



Naval Association of Canada Association navale du Canada

2022 – 2023 REPORT OF NAC NAVAL AFFAIRS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

9 June 2023

This report summarizes Naval Affairs activities over the period since the last National AGM in June 2022.

National Outreach Program

As part of the National Outreach Program, the Ottawa Branch continued to execute Speaker's Evenings over the past 12 months. Below is a summary table of the program calendar followed by a synopsis of the presentations.

	Month	Speaker	Online Attendance
a)	June 2022	Capt(N) (Ret'd) Derek Moss, Assistant Commissioner, Canadian Coast Guard (West)	21
b)	July 2022	No Meeting (Summer Break)	0
c)	August 2022	No Meeting (Summer Break)	0
d)	September 2022	Commander Chris Knowlton, CO HMCS CARLETON.	37
e)	October 2022	Commander Corey Gleason, former Commanding Officer of HMCS HARRY DEWOLF	61
f)	November 2022	Commodore Jeff Murray, Director General Naval Strategic Readiness	93
g)	December 2022	VAdm Angus Topshee, CRCN	164
h)	January 2023	Mr. Denis Stevens, Vice President, Government Relations with Seaspan Shipyards	58
i)	February 2023	Mr. Bill Matthews. Deputy Minister of DND	100

- | | | | |
|-----------|------------|---|----|
| j) | March 2023 | RAdm Steve Waddell, Deputy
Commander RCN | 50 |
| k) | April 2023 | Dr Salvatore Mercogliano, Chair,
Department of History, Criminal
Justice and Political Science,
Campbell University, North
Carolina | 43 |
| l) | May 2023 | No Meeting. BOA Gala Dinner that
week. | |
- a. June – Derek Moss’s presentation, titled, “A Flock of Black Swans: The Changing Nature of Maritime Incidents”, focused on the need to adjust the Coast Guard's capability and posture based on the broadening and deepening of incidents due to climate change and other factors.
 - b. July – Summer break. No Speaker’s Evening.
 - c. August – Summer break. No Speaker’s Evening.
 - d. September – Cdr Chris Knowlton and Ottawa Branch members Howie Smith and Tom Dewolf spoke about the NNMRA project to revitalize the National Naval Reserve Monument at HMCS Carleton, what it means to the Naval Reserve and indeed the RCN and what the end result will look like.
 - e. October – Cdr Corey Gleason gave us a summary of his experiences as first CO of HMCS Harry DeWolf, a “first in class” ship and of circumnavigating North America.
 - f. November – Cmdre Jeff Murray spoke about the current challenges with recruiting and retention in the RCN and the CAF.
 - g. December – Commander RCN, VAdm Angus Topshee drew a very good crowd on 5 December when he brought us up to date on the state of our Navy, from both the personnel and fleet assets perspectives. The audio of his remarks is on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/IWUBjaA2Cyk>.
 - h. January – Denis Stevens and his team (Stan Jacobson and Chris Earl) gave us an excellent overview of Seaspans’ operations in Canada including their work on the Joint Support Ship (hull completed), refits of VIC Class submarines and building Canada’s Coast Guard vessels.
 - i. February – The “Fireside Chat” with DM Bill Matthews was a frank, off the record discussion of issues at DND, in particular those with a naval nexus. We received several "BZ/Well done" comments from members across the country, which was a good sign that we met expectations.
 - j. March – RAdm Waddell spoke to us about his posting to Norfolk as the Vice Commander of the United States Navy’s Second Fleet (C2F). The Admiral gave us a very informative talk on his time in Virginia and how things at C2F have evolved over time.

- k. April – Dr Salvatore Mercogliano provided an interesting presentation based on his extensive research of early World War Two fuel distribution and the operations of naval oilers and commercial tankers in the Pacific Theatre. He also explained the evolution of replenishment at sea operations from the early days of the war to the current methods of alongside RAS that we know today.
- l. May – No Speaker’s Evening. Week of BOA Gala Dinner.

In summary, the 2022-23 Speaker’s Program was again very successful and helped maintain interest in naval affairs across the country. The plan in Ottawa Branch is to continue to deliver the events virtually until we can meet in person. The idea of a hybrid format with some attending in person and other virtually by leveraging technology so that members not in Ottawa may continue to participate will be explored. We were successful in obtaining high profile speakers, which in turn drew very good turnouts for many of the events.

2022 Annual Conference

On 16 June 2022 NAC Naval Affairs hosted a conference online on the subject of, “Submarines – Canada’s Strategic Requirement”. This all-day event included presentations by Branch members, Norm Jolin, Jamie Clarke and Rear-Admiral Chris Robinson, as well as retired Vice-Admiral Bob Davidson and well-known speakers from academia: Rob Huebert, Jeff Collins, Tim Choi and Adam Lajeunesse. Feedback on the conference was very positive. Papers, articles and speakers’ notes were consolidated into a special edition of STARSHELL, which was published, posted and distributed using social media in late July. With Ray Levesque’s support the paper version was printed and distributed in the early fall by mail to MPs, DND and other interested parties. Additional copies were distributed at the Deep Blue Conference and provided to members of Canadian Defence Association Institute (CDAI).

