



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia Dispatches 5 January 2024

The Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia provides a forum for the study, promotion and debate of defence, security and safety issues.

Dispatches is a weekly collection of news of interest, including posts to social media by the Institute. Links to articles are checked at the time they are put into *Dispatches* but may be unavailable at a later date or in some countries other than Canada.

Everyone is encouraged to submit links and other content to be included in *Dispatches*. Submissions and feedback are welcome anytime. Email to RUSINSDispatches@gmail.com. Comments to articles can be from members or non-members of RUSI(NS). Any comment in *Dispatches* is the sole opinion of the author and does not necessarily represent the views of the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia, the Department of National Defence or other government department, the Canadian Armed Forces, or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or other agency.

If you wish to receive *Dispatches* at a different address (i.e., not your work address), please inform RUSI(NS). Past editions of *Dispatches* may be requested by contacting RUSI(NS).

RUSI(NS) Survey 2024

A survey of RUSI(NS) performance (really, a single question) will shortly be emailed to RUSI(NS) members. Your feedback is important to the conduct of our activities. Please take the time to respond. This is your Institute.

Events:

To list an event in *Dispatches*, email RUSI(NS) by noon Thursday. RUSI(NS) events are by invitation. If you are interested in attending and have not been invited, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. RUSI(NS) events may be cancelled at short notice. Email RUSI(NS) if there is a question of an event occurring.

9 January, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Oh, The Humanity: Generative AI Imagery in Game Design." 7-9 pm AST. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/oh-the-humanity-generative-ai-imagery-in-game-design-tickets-722319094857>.

New: 12 January, Friday - Center for Strategic & International Studies webinar "Security in the Western Pacific: Building Future Capabilities in the Time of AUKUS." 10:00-11:15 am EST. Info and webinar at: <https://www.csis.org/events/security-western-pacific-building-future-capabilities-time-aukus>.

New: 16 January, Tuesday – ONE9 Mission Analysis Session "Accelerating Ukrainian Mine Clearance Operations." 8:30am-4:30pm. Online. Not the usual RUSI(NS)-type event but cool. ONE9 collaboration with DND and IDEaS (Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security). To register: <https://www.one9.ca/mission-analysis-session-ukr-mine-clearance/en>

17 January, Wednesday - RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker Dr Jonathan Fowler, Saint Mary's University, "The Historical Archaeology of Halifax's Earliest Defences." 1300-1430. In-person. Royal Artillery Park Officers' Mess.

Pre-event reading:

Early Town Defences

<https://hnhps.ca/sites/early-town-defences>

Peninsular Blockhouses

<https://hnhps.ca/sites/peninsular-blockhouses>

The Early Fortifications of Halifax

<https://hnhps.ca/pdf/The-Early-Fortifications-of-Halifax.pdf>

Cemetery that tells of Halifax's naval history hides in plain sight

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/cemetery-naval-history-halifax-1.6901190>

Walking Tour of Halifax's Early Defences

<https://hnhps.ca/pdf/Walking-Tour-of-Halifax's-Early-Defences.pdf>

17 January, Tuesday - Canada House Veterans Wellness Workshop. 0930-1530. Fairview Legion Branch 142, 50 Hillcrest Street, Halifax. See poster at end of *Dispatches*.

23 January, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Wargaming's Influence on U.S. Navy Tactical Doctrine, 1906-1941." 7-9 pm AST. Online. To register:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wargamings-influence-on-us-navy-tactical-doctrine-1906-1941-tickets-639727099977>

30 January, Tuesday - King's College London School of Security Studies presentation "Space power and Irregular Warfare in Space." 5:00-6:30 pm GMT. Online. To register:

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/events/space-power-and-irregular-warfare-in-space>

6 February, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Saga: A Sub-threshold Conflict Wargaming System." 7-9 pm AST. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/saga-a-sub-threshold-conflict-wargaming-system-tickets-719821885637>

New: 20 February, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Integrating Scientific Experiments with Wargaming Mechanics." 7-9pm AST. Online. To register:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/integrating-scientific-experiments-with-wargaming-mechanics-tickets-783428314177>

21 February, Wednesday - Distinguished Speaker MGen S.Y. Ménard, RCAF Chief Fighter and NORAD Capability (CFNC), speaking about the Future Fighter Capability Project (F-35 procurement) and about the RCAF Centennial. 1300-1500 Atlantic time. Via Zoom. Details to follow.

22 February, Thursday - Royal Alberta United Services Institute presentation "Beyond Greed: How Corruption Threatens Global Security" with journalist and political advisor Sarah Chayes. 6-7 pm MST (9-10 pm AST). Online. For more info and to register: <https://rausi.ca/info-events/rmcscd/622-beyond-greed-how-corruption-threatens-global-security>

New: 23 April, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Perspective and its Consequences in Historical Game Design." 7-9pm ADT. Online. To register:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/perspective-and-its-consequences-in-historical-game-design-tickets-781758088487>

9 May, Thursday - Royal Alberta United Services Institute 2024 Keynote Lecture with LGen (ret) The Honorable Roméo Dallaire, discussing key strategic challenges facing Canadian leadership in the current geopolitical landscape. 7 pm MST (10 pm AST) (start time to be confirmed). Via Zoom. For more info and to register: <https://rausi.ca/info-events/rmcscd/625-romeo-dallaire>

Publications:

Publications without links are available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

New: RUSI(NS) Comments "Should the Royal Canadian Air Force Acquire the E-7 Wedgetail for Arctic and Northern Surveillance?" by Murray Lee, 27 December 2023, <https://rusi-ns.ca/wedgetail/>

New: RUSI(NS) Presentation "Why Canada Needs Submarines" by VAdm Topshee, CRCN, 26 Dec 23, https://rusi-ns.ca/canadian_patrol_submarine_project/

RUSI(NS) Comments "The RCAF is on another merry-go-round. This time it's the Search and Rescue CC295 Kingfisher." by Murray Lee, 20 December 2023, <https://rusi-ns.ca/kingfisher/>

RUSI(NS) Paper "Is another Cyclone about to form for the RCAF?" by Murray Lee and John McLearn, 26 November 2023, <https://rusi-ns.ca/p8-poseidon/>

RUSI(NS) Comments "White Hat Hackers" by David Swan, 25 November 2023, https://rusi-ns.ca/white_hat_hackers

King's College London Wargaming Network presentation "Naval Wargaming Beyond the Classroom." video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOemWKst2g0>

New: Canadian Gunner News 21 Dec 2023

Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association *On Watch*, 20 December 2023
<https://www.cmisa.ca/cpages/on-watch-current>

New: Edmonton United Services Institute President's *Enews*, January 2023

Military Institute of Windsor *Communiqué*, Volume XLII, Number 1, January 2023

New: Royal Alberta United Services Institute *Dispatches*, January 2024
<https://www.rausi.ca/component/acym/archive/229-rausi-dispatches-january-2024>

Royal Canadian Logistics Service *The Logistician* Volume 13, Issue 4 December 2023
<https://sway.office.com/TbIXCGh5TR8C1xWn?ref=Link>

New: Royal Canadian Naval Association Admiral Hose Branch *Scuttlebutt*, Christmas/New Years Edition 2023

New: Royal Canadian Naval Association Admiral Hose Branch *Scuttlebutt*, January 2024

Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island *Newsletter*, Volume 55, 4th Quarter 2023

New: Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Defence Update*, Volume 22, Issue 5, 25 December 2023

New: Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Defence Update*, Volume 22, Issue 6, 1 January 2024




Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Quarterly Newsletter*, Volume 22, Issue 4, December 2023





Vancouver Artillery Association and Royal United Services Institute Vancouver *Members News* 19 Dec 2023

New: Veterans Affairs Canada *Salute!*, December 2023, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/news-media/salute>

@RUSI NS on X:

@RUSI_NS posts may also be viewed by clicking on the icon at <https://RUSI-NS.ca>. To have something posted or reposted, email RUSI(NS).

