated weapons are delivered to the Ukrainians, and new chatrooms set up to handle them. “A lot of the times we’ll get calls from right there on the firing line, so there’ll be outgoing or incoming fire at the same time you’re trying to help the forward maintainers troubleshoot the best they can,” said a US soldier who is part of the maintenance team. Sometimes, he said, the chat has to wait a bit until troops can get to a safer location.

A key problem, said one officer, is that Ukrainian troops are pushing the weapons to their limits — firing them at unprecedented rates and using them long after a US service member would turn them in to be repaired or retired. Holding up his tablet, the US soldier showed photos of the barrel of a howitzer, its interior ridges nearly worn completely away. “They’re using these systems in ways that we didn’t necessarily anticipate,” said the officer, pointing to the tablet. “We’re actually learning from them by seeing how much abuse these weapon systems can take, and where’s the breaking point.” The Ukrainian troops are often reluctant to send the weapons back out of the country for repairs. They’d rather do it themselves, and in nearly all cases, US officials estimated 99% of the time, the Ukrainians do the repair and continue on. Many of the chats are regularly scheduled with depot workers in Ukraine, like the one they call “Coffee Cup Guy,” because his chat has a coffee cup emoji. Other times they involve troops on the battlefield whose gun just blew apart, or whose vehicle stalled. “A lot of times if they’re on the front line, they won’t do a video because sometimes (cell service) is a little spotty,” said a US maintainer. “They’ll take pictures and send it to us through the chats and we sit there and diagnose it.”

There were times, he said, when they’ll get a picture of a broken howitzer, and the Ukrainian will say, “This Triple 7 just blew up — what do we do?” And, in what he said was a remarkable new skill, the Ukrainians can now put the split weapon back together. “They couldn’t do titanium welding before, they can do it now,” said the US soldier, adding that “something that was two days ago blown up is now back in play.” Doling out advice over the chats means the US experts have to diagnose the problem when something goes wrong, figure out how to fix it, then translate the steps into Ukrainian. As they look to the future, they are planning to get some commercial, off-the-shelf translation goggles. That way, when they talk to each other they can skip the interpreters and just see the translation as they speak, making conversations easier and faster.

They also are hoping to build their diagnostic capabilities as the weapons systems get more complex, and expand the types and amount of spare parts they keep on hand. For example, they said the Patriot missile system the US is sending to Ukraine will be a challenge, requiring more expertise in diagnosing and repairing problems.

The expanse of weapons and equipment they’re handling and questions they’re fielding were even too complicated for a digital spreadsheet — forcing the team to go low-tech. One wall in

their maintenance office is lined with an array of old-fashioned, color-coded Post-it notes, to help them track the weapons and maintenance needs. The team in Poland is part of an ever-expanding logistical network that stretches across Europe. As more nations send their own versions of weapon systems, they are setting up teams to provide repair support in a variety of locations. The nations and the manufacturing companies quickly put together manuals and technical data that can be translated and sent to the Ukrainians. They then set up stocks of spare parts and get them to locations near Ukraine's borders, where they can be sent to the battlefield. Just days before Milley visited the base, Ukrainians traveled to the Poland facility for parts. The visit gave US soldiers a chance to meet someone from their chatrooms face-to-face and swap military patches. "In the next video chat, we had he was wearing our patches in his video," the US soldier said.

The hub for the growing logistical effort is at Lucius D Clay Kaserne, the US Army base in Wiesbaden, Germany. There, in cubicles filling an expansive room, the international coalition coordinates the campaign to locate and identify far-flung equipment, weapons and spare parts in other countries that are needed in Ukraine. They then plan out deliveries — by sea, air and ground routes — to border locations where everything is loaded onto trucks or trains and moved to the war zone.

At least 17 nations have representatives in what's called the International Donor Coordination Center. And as the amount and types of equipment grow, the center is working to better meld the donations from the US and other nations. "As we send more additional advanced equipment, like Strykers, like Bradleys, like tanks, of course that sustainment activity will have to increase," said Douglas Bush, assistant Army secretary for acquisition. "I think the challenge is recognized. I think the Army knows how to do it."