2022 Fall Arctic Security Conference/Workshop

The Fall in person Conference/Workshop in Halifax during the week of 17-21 October 2022 was also very successful. The event was fully paid for by donations that Adam Lajeunesse solicited from various government sources, including the Mobilizing Insights in Defence and Security (MINDS) program (DND), the US Consulate in Halifax, the North American and Arctic Defence and Security Network, and the Canadian Defence and Security Network. The RCN hosted the event at CFB Halifax and provided invaluable administrative support. Adam produced an excellent Conference Report which was published on the National Website in December. <https://www.navalassoc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/NAC-Halifax-Final-Report.pdf>

Maritime Security Challenges Conference

NAC Members from NAC VI attended the Maritime Security Challenges Conference in Victoria in mid-November and provided a report which indicated that the conference was very well done, with “Lots of information on a whole range of topics highlighting a range of issues in the Indo-Pacific region. Interestingly some encouraging announcements were made by our PM and other Ministers regarding the region that week. Hosted by Comd RCN, all Formation Commanders

were there throughout. NAC VI attendees reported they were pleased to be able to re-connect with many still serving and retired shipmates.

Mobilizing Insights in Defence and Security (MINDS) Research Network Proposal

Adam Lajeunesse's submission for a three-year \$750,000 DND MINDS research network proposal was very close (4th, but only 3 received approval) to receiving funding. The Fall Arctic Security Workshop was a good proof of concept and reference for the next submission and Adam is confident of better results in 2024.

Briefing Notes

An extensive review of the Briefing Notes on the website was undertaken over the past 12 months. Approximately 50 percent were updated, and another 25 percent will be updated over the summer months.

Niobe Papers

Two new Niobe Papers were published on the website over the past twelve months. The first examines the question, "Why Canada needs Submarines", while the second is an expanded version of a Briefing Note on "Uncrewed Maritime Systems".

Children's Books

Children's book sales have continued, with several large purchases by the RCN and expressions of interest for additional sales.

Graphic Novel

The graphic novel, depicting what life was like in the RCN during the Battle of the Atlantic was completed in early May. The first 250 copies, which were produced with a credit to the RCNBF and their logo on the back cover, could not be sold as the RCNBF opted not to support the initiative. A second publication run is being undertaken and 200 of the first 250 copies will be recovered. The novel will be advertised online through social media and the NAC Website and sold online through the Kit Shop.

Salty Dips

The Ottawa Branch Salty Dips (SD) Committee has been publishing compilations of short stories about life in the Navy for many years with the support of funds provided by National dating back to the 1990s. Given that that funds generated from sales now go straight into National accounts it was decided by Ottawa Branch that full responsibility for Salty Dips should be transferred to National. Ottawa Branch was holding approximately \$7900 on their books which was returned to National accounts. As the next volume of Salty Dips will not be ready for publishing for several years National can use the money for other purposes.

Going forward, Salty Dips will come under the Naval Affairs Program under education and outreach, where it will be managed with the other publications (Children's Books and Graphic Novel) in terms of marketing, sales and future publication. The Salty Dips Committee has produced a draft marketing plan which will be useful in this regard. Should the Committee require funds to publish a Volume 12, the Committee can apply to the Endowment Fund.

STARSHHELL

The most recent STARSHHELL was published at the end of March, after a delay to allow for inclusion of the interview with the Commander RCN. This edition included an announcement of the creation of the STARSHHELL Editorial Board. The intent is to seek new Board Members who can contribute to the improving STARSHHELL and NAC National Website content and generation of more interest in the Association and the NA program. The next STARSHHELL edition is being compiled and should be ready for publication at the end of June.

Relationship with the Navy League of Canada (NLOC)

The NAC supported NLOC's Navy and Coast Guard Appreciation Day, which took place on Parliament Hill on 28 March. NAC support was in the form of team leaders/members to visit parliamentarians' offices with messages on the importance of the RCN and the CCG to Canada, in terms of security and economic impact. The Vice President NLOC's Maritime Affairs Alliance, Mme Louise Mercier personally thanked the undersigned for NAC's support and suggested that more collaboration between NAC and NLOC should be pursued.

Contribution to Defence Policy Update

In response to a request for contributions to the ongoing Defence Policy Update by the CDAI, in early June Naval Affairs provided eight papers written over the past 24 months. Most of the papers focused on Canada's requirement for new submarines and were produced as part of the 16 June 2022 Conference on Canada's Submarine Requirement. Two papers dealt with the Canadian Surface Combatant Project and the need to replace the Halifax Class with at least 15 major combatants.