<p>NATO Air Command @NATO_AIRCOM 20 Dec posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Big steps were taken this year, new name & the 1st mission over +. #NATO Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance Force flew significantly more missions than last year – eastern flank, Baltic Sea, Black Sea & High North. Read more here: https://ac.nato.int/archive/2023/NISRF_in_2023 #AlwaysVigilant (NATO ISR Force - New Name, More Flying, Still Growing)</p>	
<p>IISS News @IISS_org 23 Dec posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: With the pace of Houthi attacks via direct-attack drones and anti-ship missiles increasing, so too are the odds that some will succeed. @ChildsNJ addresses the potentially devastating effects. #MilitaryBalance https://bit.ly/480TIHp (Global implications of the shipping attacks in the Red Sea)</p>	
<p>Foreign Policy CAN @CanadaFP 20 Dec posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Canada joins the Tallinn mechanism, which intends to coordinate and facilitate civilian cyber capacity building to help Ukraine uphold its fundamental right to self-defence in cyberspace. To read the statement: (Tallinn Mechanism https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_developpement-enjeux_developpement/peace_security-paix_securite/tallinn-mechanism-mecanisme-tallinn.aspx?lang=eng) <i>Also, see:</i> Tallinn Manual 2.0 on the International Law Applicable to Cyber Operations https://www.cambridge.org/ca/universitypress/subjects/law/humanitarian-law/tallinn-manual-20-international-law-applicable-cyber-operations-2nd-edition</p>	

<p>NATO ACT @NATO_ACT 19 Dec posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: The NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept, #NATO's Military North Star, helps to ensure Alliance's enduring strategic success. It provides a long-term vision for @NATO's military transformation & sets the path to turn that vision into reality. →https://act.nato.int/our-work/nato-warfighting-capstone-concept/ #WeAreNATO (NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept and https://www.act.nato.int/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/NWCC-Glossy-18-MAY.pdf)</p>	 <p>A banner featuring the NATO logo (a white four-pointed star on a blue background) and the text "NATO WARFIGHTING CAPSTONE CONCEPT" in blue capital letters.</p>
<p>RUSI(NS) Comments "Should the Royal Canadian Air Force Acquire the E-7 Wedgetail for Arctic and Northern Surveillance?" https://rusi-ns.ca/wedgetail/ @RCAF_ARC @CanadianForces @NationalDefence</p>	 <p>A white E-7 Wedgetail surveillance aircraft in flight against a blue sky with light clouds. The aircraft has a red maple leaf on its tail.</p>
<p>David Pugliese @davidpugliese 27 Dec posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: My latest article.....Delivery of Canada's F-35 fighter jets could be delayed — extra costs possible https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/delivery-of-canadas-f-35-fighter-jets-could-be-delayed-extra-costs-possible via @ottawacitizen</p>	 <p>A dark-colored F-35 fighter jet in flight, viewed from a low angle, with a white smoke trail behind it.</p>
<p>Christopher E Richardson @DivebumChef 25 Dec posted: https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/south-korea-slowly-becoming-submarine-superpower-208147 Well, they are producing, let's hope they can schedule an extra dozen 🇨🇦 RUSI(NS) quoted: 12 #submarines would allow CAN🇨🇦 strong regional defence of each of its 3 oceans. Source soon by procuring in-service boats from partners like South Korea or Japan. @RoyalCanNavy presentation "Why Canada Needs Submarines" https://rusi-ns.ca/canadian_patrol_submarine_project/ @CanadianForces @NationalDefence</p>	 <p>A presentation slide titled "The Canadian Patrol Submarine Project" showing a submarine on the surface at sunset. The slide includes the Canadian flag and the text "The Canadian Patrol Submarine Project".</p>

"Bulk Carrier Hits Russian Mine in the Black Sea"
<https://gcaptain.com/bulk-carrier-hits-russian-mine-the-black-sea/> There is still need for mine clearance capability (ships, drivers, #drones) in @RoyalCanNavy. CAN🇨🇦 prosperity depends on trade by sea, need ensure can contribute to keeping sea lanes open



David Pugliese @davidpugliese 29 Dec posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Opinion: Canada's navy doesn't just have a recruitment crisis. It also has a retention problem /via @globeandmail
(<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-canadas-navy-doesnt-just-have-a-recruitment-crisis-it-also-has-a/>)



CTV News @CTVNews 1 Jan posted: Senior military leader: Canadians 'overly comfortable' as global security shifts
(<https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/senior-military-leader-canadians-overly-comfortable-as-global-security-shifts-1.6706574>)



RUSI(NS) quoted: Yes, CAN🇨🇦 needs "critical conversation about where @CanadianForces fits in to disaster response & whether emergency management agencies can take over."
RUSI(NS) Comments "Canada's National Disaster Challenge" https://rusi-ns.ca/national_disaster_challenge/

David Pugliese @davidpugliese 2 Jan posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: My latest article...Canada promised to deliver a \$400M air defence system to Ukraine a year ago. It still hasn't arrived. <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/canada-promised-to-deliver-a-400m-air-defence-system-to-ukraine-a-year-ago-it-still-hasnt-arrived> via @ottawacitizen



Note RUSI(NS) Comments:
We Have No Air Defence For Our Army – Why?
<https://rusi-ns.ca/air-defence/>

NATO ACT @NATO_ACT 3 Jan posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: The Audacious Wargaming Capability is a cutting-edge solution that empowers Allied troops to lead, fight, and win in any environment, strengthening the Alliance's efforts towards a more secure future.
Learn more: <https://act.nato.int/article/nato-act-develops-audacious-wargaming-capability/> #WeAreNATO
(NATO's Allied Command Transformation Develops Audacious Wargaming Capability)
Editor: "Audacious Wargaming Capability presents scenario-based models and provides a safe-to-fail environment for



decision makers to explore threats and practice decision-making, explore risks, and evaluate options for actions to support NATO's Deterrence and Defence posture." Why 'Audacious' had to be added is not evident, and seems redundant.

"Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia" on Facebook:

RUSI(NS) posts may also be viewed by clicking on the icon at <https://RUSI-NS.ca>. To have something posted or commented, email RUSI(NS).

Ireland must be responsible for its own maritime security

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/ireland-must-be-responsible-for-its-own-maritime-security/>

"Ireland, positioned strategically in the North Atlantic, finds itself at the nexus of a vast network of undersea fibre-optic cables, carrying about 97 per cent of the world's communications and internet traffic."



Canada is strategically positioned, too, for those cables which run to the western side of the North Atlantic. Many of the points and recommendations of the article can apply to Canada, though maybe the article focuses overly on the Irish Naval Service whilst in Canada other federal government departments and agencies have capabilities to contribute to securing the sea bottom infrastructure. There are the questions: what Canadian department/agency should be taking the lead to coordinate a whole-of-government effort? What are the collaboration fora, planning teams and wargaming/exercising efforts to build that effort?

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More graphics like the one in the article would be good to emphasize the 'sea bottom environment.'

Australia's anti-submarine frigate program sails rough seas

<https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2023/12/21/australias-anti-submarine-frigate-program-sails-rough-seas/>

"Then on Dec. 5, a secret document made available to lawmakers revealed the program's selection process focused on high-end capabilities at the expense of value for money, which went against Australia's Commonwealth Procurement Rules."



One would hope that the "high-end capabilities" were those specified in the project's requirements in the first place, and approved by authorities including political. "Value for money" should be measured against achieving those requirements, not some (appears to be unspecified) cheaper deliverable.

Hopefully the ships (destroyers?) to be procured by Canadian Surface Combatant project stay true to requirements originally specified. Though, yes, it is appreciated the government budgeteers have the final say.