Lt.-Gen. Michel Maisonneuve (Ret'd): Once Again, Canada Fails on the World Stage

Disaster Assistance Response Team personnel should have been deployed immediately to Turkey and Syria

Lt.-Gen. J.O. Michel Maisonneuve (Ret'd),

February 11, 2023



A man stands on the rubble of collapsed buildings in Hatay, Turkey, on Feb. 10, 2023, after a 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck the country's southeast and portions of Syria. Although a private group of search and rescue volunteers from British Columbia have travelled to Turkey to assist, Canada has not sent its Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART). PHOTO BY YASIN AKGUL / AFP

The news out of Turkey and Syria is horrible. As of the time of writing, the death toll from the earthquakes there has reached more than 23,000 and no one thinks it has peaked.

The devastation is overwhelming. It is almost impossible to reconcile the piles of rubble with the apartment buildings, places of worship and historical treasures they once were, even with the graphic photos of before and after provided by those on the ground.

There have been haunting images of people digging with bare hands into insurmountable piles of debris, a father holding the hand of his dead daughter. But then, in an example of human nature at its finest, we see the world rally. Rescue teams with medical personnel, firefighters and search and rescue dogs arrive in a continuous stream. Israel, just one of many countries that have responded to the disaster, is sending a team of 150 engineers, medical personnel and other aid workers. The EU will contribute 1,150 rescue personnel and 70 rescue dogs.

We have watched and waited to see Canada's contribution. We are good at this; our Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) is known for its successes, especially its ability to provide clean drinking water, primary medical care and engineering/mapping services. By our own definition, "Since 1998, Canada has sent the DART to help when natural disasters and crises have struck other countries. It assists when local responders are overwhelmed, and people have nowhere else to turn. The DART can remain in place for up to 60 days. It works to stabilize a crisis until long-term aid is underway to help the country recover." Surely the team is already on its way?

Not so. Instead of seeing the Maple Leaf on the shoulders of a team of 200 heading to Turkey, we have been told that Canada has sent an "assessment team" and promised \$10 million to various aid organizations. The whole point of the DART is that it is ready to deploy. Now. Within 48 hours the 200-person team could be enroute. Instead, the tap dancing and handwringing continues and, once again, Canada fails. Why?

In truth, the Canadian Armed Forces have very little capability to help. Missing more than 10,000 soldiers, fielding old kit, reeling from dozens of misconduct allegations and the need for "culture change," our forces are unable to send emergency troops to help in a real crisis. The "staff checks" the media has been told about are likely a beleaguered Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Wayne Eyre, being asked if he can pull blood from a stone. What current commitment, operation or exercise can he curtail in order to redirect his meagre resources to help Turkey and Syria?

Eyre has played magician before, most recently to satisfy the government's newly announced Indo-Pacific Strategy, which stated that Canada would "deploy additional military assets." For the Chief of Defence Staff this meant pulling a ship from other commitments, but perhaps there is simply no more room to manoeuvre. How embarrassing.

Canada donating money to relief organizations reminds me of Ottawa's approach to the humanitarian crisis in Albania in 1999. As the head of the Kosovo Verification Mission's Refugee Task Force, I was sent to Albania to "look after the refugees being sent across the border from Kosovo to Albania." Not the usual clear mission statement I was used to as an army officer. As I was working to support the Albanian government in all the prefectures (provinces) to receive and house the refugees, I watched how Canada was supporting the crisis. I was told repeatedly that Canada was providing millions of dollars to the Canadian International Development Agency for the UN relief agencies; however, this was not something Canada could get visible credit for in Albania or indeed across the international community. Yes, our political masters could talk about it, but it was not apparent to anyone — certainly not to Albanians — that Canada was doing anything.

Compare that with what the Austrians were doing. They set up a complete refugee camp in Shkodra near the Albanian border with Kosovo where they could house thousands of refugees until they could be relocated in Austria or elsewhere. The camp was well run; clean, secure, and orderly. And the Austrians could hoist their flag and announce that Austria was present and

helping. In addition to the money they were spending to ensure the refugees in the camp were looked after, Austria was providing many more millions to relief agencies. Canada got no credit — except from bean counters in the UN for our donation. I tried to explain this to our representatives many times; those explanations fell on deaf ears.

So, here we are again — what can we do in Türkiye? Well, other than providing millions to relief agencies, with the hope that the money actually makes its way to those truly in need, probably little.

Canadians love their armed forces when there is a crisis, but we are not giving them the ability to ensure they will be at their best by ensuring they are funded, resourced and appreciated before the crisis.

Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy: An Overdue Conversation

NATO Association of Canada

February 6, 2023 Joseph De Sapio

Canada has recently [published](#) its long-awaited Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS), which provides a comprehensive roadmap for managing opportunities and mitigating threats in the region. There are plenty of each: the opportunities to increase trade, bilateral foreign direct investment (FDI), and “person-to-person” connectivity (i.e., educational exchanges or cultural programs) are extensive across the theatre. Similarly, however, the threats to local stability — whether from China's [increasing disregard](#) for the rules-based international order, or North Korea's [nuclear provocations](#), or India's uncertain [border disputes](#) — are numerous and multifaceted. At its heart, then, the IPS demonstrates that Canada needs to act constructively to maintain an awareness of these issues, and that any response must necessarily incorporate a variety of perspectives and actors (military, political, cultural, economic), as there is no universal policy for such a disparate region.

However, while the strategy is welcome in turning Canada's attention to an area of growing importance in world affairs, in terms of interests, the IPS remains vague on objective metrics for success. Increasing Canada's presence in the region through the use of military, economic, or cultural ties is a good way to benefit Canada, but what *are* Canada's interests in the region? The IPS offers some useful ideas across the region — increasing [engagement in the G7](#); an increased presence coordinating with [ASEAN](#); greater cultural ties through [increased economic and education visa programs](#) — but it does not establish a relationship between objective and policy. Indeed, these are not new objectives: the emphasis on alliances and multilateral solutions to ongoing challenges has been [standard Canadian policy](#) since at least the end of the Second World War; support for [bilateral investment opportunities](#) has also been policy priority for a similarly long time.

For instance, in promoting “strategic resiliency,” the IPS calls for Canada to “increase...military engagement and intelligence capacity [and to] deploy additional military assets and increase its investments in border and cyber security.” These are welcome steps to protect Canadian interests, but the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) may not have the additional capacity in equipment or personnel to provide additional support in such a large theatre. Naval and air

assets, for instance, are already generally tasked with [specific ongoing missions](#), and CAF operations in the Indo-Pacific would rely heavily on the navy.

Militarily, the size of the CAF footprint in the Indo-Pacific is quite small. Naval assets from the Pacific Fleet ([MARPAF](#)) are limited to just [thirteen surface ships and two submarines](#) for combat or force projection, not including auxiliary units such as shore-based aircraft. To assert an increased security presence in this region, then, would likely require a redeployment of resources and ships from the Canadian Atlantic Fleet ([MARLANT](#)).

This, however, is not without problems. Major MARLANT units, such as the *Halifax*-class frigates, are often tasked for participation in NATO's [Standing Maritime Group](#) patrols, which may last up to a year in duration. Furthermore, *Kingston*-class ships are perennially visible in the Caribbean as part of [Operation CARIBBE](#), which interdicts suspected drug smugglers in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. Re-tasking these units is possible but would negatively impact Canada's participation in these operations. It is not enough, therefore, simply to state that more military assets would be provided, without detailing how and why these would be used.

The use of such assets requires a comprehensive set of objectives as well as a plan to achieve them. While the IPS lists many useful objectives, from coordinating with allies and partners, to enhancing trade and economic activity, the step-by-step process for enhancing Canadian interests, from implementation to successful accomplishment, is often missing altogether. To compare, the US' own [Indo-Pacific Strategy](#) (USIPS) is much more specific in its tone. In discussing improving military cooperation within the region, the USIPS notes that "finding new opportunities to link our defense industrial bases, integrating our defense supply chains, and co-producing key technologies that will shore up our collective military advantages is a key necessity." The level of cooperation and integration here is a means to an end: securing defence-industrial bases will allow the US to [more easily defend Taiwan](#) in the event of a [Chinese invasion](#). Indeed, with the US turning its attention to the region via new security architecture (the "[Quad](#)", [AUKUS](#)), and devoting more military and financial resources into securing its own interests, Canada's IPS appears small-scale and rather limited in what it can achieve.

The IPS would be more effective if it provided a niche or specific area of maneuver for Canada. Canada [cannot compete](#) with large powers such as China, Russia, or the US. It should, however, leverage its soft power in other ways, most usefully by returning to its role as an "[honest broker](#)" in the region through the creation or reinforcement of diplomatic architecture to resolve disputes or conflicts. As conflict and competition intensify in the region, and with the UN perceived as being [outdated or unrepresentative of the region](#), new forums for cooperation or resolution will be required, especially to handle complex problems. Canada should continue its military and financial contributions to local alliances, but perhaps focus more on leveraging its traditional strengths as a [diplomatic broker](#) – as it did with the creation of the 1997 [Ottawa Treaty](#) banning global landmine use.

