



From the bridge...

Jim Carruthers | National President | jimc@rruthers.com



NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
ASSOCIATION NAVALE DU CANADA

Your part in the Defence Policy Review

No doubt about it — the priority for the Naval Association of Canada (NAC) over the next few months is the Defence Policy Review (DPR). While communicating the need for a capable and effective Navy is something we take as a priority day in day out, we now need to kick it up a notch.

In my last *Starshell* column I described how we were planning to approach the DPR as an Association. It is on line at:

<http://navalassoc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/From-the-Bridge-Winter-2015-16-Starshell.pdf>

I recommend you have another look at it, particularly our messaging points. This time I would like to update you on what the National Office is doing and then focus on how you can contribute as individuals.

AS AN ASSOCIATION

As NAC we are executing on our plan:

- The special issue of *Canadian Naval Review* is coming together. This peer reviewed academic journal will contain an editorial by Dan Sing; “Strategic Considerations for Canada’s Navy” by Elinor Sloan; “Technology and Where Navies are Going” by Dr. Norman Friedman; “Naval Economic Budget Realities” by Dr. Dave Perry; “The Navy and the Arctic” by Dr. Rob Huebert; RCN Operations and Force Structures” by RAdm John Newton; “Submarines” by Peter Haydon; “Maritime Air” by John Orr; considerations re “Costs of Building Ships in Canada” by Dr. Eric Lerhe, and “A View from the West-Indo-Asia-Pacific” by Brett Witthoef. You will note the majority of these authors are NAC members.

- By the time you read this we will have completed what will have been another very successful Battle of Atlantic GALA at the Canadian War Museum which, while

honouring our veterans, provides a naval atmosphere where the leadership of our Navy can spend an evening with government and industry leaders.

- We have provided support for professional editing of a RCN document which will be used within the department and to make the case for the type of Navy Canada needs. We are also providing support when needed in helping Canadians meet with RCN leadership.

- Richard Archer and his OUTREACH Committee have re-tooled their existing presentation and will continue to do so as this process evolves.

- We continue to look to a special Navy DPR focussed issue of FRONTLINE DEFENCE. A concept being considered is to take a different approach asking what would happen if we did not have a blue water capability, submarines, the ability to operate as a Canadian entity, an unregulated Arctic and so on.

- Mike Young is developing a simplified and updated version of his 1994 booklet on why Canada needs a Navy, focussing more on capabilities.

AS INDIVIDUALS

Our best intelligence is that the government believes we need a capable Navy. So it seems they have made the binary decision. We need not and should not be writing and speaking out about why we need a Navy—the DPR team believe they have already checked that item off and most likely don’t want to be lectured further on the topic.

What we do need to address are the grey area decisions that will follow. Okay, Canada needs a Navy, but what does that mean? Does it involve submarines, blue water capability, an ability to deploy on the other side of the planet as a Canadian entity, low level UN riverine support, high level ballistic

missile defence?

As mentioned in NAC NEWS and the press, the government has invited Canadians to participate in the Defence Policy Review. [Simply enter [Defence Policy Review](#) in your browser's address field and hit enter to follow the links, Ed.] Running through until 31 July 2016, the Department of National Defence (DND) will be engaging all Canadians and many key stakeholders to discuss three fundamental areas:

1. The main challenges to Canada's security;
2. The role of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in addressing current threats and challenges.
3. The resources and capabilities needed to carry out the CAF mandate.

To help guide an informed discussion, the DPR team has prepared a public consultation paper to inform the public on the role of the Canadian Armed Forces and the issues affecting their current operating environment, defence capabilities, and the future defence force.

There are two main ways we can provide feedback: anonymously, via a workbook, or by joining a discussion which requires you to log in and will allow you to see what others have posted and discuss those issues. These services are being managed by an independent research firm.

In addition, six roundtables are happening across the nation having started in Vancouver on 27 April. Fellow member King Wan has been asked to participate in this first roundtable. The roundtables are advertised as encouraging all Canadians to get involved with participation by invitation.

I anticipate the third party firm engaged to conduct this exercise, followed by government staffs, will parse your commentary looking for well thought out arguments of the gray type. I believe your reasoned arguments regarding needed capabilities will enable them to fill in the blanks.

We are using and will use NAC NEWS to provide background on not only naval developments, but developments in the area of DPR progress. Please keep an eye peeled each week to ensure you are up to date. If you are asked to participate in a roundtable, before you offer an opinion I suggest you contact either Dan Sing or myself—we can provide further updates and background material. Our Naval Affairs team is working to examine what Canadians think of our navy and questions they believe need to be answered. We will also develop lines of discussion and concise expressions of capability needs—the so-called elevator speeches.

Given that a real defence review has not been completed in over twenty years, I hope Canadians of all views will seize this opportunity to contribute to and influence an important national policy. From our experience in internet-based expressions of opinion on almost any topic, it is probable that this undertaking will attract more than its share of folks who may well provide most of the content that will unfortunately be off-topic and flawed. Your informed comments regarding Canadian naval capabilities will provide a valued counterpoint to those inputs. We may be helping craft policy that will last another twenty years!

I hope your comments will be positive and forward looking—but please comment.

Yours aye

Jim

As published in *Starshell*, Spring 2016, No. 73 edition.