The Navy has its first giant robotic submarine

<https://www.defenseone.com/business/2023/12/navy-has-its-first-giant-robotic-submarine/392940/>

"Configured to accommodate various payloads, the Orca XLUUV (Extra-Large Unmanned Undersea Vehicle) allows for the seamless integration of sensors, communication systems, and other mission-specific components, adapting to the evolving requirements of naval operations..."



The nature of operations at (under) sea is undergoing great changes. Changes that will much affect anti-submarine, special operations, surveillance, logistics and a whole range of activities.

Might Canada consider procuring XLUUV in addition to the crewed boats to be procured under the Canadian Patrol Submarine Project? The latter are still needed, because the boats are needed now and can be procured soon. But it may be wise to start development of the various efforts (developing people, infrastructure, the vehicles themselves) to ensure that the Royal Canadian Navy acquires the capability in time to have it for the defence and security of the country. That development is going to take time.

More at: "Navy Receives First of Six Prototype Extra Large Orca Underwater Drones"

<https://news.usni.org/2023/12/21/navy-receives-first-of-six-prototype-extra-large-orca-underwater-drones>

Manitoba shipping company signs agreement with Hudbay Minerals to ship products through Port of Churchill

<https://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/manitoba-shipping-company-signs-agreement-with-hudbay-minerals-to-ship-products-through-port-of-churchill-1.6695895>

"The Port of Churchill recently reopened to cruise ship traffic this summer and the rail line to the community has also seen repairs, which are continuing."

The more that the Port of Churchill connects by sea, rail and air to the south and the north, the better it is for Canada ensuring its sovereignty over its Arctic. Logistics!

There's a Canadian Ranger Patrol in Churchill. Might it be useful, considering the situation, for the patrol to include training and tasks in logistics (rail and sea) support?



Italian Midget Submarine under Construction In Romania For Undisclosed Customer

<http://www.hisutton.com/Italy-Drass-DG160-Submarine.html>

Hopefully the "undisclosed customer" is Ukraine. A submarine, even if 'midget" (141 tons surfaced is not that small) in Ukrainian hands would change the calculus in the Black Sea. With a range of 2000 nautical miles, such a vessel would have to be included in Russian calculations of correlation of forces. The Ukrainians have not shown reluctance in taking the war right to the Russians and their port-bound ships (SODCIT = strategic operation for the destruction of



critically important targets. See: "Russian Military Strategy: Core Tenets and Operational Concepts https://www.cna.org/archive/CNA_Files/pdf/russian-military-strategy-core-tenets-and-operational-concepts.pdf).

Where Did the Houthis Get Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles?

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/where-did-houthis-get-anti-ship-ballistic-missiles%2%A0-208127>

Is there going to be a proliferation of anti-ship ballistic missiles? That makes the anti-ballistic missile capability that is being included in the Canadian Surface Combatant project ships a good addition.



The 'information war' has revolutionized war itself. And the West is losing

<https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/macdougall-the-information-war-has-revolutionized-war-itself-and-the-west-is-losing>

"What the leaders and the people of the West must ponder is whether the information economy they use, as currently constructed, lets them conduct any sort of foreign policy at all."

The 'data' and 'information' we see must be developed into 'knowledge' and 'wisdom.' It cannot just be consumed raw. Not just "Need input!" but "Need analysis!"



Navies raise their air- and missile-defence game

<https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/military-balance/2023/12/navies-raise-their-air-and-missile-defence-game/>

"For most navies, just like their land-forces counterparts, air-defence challenges are taking on greater urgency, reflecting lessons from current conflicts."

Something to be said for the Canadian Surface Combatant project design with its emphasis on air-defence (sensors and missiles).



Maritime Maneuvers: Navigating Irregular Warfare in Yemen's Civil War

<https://irregularwarfare.org/articles/maritime-maneuvers-navigating-irregular-warfare-in-yemens-civil-war/>

"Moreover, at the time of publication Yemen is once again playing a disruptive role in the maritime domain and whatever solution is implemented it will require some form of civil-military coordination between the region's naval forces and commercial shippers as well as enduring presence from regional partners. The MCCC



(Maritime Coalition Coordination Cell) offers a potential framework to begin planning such a solution."

Hmm, wonder how the MCCC is doing what with all the open reporting of nations apparently only loosely coordinating (there's probably a lot more going on behind the scenes) and wonder to what extent the three Canadian Armed Forces staff are engaged with the MCCC.

Navy commander 'confident' in ability to meet commitments despite sailor shortage

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10192146/navy-commander-confident-commitments-sailor-shortage/>

"Despite being short on crew, Topshee says that the Navy can maintain its operational commitments, including deploying three ships as part of the Indo-Pacific Strategy and Operation Reassurance, but there is little room for things to go wrong."



One would think that the Red Sea is part of the Indo-Pacific and therefore one would wonder what were the assessments by senior military commanders, and the political direction/guidance they were given, that led to no ship being deployed there to defend shipping trade important to the prosperity of Canada and other states. Is the Royal Canadian Navy lacking not just people but sufficient modern fighting ships (the Arctic and Offshore Patrol Vessels are patrol ships) that it's at its limits?

Things can go wrong. Has Canada limited its options and government choices because of national decisions made the last decades?

Turkey Blocks UK Minehunters From Black Sea

<https://gcaptain.com/turkey-blocks-uk-navy-from-clearing-black-sea-mines/>

with link to:

Closing the Turkish Straits in Times of War

<https://lieber.westpoint.edu/closing-turkish-straits-war/>



"While Turkey maintains that it is applying the Montreux Convention 'impartially and meticulously' to prevent escalation in the Black Sea, its decision to block non-belligerent nations' ships, like the British minehunters, is based on a separate diplomatic policy."

Naval planners and operators have to appreciate (know) international relations and law. Diplomats, academics and lawyers, whether in uniform or not, are part of the higher councils of operations.

Navy could be down to just one operational ship this year due to staff shortages

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-41301337.html>

"Only a few years ago, the navy had eight ships operational. It is currently down to two..."



Canada and New Zealand are not the only navies to suffer shortages of personnel, especially trained and specialist personnel, with a consequent effect on how many ships can be operationally sailed. One

wonders what similarities there may be in causes (and lessons about rectifications that can be learned). Surely Canada is not unique in its issues, despite any self-absorption.

Other Sources:

#A2R

Lessons for Canada?

Sustaining the All-Volunteer Force Means Streamlining Army Recruitment

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/sustaining-the-all-volunteer-force-means-streamlining-army-recruitment/>

Lack of Awareness Largest Barrier to Military Recruiting, Officials Tell House Panel

<https://news.usni.org/2023/12/14/lack-of-awareness-largest-barrier-to-military-recruiting-officials-tell-house-panel>

A Better Response to the Recruiting Crisis

<https://tacticalnotebook.substack.com/p/a-better-response-to-the-recruiting>

#Arctic

UK urged to bolster Arctic defense as grey-zone threats rise: report

<https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2023/12/uk-urged-bolster-arctic-defense-grey-zone-threats-rise-report>

Countering Russia's hybrid threats in the Arctic

<https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/report/countering-russias-hybrid-threats-in-the-arctic/>

Into the Cold: Special Operations in the Arctic

<https://wavellroom.com/2023/12/20/into-the-cold-special-operations-in-the-arctic/>

Arctic strategy implementation plan calls for enhanced military comms, sensing and PNT

<https://defensescoop.com/2023/10/23/arctic-strategy-implementation-plan/>

#Russia

Control Over Arctic Ocean Top Priority Of New Russian Naval Doctrine

<https://www.highnorthnews.com/en/control-over-arctic-ocean-top-priority-new-russian-naval-doctrine>

#artificial intelligence

The Future of Defense: The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Modern Warfare

<https://wavellroom.com/2023/01/27/artificial-intelligence/>

#command

Data Analytics in the Combatant Command: Improving the Approach to Decision-Making

<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2021/9/6/data-analytics-in-the-combatant-command-improving-the-approach-to-decision-making>

"Before a commander decides to act, the staff must identify the commander's information requirements and then explore ways to collect relevant data from the operational environment to fulfill the requirements."