Thus, the role of the IPS is perhaps best viewed as the opening of a dialogue on Canada's future role in the region. It indicates areas where Canadian participation must be improved – trade, military alliances, and cultural contacts – but the absence of metrics or criteria for success invites ideas from government departments, private institutions, NGOs, or other actors to tailor policy implementation to specific states, conditions, or alliances. The IPS, therefore, is a work in

progress, and will itself likely change as conditions in the Indo-Pacific become clearer and better understood in the coming years.

Royal Canadian Air Force Strategy

Dear friends,

It is with great pleasure I provide to you today the Royal Canadian Air Force Strategy. This document has been in development for the past 18 months and represents a vision and path for the future of the RCAF over the next decade.

The RCAF is on the cusp of unprecedented modernization. We are the beneficiaries of significant investments in equipment, infrastructure and capabilities that, once fully realized, will place the RCAF on par with the most advanced air forces in the world. The recent announcement of the acquisition of the F-35 as our new fighter, with associated infrastructure and equipment upgrades is testament to that investment. Meanwhile, we recognize that our capacity and capabilities are below where we want them to be. For the sake of our collective security and defence, we need a clear and achievable path forward.

The RCAF Strategy provides the overarching guidance for our collective efforts over the coming years. The Strategy contains four strategic objectives and a series of actions required to achieve those objectives. It is an ambitious and achievable undertaking that will set the RCAF on a solid footing to ensure we are prepared to act decisively when needed – either here at home or in support of our allies and partners around the globe.

As steadfast supporters of the RCAF your organizations are key partners in communicating with Canadians about your air and space force, the value a robust air and space force brings to Canada and Canadians, and the impact these forces have in a modern network-enabled battle space. It is no understatement to say your continued support is essential and valued for our collective successes in the exciting times ahead. To that end, I would be grateful if you would share the RCAF Strategy with your association.

LGen / Lgén Eric J. Kenny, CMM, MSC, MSM, CD
Commander Royal Canadian Air Force

Editor: see <https://www.canada.ca/en/air-force/corporate/reports-publications/royal-canadian-air-force-strategy.html>

Book Review- Historical Dreadnoughts Arthur Marder, Stephen Roskill: Writing and Fighting Naval History

by Barry Gough, Seaforth Publishing, 2010. 599 pages, Illus., maps, notes, biblio., indices.

ISBN: 1848320779

History of War, 2010

This is an unusual topic for a book, containing biographies of two of the most important naval historians of the Twentieth Century and a look at feud that developed between the two men as they approached the peak of their careers. Marder and Roskill were very different figures. Marder was the Harvard man, an academic who served very briefly in intelligence during the Second World War, but spent much of his career travelling between his university base in Hawaii and the archives in Britain. Roskill was a Royal Navy officer with a fairly distinguished career that included some frontline service during the war before being cut short by deafness caused by repeated exposure to gun fire when in charge of the guns on HMS Warspite.

At first the two men seem to have got on quite well, at least for as long as their areas of interest didn't overlap. Marder was interested in Jackie Fisher and the First World War navy, while Marder wrote the Official History of the Royal Navy during the Second World War. Once they both began to look at the interwar period the rivalry became more intense, and after a particularly unpleasant argument over access to the Hankey papers their professional relationship broke down (although they continued to correspond on a fairly friendly basis to the end of their lives).

This book will have a rather wider appeal than you might think from the subject. In the process of discussing Marder's and Roskill's work, Gough inevitably provides a great deal of information on the topics they were studying, and the way in which thinking on their main topics developed over time. These sections will thus be of value to anyone interested in the Dreadnaught era, Fisher, the British navy in the First World War, or to anyone who has used Roskill's Official Histories of the fighting during the Second World War.

The book should also be of interest to anyone interested in the writing of history, and military history in particular. There is some excellent material on how both men gathered and used their sources, and their approaches to the writing of history - particularly of interest in the case of Marder, who had to engage with the academic trends of the late 1960s towards the end of his career. There is also an interesting comparison of the different problems faced by official and unofficial historians - Roskill had easy access to the Navy's archives, but some limits on what he could say, while Marder had to struggle to gain access to the First World War archives, but was less restricted in what he could do with his sources. Highly recommended.