Additionally, Adam Lajeunesse, with the assistance of the STARSHHELL Editorial Board produced an OpEd commentary on the importance of a submarine fleet to Canadian defence and security. The OpEd was sent to the Deputy Minister DND, who expressed an interest in it at the BOA Gala Dinner and it was recently published by the Canadian Global Affairs Institute website.

Honorary President/Patron

No formal action has been taken on this activity since the initial meeting. With the King's Coronation having taken place in May, it is time to revisit this activity.

BOA Gala Dinner

The BOA Gala Dinner took place at the Canadian War Museum on 3 May. The theme of the dinner was the celebration of the Centennial of the RCN Naval Reserve. Invitations were sent to Parliamentarians, foreign attachés and other high-profile individuals. 355 people attended the dinner, including the Minister of National Defence and 8 other MPs, the Deputy Minister at DND, the Chief of the Defence Staff, the Commander and Deputy Commander RCN, Commander NAV RES and his Command CPO, Commander 1 CAD, RCAF and his Command Chief Warrant Officer, and many military attachés and representatives from 15 of 16 sponsor companies. Feedback on the dinner has been very positive. A “Hot Wash Up” discussion was conducted on 12 May and a Lessons Learned Report is being prepared by Ottawa Branch Vice President Operations, Ray Coutu who co-chaired the Planning Committee. It was noted that support from the RCN was much better than previous years. There will be a follow up discussion in July with CRCN Staff regarding their plans for a Maritime Gala Ball in 2024.

The Admirals’ Medal

The Selection Committee of retired Senior Officers met in November and reviewed six submissions. Rear Admiral (Ret’d) Ian Mack was selected as the recipient for 2022. Four of the remaining 5 nominations will be held for consideration along with any nominations in 2023. The advertising to generate awareness and nominations through circulation to periodicals, magazines and websites with a maritime nexus was very successful and will be repeated in 2023. The BOA dinner included presentation of the 2022 Admirals’ Medal to RAdm (Ret’d) Mack.

Sponsorship of the BOA Gala Dinner and Naval Affairs Program

In late March the undersigned met with the Regional Vice President Ottawa East and Quebec West of Bank of Montreal, Mr. Omar Abouzaher. He was briefed on the NAC and the Naval Affairs Program and asked him to consider a BOA Gala Dinner sponsorship for 2023. He advised me that BMO’s 5-year sponsorship of the Army Run in Ottawa is about to end, and he is looking for new opportunities to sponsor military supporters like the NAC. He was provided a “Wish List” of projects and activities. Although sponsorship of the BOA Gala Dinner did not occur this year, Mr. Abouzaher did attend the dinner with BMO Nesbitt Burns (Linas Pilypaitis) and in a brief conversation said that the sponsorship of NAC was still under consideration and that he would be willing to discuss sometime later in June.

Professional Services Contracts with Naval Affairs Team Members

Dr. Adam Lajeunesse’s contract was revised to combine his work as Editor STARSHELL with his other work in support of Naval Affairs. It has been signed and came into effect 1 May 2023. With Dr. Griffiths’ work on the Graphic Novel completed and the naval affairs content on the national website in a relatively good state, it was decided that her services would no longer be required effective 30 April 2023. As a result NA contractor support costs will be reduced from \$77,250 to \$30,000 on an annual basis.

New Naval Affairs Initiatives

Naval Affairs intends to pursue the following initiatives in 2023-24:

- NAC- RCN Mentorship Program. This initiative is in its early stages. An article on the mentorship program written by Commander Amber Comisso was published in the March STARSHELL. Ottawa Branch member Phil Dana is investigating software applications that may be suitable for a trial and a follow-up discussion with the RCN is planned for 15 June.
- Outreach to Deployed RCN ships. The idea is to provide each RCN ship (and eventually shore establishments) a NAC membership and possibly a NAC Email address. This will facilitate communications and support other activities. This was discussed with Command CCPO1 Tom Lizotte on 24 November. He liked the idea and offered to contact ships' Coxswains as the initial Point of Contact. No action has occurred to date.
- Essay Writing Contest for deployed sailors. The idea is to challenge sailors on deployed ships to write essays on naval affairs, their experiences at sea, or any other relevant topics. This would be supported by NAC membership and Email address. No action has occurred to date.

Conclusion

The NAC's Naval Affairs program has continued to gather momentum over the past 12 months, with much of the focus being on the relationship with the RCN, how to provide support to the RCN in the future and content of future STARSHELL editions. To that end, the creation of an Editorial Board to support STARSHELL and other NA activities is seen as a significant step forward.

(O.S.B.)

Tim Addison
Director - Naval Affairs
Naval Association of Canada