#drones

US Army Flight Tests 'Launched Effects' Air Vehicle

<https://www.thedefensepost.com/2023/12/27/us-army-tests-air-vehicle/>

"Launched effects involve manned and unmanned systems teaming to detect and identify threats in contested environments, enabling commanders to execute fires and effects when needed." Is the term really necessary?

Articles about Drones

<https://tacticalnotebook.substack.com/p/articles-about-drones>

#Indo-Pacific

Former NATO Commander's Prediction About War With China

<https://www.newsweek.com/nato-commander-war-china-united-states-1856206>

#information operations

Beyond Bullets and Bombs: The Rising Tide of Information War in International Affairs

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/beyond-bullets-and-bombs-rising-tide-information-war-international-affairs>

Narrative warfare: How disinformation shapes the Israeli-Hamas conflict—and millions of minds

<https://thebulletin.org/2023/11/narrative-warfare-how-disinformation-shapes-the-israeli-hamas-conflict-and-millions-of-minds/>

#intelligence

Global Affairs intelligence gathering unit lacked oversight: report

<https://nationalpost.com/news/global-security-reporting-program-watchdog>

National Security and Intelligence Review Agency Review of Global Affairs Canada's Global Security Reporting Program

<https://nsira-ossnr.gc.ca/en/reviews/ongoing-and-completed-reviews/completed-reviews/review-of-global-affairs-canadas-global-security-reporting-program/>

#land warfare

Articles about the Schwerpunkt

<https://tacticalnotebook.substack.com/p/articles-about-the-schwerpunkt>

#engineering

Bridging the gap: Army validates division-led river crossing

<https://www.defensenews.com/land/2023/12/15/bridging-the-gap-army-validates-division-led-river-crossing/>

Example of challenges if Canada decided to scale up higher than bde gp. Maybe even to bde gp.

#legal

Legal Questions Answered and Unanswered in Israel's Air War in Gaza

<https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/legal-questions-answered-and-unanswered-in-israel-s-air-war-in-gaza>

Attacks on U.S. Warships Justify Self-Defense Against Houthi Forces Ashore

<https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/attacks-on-u.s.-warships-justify-self-defense-against-houthi-forces-ashore>

#NATO #maritime security

NATO's Role in Protecting Critical Undersea Infrastructure

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/natos-role-protecting-critical-undersea-infrastructure>

#naval warfare

New study suggests climate change will make submarine warfare more complex

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/new-study-suggests-climate-change-will-make-submarine-warfare-more-complex/>

#reading

Editor: Sorry, a little late for your Christmas wish list.

War Books: Lessons from a Century and a Half of British Military Experience

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/war-books-lessons-from-a-century-and-a-half-of-british-military-experience/>

War Books: Beginning Your Professional Development Journey Through Reading

<https://mwi.usma.edu/war-books-beginning-your-professional-development-journey-through-reading/>

War Books: A Major War Fiction Reading List

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/war-books-preparing-great-power-competition-fiction-reading-list/>

The 7 Best Military Books That Envision the Near Future of Warfare

<https://www.military.com/off-duty/books/2023/08/29/7-best-military-books-envision-near-future-of-warfare.html>

War Books: Drone Warfare

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/war-books-drone-warfare/>

War Books: The Best Books We Read in 2023

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/war-books-the-best-books-we-read-in-2023/>

#Russia-Ukraine War

The High Price of Losing Ukraine

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/high-price-losing-ukraine>

The High Price of Losing Ukraine: Part 2

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/high-price-losing-ukraine-part-2-%E2%80%94-military-threat-and-beyond>

Ukraine at War: The Year Past and the Year Ahead (Part One)

<https://jamestown.org/program/ukraine-at-war-the-year-past-and-the-year-ahead-part-one/>

Ukraine at War: The Year Past and the Year Ahead (Part Two)

<https://jamestown.org/program/ukraine-at-war-the-year-past-and-the-year-ahead-part-two/>

Ghost Ships at Reawakened North Korea Port Put Ukraine in Peril

Logistics!: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-12-26/ghost-ships-at-reawakened-north-korea-port-put-ukraine-in-peril>

The Year of the “Meatgrinder”. What we know about Russia’s war losses in 2023

<https://bbcrussian.substack.com/p/russian-war-losses-in-ukraine-2023>

The Lands Ukraine Must Liberate

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/lands-ukraine-must-liberate>

#drones

Maritime Drones (USVs) Of The Russo-Ukrainian War, 2022-23

<http://www.hisutton.com/Russia-Ukraine-USVs-2023.html>

#shipbuilding

Presentations from the Marine Procurement Outlook 2023

<https://canadabuys.canada.ca/en/news-and-events/marine-outlook-presentation-2023>

Australia’s anti-submarine frigate program sails rough seas

<https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2023/12/21/australias-anti-submarine-frigate-program-sails-rough-seas/>

#space #wargaming (May be the first time in *Dispatches* these two tags have been put together.)

Wargame SITREP 231222 N5 Plans ~ PRC space war game for wargame practitioners

<https://rockymountainnavy.com/2023/12/22/wargame-sitrep-231222-n5-plans-prc-space-war-game-for-wargame-practitioners/>

For the Chinese view: China unveils space war-gaming system for military operations and training

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3245148/china-unveils-space-war-gaming-system-military-operations-and-training>

#strategy

Strategy: Some Notes for a User’s Guide

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/strategy-some-notes-for-a-users-guide/>

Military Strategy Magazine @milstrategymag 18 Nov 23 posted: When reading Colin Gray's words, you can of course think about Ukraine, you can think about Israel, as well as Afghanistan and Libya, but you **must** also think, 'every single war, in every single place, in any period in history'. As Colin notes, "When in doubt, turn to the master. So, what does Clausewitz advise? He says: 'The political object – the original motive for the war – will thus determine both the military objectives to be reached and the amount of effort it requires'. Sounds great. The challenge is to serve policy by military behaviour. Unfortunately, while stating the challenge may be important as a step towards meeting it, it does not actually advance you very far."

Putin's Wars: Testing Boyd's Strategy of Applied Friction

<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2023/6/12/putins-wars-testing-boyds-strategy-of-applied-friction>

Assumptions – A Fatal Oversight

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/assumptions-a-fatal-oversight/>

A 2010 monograph, but enduring: "...without knowing the underlying assumptions, decision makers cannot evaluate proposed strategies. As assumptions are rarely mentioned, decision makers must demand they be clearly stated as part of any discussion."

So What! The Meaning of Strategy

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/so-what-the-meaning-of-strategy/>

When the Clausewitzian Trinity is Not Paradoxical

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/when-the-clausewitzian-trinity-is-not-paradoxical/>

#naval strategy

Primacy of Maritime Strategy in Naval Shipbuilding? The Case of Imperial Germany

<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2023/9/6/primacy-of-maritime-strategy-in-naval-shipbuilding-the-case-of-imperial-germany>

#training

Prioritizing Realistic Tactical and Operational Training for Maintainers

<https://fromthegreennotebook.com/2023/12/18/prioritizing-realistic-tactical-and-operational-training-for-maintainers/>

#war

The Fallacy of the Short, Sharp War: Optimism Bias and the Abuse of History

<https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2023/3/16/the-fallacy-of-the-short-sharp-war-optimism-bias-and-the-abuse-of-history>

#warfare

#legal

Pentagon Releases Instruction on Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response

<https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/pentagon-releases-instruction-on-civilian-harm-mitigation-and-response>

#strategy

Where Did the Houthis Get Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles?

