

11 January 2105

Procuring the *Canadian Surface Combatant* – Maintaining Military Independence

Contrary to a recent inference (Michael Den Tandt, Postmedia News, **Does Canada still need an independent military?**, Sunday 2 November 2014), the Government of Canada and its armed forces will continue, as they have to date, to make decisions and to take actions which are in the best interests of Canada, as determined by Canadians. In the arena of future naval warfare, there is no question that navies (and supporting and supported services) must be interoperable and interconnected to be effective; there is a real need for allied ships (and aircraft) to be highly interconnected, especially at the sensor level, so as to defeat increasingly lethal threats, especially in the air warfare domain. Regardless of which combat systems are procured for the *Canadian Surface Combatant*, in satisfaction of the *Statement of Operational Requirement*, a Canadian chain-of-command, which has Canadians in the loop, will always retain the authority to decide when and how Canadian military force, including the firing of missiles, may be used. The answer to the question “Does Canada still need an independent military?” is absolutely yes, and it is most doubtful that anything in the *Canadian Surface Combatant’s Statement of Operational Requirement* would advocate a different answer.

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