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/where-did-houthis-get-anti-ship-ballistic-missiles%C2%A0-208127>

#wargaming

Nobody is Playing at this Game

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/nobody-playing-game-royalcanadiannavy-ufe2c>

What War Games Really Reveal

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/what-war-games-really-reveal>

Comments: <https://twitter.com/davybanks79/status/1741418925353472298>

Other:

Canadian Defence Review Volume 29 Issue 6

<http://www.canadiandefencereview.com/>

Note article by RUSI(NS) member Jay Heisler.

8 LETTER FROM THE EDITOR By <i>Peter A. Kitchen</i>	76 TRADE SHOW & CONFERENCE REPORT Canadian Aerospace Summit 2023 By <i>James Careless</i>
19 DEFENCE INSIDER By <i>Vice-Admiral (Ret'd) Mark Norman</i>	80 CYBERSECURITY CMMC 2.0 By <i>Arnold Villeneuve</i>
28 ARMY SUPPLIERS SUMMIT Top executives speak out	83 CYBER DEFENCE By <i>Dave McMahon</i>
47 WOMEN IN DEFENCE By <i>Gina Pecore</i>	90 TRADE SHOW & CONFERENCE REPORT I/ITSEC 2023 By <i>Joetey Attariwala</i>
56 REGIONAL REPORT Quebec's aerospace & defence industry By <i>Peter Diekmeyer</i>	104 TRADE SHOW & CONFERENCE REPORT Halifax International Security Forum By <i>Jay Heisler</i>
70 TOP UNDER 40 CDR profiles young defence professionals	106 TRADE SHOW & CONFERENCE REPORT CGAI procurement conference By <i>James Careless</i>
73 DEFENCE BUSINESS By <i>Grant McDonald & Peter Graham</i>	

RCAF Today Magazine 2023 Edition

<https://issues.skiesmag.com/554/766/188784/RCAF-Today-2023/index.html>

content:

8 FROM PARITY TO ADVANTAGE	54 FIFTH GENERATION TRANSFORMATION	90 TUTOR LIFE EXTENSION
20 CELEBRATING THE AIR FORCE'S CENTENNIAL	70 REWARDING EXCHANGE	94 TURBINE TO TIGER MOTH
26 APEX OF TACTICAL AVIATION	76 CONTESTED AIRLIFT	100 GRIFFON DUSTOFF
38 FLY LIKE THE ENEMY	80 FLIGHT PATH	104 CORMORANT OVERHAUL
46 FIGHTER INTEGRATION	88 THE PILOT PROJECT PODCAST	

Decoy

Brady Africk @bradyafr 29 Dec posted: Russia painted decoy aircraft at Primorsko-Akhtarsk air base, new satellite imagery shows. This base is one of several used by Russian aircraft operating over Ukraine.



More: Russian troops paint decoy planes on airfields to deceive drones

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/world/russian-troops-paint-decoy-planes-on-airfields-to-deceive-drones/ar-AA1mggSn>

Editor: Note the lack of shadows in the painted decoys.

#Armour in Ukraine



9:32 AM · Dec 23, 2023 **113.4K** views as of late 23 Dec

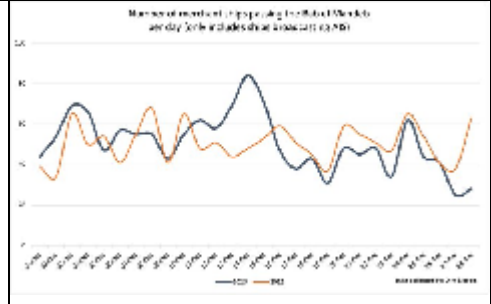
Another Franken something-or-other

MAKS 23 66 🇺🇦@Maks_NAFO_FELLA 27 Dec posted: 🇺🇸
Minister for Strategic Industries Olexander Kamyshin: 🇺🇸
"Ukrainian-American air defense project "FrankenSAM" is
already operating on the battlefield"



Trade Warfare

Dirk Siebels @DirkSiebels 29 Dec posted (thread:
<https://twitter.com/DirkSiebels/status/1740814628567777598>)
: It's fair to say that the #RedSeaCrisis has created a few
headlines this month. Attacks conducted by the #Houthis in
#Yemen have targeted merchant ships, leading to lots of
alarmist comments about the Red Sea being virtually closed.
But what do the stats say? 🇺🇸



A short and thoughtful analysis, from a PhD in maritime security, the University of Greenwich, London. Leads to the thought: who is responsible for trade warfare in the CAF and RCN? Note "Trade Division (Royal Navy) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trade_Division_\(Royal_Navy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trade_Division_(Royal_Navy)) and Directorate of Naval Operations and Trade (Royal Navy) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Directorate_of_Naval_Operations_and_Trade_\(Royal_Navy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Directorate_of_Naval_Operations_and_Trade_(Royal_Navy)).

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis 29 December 2023

O Canada

In many ways despite everything else going on in the world Canada is still basically a safe place for most of our population. There are those who are unfortunate such as the growing number of homeless, and there is a lack of potable water in all too many places in such a rich country. Identity politics has grown as a problem as housing and economic issues combine with a lightly planned and executed immigration plan. Foreign influence continues to be a huge issue not only from the usual malign actors such as China, Russia and Iran but also from certain types of political movements which have been brought here to Canada, such as Khalistan separation movement and most recently wide-spread support for Hamas hidden behind the Palestinian issues. Conflict in Ukraine, the Middle East and the South China Sea are in the news but do not really enter the consciousness of most Canadians. We are fortunate as a nation that we can avoid really having to consider these issues as more concrete events. Canada's time of freedom from these, though, may be coming to a close as Russia becomes more desperate as their economy fails and the war in Ukraine continues to smolder. As mentioned in the last notes Russia intends to lay claim to a large portion of the Arctic Ocean especially in areas considered Danish or Canadian. It is a direct action against Canadian sovereignty, and wishful "sunny ways" thinking in a post-national nation will come crashing down.

Canada does not understand its national interests. We have a security policy that is unworthy of the title, our foreign policy is in disarray and in need of a comprehensive approach, the current defence policy is a laundry list of poorly thought out social experiments, and the long-awaited Defence Update Review is still in the wind. Canada needs considerable thought in the development of rational and

comprehensive policies on these critical issues. One hopes as a New Year's resolution that the Government will take up this challenge.

Foreign interference was a major topic last spring and well into the summer. Marie-Josée Hogue, a well known jurist, was appointed as head of the new inquiry. The Government has demanded that all parties interested in participating have their proposed members submit for their security clearance. This would allow those security-cleared members to see all the material of classified nature. Unfortunately, this would also mean that the inquiry would not really be public as originally requested as those members would be covered by the official secrets act. The Opposition refused to do this as it would tie their hands and from their perspective would prevent the public from knowing the full extent of the nature of the interference into Canadian elections and government affairs. It is known that some Members of Parliament have been threatened and that some candidates may have lost their seats due to this interference. At one point it seemed that it would have been possible that the "wrong" government was elected as up to twenty seats seemed to be at play. This later turned out to be not quite the situation. The bottom line is this government did not take the advice of the intelligence community nor even from the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians (NSICOP) formed in 2017. In 2019 this committee reported the issue to the Prime Minister, however, nothing was done and as a consequence both the 2019 and 2021 elections were suspected of being tainted. The follow up was less than necessary to keep the public properly informed. This current inquiry also seems to be suffering from several weaknesses starting with the chair who has little experience in national security issues, and also appears to be answering to the concerns of the current government rather than a proper inquiry. This may be somewhat unfair but possible, thus more concern about the government's effort to get to the bottom of the problem. Time will tell - public interest unfortunately has waned.

Just prior to the Christmas break there were a series of procurement announcements including the CP140 Aurora replacement known as the P-8A Poseidon. Announced were the purchase of eleven MQ-9B Reapers, an armed long range unmanned aerial vehicle, on 14 December along with modernization of the North Warning System and the purchase of 88 F-35 Lightning fighters for the RCAF. The fifth ship of the Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship project, the future HMCS *Frédéric Rolette*, was launched earlier this month, so there were some "gifts" for the RCN at least.

The National Post article "After 150 Years, Time to Say Goodbye to the Canadian Mounties as We Know Them" is at: <https://nationalpost.com/feature/time-to-say-goodbye-to-canadas-mounties>. It is an interesting point of view but if the suggestions are to take place, work needs to occur now. Our President has written his own comments which have been published with SAC notes this past summer. 2032 is the end of the community policing contracts. They could be renewed but nearly 75% of the force is used in this role, and it means that major national efforts have to take a back seat and do not get the resources needed to fight major issues such as foreign interference, espionage, gang related crime, cross border crime, financial crime, cyber-crime, smuggling of weapons, drugs, humans, none of which get the necessary effort required. Suggestions have been made to change the education requirements and require a university degree, however, that seems to be overkill and as we are discovering a degree is not an indicator of other key characteristics such as human relations skills, technical capability, (think hackers) diploma level technicians, so that particular requirement needs some more thought. Still, the last problem we need is an ill-considered re-organization of the federal police, so major efforts will have to begin shortly to create conditions for this change. The most important will be for the provinces to re-establish provincial forces. In Nova Scotia's case, our provincial police was shut down in 1928. Provinces will need time to adjust.

United States

The US is maintaining four carrier strike groups (CSG) at sea, two in and around the Middle East to counter Iran and Yemen as well as deal with the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, and two in the Western Pacific to counter Chinese efforts in the South China Sea and North Korea's acts. It is a level of operations that will be difficult to maintain. There is now thought that some of the Nimitz-class will be refitted sufficiently for further service beyond that currently forecast in order to maintain greater carrier numbers. One can only give thanks for their sacrifice to maintain this capability in areas of concern.

The US is trying desperately to get Israel to take greater care in their operations to protect Palestinian civilians, but they have generally supported Israel so far during this conflict. The Hamas authorities have maintained that over 20k have been killed but these numbers are ill-defined and do not specify the difference between actual civilians versus fighters and civilians. Having served in the area on a couple occasions, the Israelis have always taken precautions to avoid civilian casualties. They also investigate problems and incidents, and they do place their own soldiers in jail for failures of various sorts whether accidents, neglect, or on purpose. They are not perfect but they do make every effort as a general rule. The US is well aware of this point and hence the support. US support is not unconditional.

Moldova

Moldova is the canary in the coal mine. Its survival in this part of the world is a strong indicator of the success of the West's efforts in support of Ukraine.

As mentioned in previous notes Moldova is making every effort to create space between the Confederation of Independent States (CIS) and Moldova's increasing efforts to grow closer to the West in particular the European Union. The EU less Hungary has agreed to conduct negotiations that will lead Ukraine and Moldova to ascend to the EU. Moldova is also making efforts to modernize its forces to NATO standards and has increased its defence budget from .33% to .55% of their Gross Domestic Product. Although small it is a major investment and increase to their military efforts. NATO instructors are already in place to assist as are security experts to help Moldova against Russian destabilization efforts including economic warfare, disinformation operations, cyber-warfare, intelligence gathering, influence operations, and even low level insurgency including minor violence. It is widely accepted that Moldova will be the second target of further Russian efforts if Ukraine were to fall. Russian efforts are expected to continue using pro-Russian sympathizers in the coming period.

Belarus

Although much reported and supposedly done during the summer, Russia has delivered tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus in the recent past, according to one report not later than the end of October 2023. One has to wonder though as this has been allegedly done several times before. Disinformation is a large part of Russian operations and this might be part of an ongoing effort. Russia has increased the number of Russian soldiers in Belarus but insufficiently to be a major concern for Ukraine at this time. It may be a way to provide a backstop to Belarus security forces whom have not been totally supportive of overall Russian efforts. Even the support of their self-appointed leader is tenuous. Belarus is walking a tight rope between Russia and Ukraine, mainly supporting Russian efforts but refusing to actively participate in fighting. If anything were to occur that would change the situation it would be in Belarus, whether an incident with Poland, a second Russian attack from Belarus, a revolt by elements of the security forces, or the death of Lukashenko; something along these lines would create a confusing and dangerous situation. Belarus is not as stable as people may like to assume. It bears watching.

Russia-Ukraine War

The war continues and is considered by most pundits to be at a stalemate. On the battle front this seems to be mainly true although both sides continue to make small gains in various locations. The weather seems to be the single biggest factor as winter really sets in across the entire frontier.

The biggest news is the use of a Patriot missile system to cover Odessa and area. It has come as a huge surprise to the Russian air force as they have lost five modern aircraft in two days including four SU-34 bombers and one SU-30 fighter. These aircraft are not easily replaceable. The capacity of Russian industry to produce new aircraft or repair damaged aircraft is very low. SU-34 production is estimated to be around 3 to 4 per year, so recent losses are a full year's production. Russia's air force is gradually being worn down. The most widely used aircraft is the SU-25 ground attack aircraft which takes steady losses but is no longer in production; every loss is permanent, there are no replacements. Ukraine on the other hand has received its first squadron of F-16, and more are due. Pilot training on Western models is continuing as fast as possible as well and should soon balance the air situation despite larger Russian numbers.

Ukraine apparently used existing capabilities to attack the Russian port of Feodosia, destroying two ships, one Ropucha I-class landing ship, RFS *Novocherkassk*, and an old training vessel, RFS *Captain Guriev*, which is of limited military value. The older ship was collateral damage when the landing ship was hit and the cargo exploded. The landing ship was reputed to be loaded with ammunition. The remarkable point is that Feodosia was relatively safe until recently. The destruction of a major warship in that location will have long term effects. Warships are also not easily replaced although use of the canal system means that there is some capacity to reinforce the fleet from the Caspian flotilla, though it is unlikely especially as Iran continues to build its fleet in that body of water.

It is expected that both sides will take the time to refit and replace both manpower and equipment over the next few months. There will be ongoing efforts at a low level to keep any stabilization efforts off guard. Expect Ukraine to use its newer technology to bear on Russian facilities in the rear and to destabilize Russian civilian confidence by ongoing efforts within Russia itself and in the occupied areas. Ukraine is also likely to press Western allies for greater efforts on their behalf. It appears most European governments fully understand a Russian victory would result in further aggression within Europe. One can expect European countries to increase their efforts even as the US seems to be in the control and at the mercy of a small group of politicians who are isolationist in their outlook.

China

China on 25 December appointed a new commander of the Peoples' Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). He Zhongming is a submariner with extensive operational experience although his experience as a multi-domain commander is unknown. The Navy has been noted for its level of corruption and Xi's appointment is likely to be mainly because of his loyalty to the Party and Xi rather than his capability. Still, if Taiwan is to be taken by 2027, he will be the one responsible for preparations and perhaps conduct. He is an interesting choice for such a task.

China's economy is cratering mainly due to the ongoing "efforts" of the Communist Chinese Party. Late December the Party issued a single page document which essentially destroyed the Chinese gaming industry which lost 80b USD in investment in a single day. The paper essentially eliminated micro transactions so necessary for the health of the gaming community. One Western estimate is that 30k minor game development companies will disappear in the near term and that major ones will be crippled. One might ask why they did this? The gaming community is relatively large in China, and is well connected and organized in such a way that they could cause incidents that could create a

destabilizing situation in a way that the CCP has never had to deal with before> The gaming community is therefore a threat to its survival. Survival of the CCP's control is the main goal, all other things are subordinate to this one idea. Imagine the collapse of CCP caused by gamers?

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis 4 January 2024

O Canada

It is with considerable dismay that we read that the commanders of the three services, the Chief of Defence Staff and the Commander Canadian Joint Operations Command have all expressed major concerns about the state of the Canadian Armed Forces. Vice-Admiral Auchterlonie is the latest of this group of concerned military leaders. This past year, he stated that Canada has been involved with evacuations from two countries and many domestic operations for fires, floods and other issues. The Canadian Press article of his interview published on 31 December 2023 stated "In a year-end interview, Vice-Admiral Auchterlonie said there will have to be trade offs as Canada sends more troops abroad and climate change continues to cause extreme weather at home. At the same time, he says he thinks Canadians are 'overly comfortable' about their safety in a rapidly changing world." His comments are understated if anything. Our governments have failed to act to correct critical issues in the armed forces to bring up their ability to conduct operations in the immediate future.

Parliament is in its winter break after a series of quiet but significant sign offs on new equipment such as various types of drones and the P-8 Poseidon patrol aircraft. Whilst these decisions are good news, most of this equipment will not actually be seen for a number of years and in some cases decades long after the need. All government parties need remember that Canada exists in a very real world that is undergoing malignant changes. Whilst the RCAF has had a great Christmas, the other two services seem to be lining up at the military equivalent of a 'food bank' looking for charity. The best story is the squadron of tanks for Latvian-based troops. The vehicles are apparently in poor shape and mainly unserviceable, and it is not an actual full squadron of nineteen tanks. There are no spares and one suspects there is little 'war stock' in theatre to back up the meager equipment resources we have there. We have to tear apart what is left of the Army to produce one grossly under strength brigade group. It is far cry from the Allied Command Europe (Land) Battle Group, 4th Mechanized Brigade in Germany, the Canadian Airborne Regiment and the Canadian Air-Sea Transportable Brigade of the 1970s through early 90s. All these formations could deploy rapidly. The Navy is in danger of literally falling apart and there are some suggestions that at least one of the frigates is in very poor shape and is unlikely to last much longer, yet unlike the UK and Australia we haven't even started cutting steel for the new Canadian Surface Combatant project ships. Will the Navy survive, it is hard to say at this point. New ships are being built but they are not major combatants and are lightly-armed thus are not useful in a fight. Successive governments have forgotten that Canadian service personnel are Canadian citizens, they are the sons, daughters, non-binary, fathers, mothers, etc., and not just someone in uniform. Governments owe these people the best equipment possible to do their jobs. Mind you, this takes understanding national interests, to develop sound security policy, foreign policy and defence policies, and to state what the Government of Canada expects the people involved have to do and to give them the necessary tools. There we have the true problem: no planning, no understanding of the situation to develop sound ideas and put them into action.

So many governments should be ashamed of letting Canadian sailors, soldiers, and aviators down, not to mention all Canadian citizens. Too many were busy bribing taxpayers with their own money for dubious programs that were essentially blank cheques on the Canadian economy with little or no planning. Canada is likely to pay a very steep price in the near future as bigger countries including Russia and the US take careful aim at our North. It will be a true shock.

Our GDP per capita has taken a large drop and is unlikely to climb anytime soon. The reasons are varied but government policy has created negative conditions.

United States

The US has maintained combat naval forces in the Red Sea during the latest Middle Eastern conflict. The Yemen tribal group called the Houthis have stated their ongoing support for Hamas by firing missiles and drones at international shipping with some success, but most of the missiles and drones have been knocked down. The US has employing Task Force 153 based on contributions from ten countries so far with at least moral support from many others, although some countries have sent vessels but are not strictly part of the organization. Canada has sent three staff officers.

The USS Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group is heading home after eight months at sea for what was supposed to be a six month tour. Well done. It was the first operational deployment of this new carrier class, one hopes the new future *John F. Kennedy*, the future *Enterprise* and the future *Doris Miller* come out of the yards sooner than expected. The US has done more than its fair share in recent years. They too need support from all liberal democracies in a meaningful way.

Moldova

Nothing significant to report.

Belarus

Nothing significant to report.

Russia Ukraine War

The war continues unabated with heavy losses on both sides. It appears that there is an actual stalemate on the front lines with no major gains by either side, however, Russian losses in equipment and manpower continues to be much heavier than Ukraine's losses. There is now some evidence that Russia is able to go around sanctions despite being subject to over 18k sanctions from various countries and organizations as recently examined equipment shows recent manufacture. The Russian economy has switched to one supporting the military effort thus consumer goods are increasingly in short supply in outer regions. Cities have so far avoided the same level of deprivation. Sanctions do have an effect, they do hurt and eventually they do undercut the overall wellbeing of a country. Russia has avoided this so far but empty shelves are being seen again.

The biggest effort by both sides is the use of drones and missiles to attack each other's cities. Russia has fired over 500 missiles and drones against Ukrainian targets in the first five days of 2024. Most have been shot down but enough have hit to cause damage and apprehension to Ukrainian citizens. According to one source, Russia has fired 2405 missiles and drones at Ukraine since February 2022. Most have been shot down, proving how rapidly people can be trained on new equipment when pressed and most importantly how effective Western air defence capabilities are in combat. The down side is that sufficient numbers get through to cause casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure. Ukraine has fired back more recently using locally-produced drones and missiles at military targets nearby such as poor old Belgorod, Rostov on Don, Russian airfields and Moscow itself but the effect is not the same. The West has prevented Ukraine from winning. Ukraine needs all the tools to succeed, not only to take back its lands but also to ensure the enemy's capability is destroyed as well. The Russian people have been shielded from Putin's follies because Ukraine cannot hit back in a way that will make a very

statement on the cost of this conflict to the Russian people. Ukraine needs all the tools to succeed and we need to give it to them. Not to do so is immoral and unethical.

China

China's economy continues to slip across the board. Order books for both foreign and domestic sales are down considerably and not only because of the pandemic and China's response. China's actions under Xi have shown that the Communist Chinese Party (CCP) is corrupt, its official figures are based on imagination and the much vaunted elimination of poverty is an untruth. The CCP has attacked key drivers of the economy and have inflicted regulations and laws that further the survival of the CCP and do not benefit the Chinese people. The CCP efforts regarding National Security Act changes have caused considerable concern in the international community and has essentially ended foreign investment in the near term. The CCP has created conditions that will continue to lead the Chinese economy into dire straits including massive bank issues, property development collapse, crash of the shadow economy and the loss of individual savings through poorly run financial vehicles created to provide loans to local government enterprises. As discussed before, CCP intervention has placed this type of financial vehicle at risk, and by demanding banks lend to these institutions, placing the health of the banking system at risk.

The Chinese economy now faces a number of big challenges including a large and growing unemployment rate, especially amongst youth, now topping 21% of this population, the inability of the current system to employ university graduates of which nearly half remains unemployed or under employed in the government equivalent of "McJobs," failure to find a meaningful solution to the demographic situation created by the CCP's "One Child Policy" and the rise of the pensioner issue. Because of CCP policy, there is the fleeing of international capital to safer countries, taking investment and jobs with them. The Chinese economy is in poor shape and is likely to continue to have slow to negative growth in the near term at least. Major structural issues created by the CCP will continue to create difficult conditions in the foreseeable future.

The Xi regime is also continuing its purges across the military and industry. Purges include all but two of seven members of the Central Military Commission, seven members of the leadership of the Strategic Rocket Force, one from the Navy and one from ground forces. Keep in mind this on top of the purge of the Foreign Minister and the Defence Minister. The Chief of Defence Staff and the Commander of the Navy were appointed recently, see last week's notes for details. This is not the sign of a stable and confident regime.

These issues should be a concern to all as China ramps up aggressive actions in both the East and South China seas and especially against Taiwan and the Philippines. This type of activity is likely to increase as the CCP tries to provide an outlet for anger of nationalists. It should be interesting to watch the outcome of the Taiwanese elections scheduled for 13 January 2024. Taiwan is a threat as it is a successful democracy created by evolution from an authoritarian regime. A successful change from an authoritarian regime to a democracy is exactly what the CCP does not want and it may try desperate measures to ensure this nearby example is eliminated. Given the other strains in the international situation, would China attack and if so how much is it willing to pay? Time will tell, but the chief goal of the CCP is to survive at all costs, even at the expense of the economy.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- In recent weeks, both Ukrainian and Russian troops have highly likely suffered from exceptional levels of rat and mice infestation in some sectors of the front line.
- This year's mild autumn, along with ample food from fields left fallow due to the fighting, have likely contributed to the increase in the rodent population. As the weather has become colder, the animals are likely seeking shelter in vehicles and defensive positions. Rodents will add further pressure to front line combatants' morale.
- In addition, they pose a risk to military equipment by gnawing through cables – as recorded in the same area during the Second World War. Unverified reports also suggest Russian units starting to suffer from increased sickness cases which the troops attribute to the pest problem.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- On 25 December 2023, the Russian Navy's Ropucha class Landing Ship Tank (LST) Novocherkassk was completely destroyed following a Ukrainian strike while alongside at the port of Feodosia, on the south coast of Russian-occupied Crimea.
- Open source evidence suggests it is highly likely the vessel was carrying explosive cargo when it was hit, causing a large secondary explosion. The incident takes the number of LSTs Russia has lost since the invasion to three: the Saratov sank on 24 March 2022, while the Minsk was functionally destroyed in dry dock on 13 September 2023. Two additional LSTs have likely been damaged.
- Russia likely planned to use its LST force to launch significant amphibious assaults during the invasion and it doubled the number of these vessels in the Black Sea during the build-up to the war. As the war has dragged on, the ships have been more commonly employed in providing logistical support. This is a significant role because it augments the vital and relatively fragile road and rail connection of the Crimea Bridge, which links Crimea to Russia.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- During the course of 2023, the average daily number of Russian casualties (killed and wounded) in Ukraine has risen by almost 300 per day compared to 2022.
- The increase in daily averages, as reported by the Ukrainian authorities, almost certainly reflects the degradation of Russia's forces and its transition to a lower quality, high quantity mass army since the 'partial mobilisation' of reservists in September 2022. It will likely take Russia five to ten years to rebuild a cohort of highly trained and experienced military units.
- If casualties continue at the current rate through the next year, by 2025 Russia will have sustained over half a million personnel killed and wounded over three years of war. This is compared to the Soviet Union's 70,000 casualties in the nine-year Soviet-Afghan War.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- Since 29 December 2023, Russia has increased the intensity of its long-range strike operations against Ukraine. Its forces have committed a significant proportion of the stock of air launched cruise missiles and ballistic missiles they had built up over recent months.
- The recent strikes likely primarily targeted Ukraine's defence industry. This contrasts with its major attacks last winter which prioritised striking Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Russia appeared set to restart this campaign by hitting energy sites in early December 2023.
- These new operations suggest at least a temporary change of approach in Russia's use of long-range strikes. Russian planners almost certainly recognise the growing importance of relative defence industrial capacity as they prepare for a long war.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- In November 2022, President Putin approved the establishment of the Moscow Government Security Force (MGSF), a new organisation to guard the capital's infrastructure. From July 2023, the MGSF has assumed a more paramilitary character, including receiving a remit to use firearms. It has likely attracted several thousand recruits out of a planned strength of 15,000.
- The MGSF represents another example in Russia's long tradition of 'paramilitarisation': the proliferation of armed organisations outside of the regular military. However, MGSF has highly likely been strengthened partially in response to concerns about the preparedness of Moscow's local security forces in the face of advancing, mutinous Wagner Group troops in June 2023.
- The project also provides an opportunity for Muscovites to volunteer for 'patriotic' war time duties - while avoiding front line service in Ukraine. Moscow mayor Sergei Sobyenin has been successful in limiting the direct impact of the conflict on the capital's relatively well-off population. The majority of Russian casualties in Ukraine have come from poorer, provincial regions.

The 'paramilitarisation' is reminiscent of what occurred in Nazi Germany.


Artificial Intelligence and Imagery

Wargaming
@BarrickTim

This is an example of exactly how NOT to use AI generated art. Using an entirely fictional cover art for an article on a specific weapon system simply tells me you have no idea what you're talking about. This is becoming a trend. And you lose all credibility with your picture.

The U.S. Army's Paladin M109A7: A Next-Generation Howitzer

by Marcin Frackiewicz
in [Artificial Intelligence, Mobile, News](#)
on 22 December 2023



12:41 PM · Dec 23, 2023 · 10.4K Views

The Armchair Dragons
@ADragoons

👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍

The article has replaced that image with an equally bad one, and closes on this howler

Marcin Frackiewicz is a renowned author and blogger, specializing in satellite communication and artificial intelligence. His insightful articles delve into the intricacies of these fields, offering readers a deep understanding of complex technological concepts. His work is known for its clarity and thoroughness.

9:09 AM · Dec 24, 2023 · 101 Views


The Armchair Dragons
@ADragoons

so it looks like there are 2 different versions of the article out there. Text is mostly the same, but the other one has this splash graphic instead of the one you were (rightfully) slagging

No idea what that stack of 2x4's by the TC's MG is for "_(:\`)/"

The U.S. Army's M109A7 Paladin: The Next Generation of Artillery

by Marcin Frackiewicz in [Artificial Intelligence, Mobile, News](#) on 22 December 2023



9:12 AM · Dec 24, 2023 · 46 Views

Casualty Counts

Counts come in different ways but often are enhanced (eye catching?) with (good) graphics. Air, ground and overall (right) counts tend to be numerical tallies with (too) simple graphics by each number. Interesting to see a naval count like that to left.

RUSSIAN NAVY — NEW HOUSES FOR FISH

TOP
LEAD

Publicly known cases of destruction to Russian Navy ships and boats during the full-scale invasion



Sources: open data.

t.me/uawarinfigraphics

LOSSES OF THE RUSSIAN OCCUPIERS IN UKRAINE



from February 24, 2022 to December 31, 2023

~359230 +960

Eliminated personnel




Military jets	329
Tanks	5977 +8
Helicopters	324
Armored combat vehicles	11070 +17
Cruise missiles	1709 +1
Artillery	8464 +30
Warship & boats	23
Multiple Launch Rocket System	943 +4
Submarines	1
Air defence system	623 +2
Vehicles & fuel tanks	11292 +48
Drones	6591 +37
Special equipment	1268 +8

From the reports of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

Defense of Ukraine @DefenceU 31 Dec posted: "Tomorrow is the first blank page of a 365-page book. Write a good one." Brad Paisley
The combat losses of the enemy from February 24, 2022 to December 31, 2023.

Holiday Greetings from Canadian Forces Base Halifax

Editor: Posted 24 December, after our last Dispatches in 2023.

 Canadian Forces Base Halifax - Base des Forces canadiennes de Halifax 1h ·  

Our CFB Halifax family extends warm holiday wishes to members of the Defence community at home and abroad and to friends, neighbours and supporters across the region and beyond. Enjoy yourselves and please take care of one another.

La famille de la BFC Halifax offre ses meilleurs vœux aux membres de la communauté de la Défense au pays et à l'étranger, ainsi qu'aux amis et voisins, et à tous ceux qui la soutiennent dans la région et ailleurs. Profitez-en et prenez soin les uns des autres.

Royal Canadian Navy Marine royale canadienne Trident News PSP Halifax-Shearwater Naval Museum of Halifax - Musée naval d'Halifax Naval Training Group - Groupe de l'instruction de la Marine HMCS Scotian / NCSM Scotian United Way Halifax Halifax Partnership Halifax Chamber of Commerce Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia Halifax Regional Municipality Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Halifax Regional Police Canada's Naval Memorial - HMCS Sackville Halifax Mooseheads HFX Wanderers FC Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia Halifax Thunderbirds Halifax Harbour Bridges Port of Halifax HealthPartners - PartenaireSanté CFB BFC Esquimalt Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre Build Nova Scotia 5th Canadian Division/ 5e Division du Canada 36 Canadian Brigade Group / 36e Groupe-brigade du Canada Port of Halifax

See Translation



