



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia Dispatches 22 March 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 periodic 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 RUSINovaScotia@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).

Dispatches

RUSI(NS) seeks a new editor to replace our editor of several years ago and our editor pro tem since then. If you are interested, please email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. We have a volunteer for the 5 April 2022 edition but need someone (more than one?) for then onwards. What *Dispatches* looks like and how often it is published will be up to the new editor(s).
After 5 April, publication of *Dispatches* may be on hold pending a new editor.

Your Dispatches needs your contributions!

For the 5 April edition, you are encouraged to assist the volunteer editor by emailing articles and other contributions to rusinsdispatches@gmail.com. Articles with a Canadian nexus, explicit or implicit (i.e., Canada is not mentioned in a cyber ops article but it is an area to which we should be paying attention) are good, articles with your value-added comment (why we should read the article and think about it) are better.

You are also encourage to send material to be posted to the RUSI(NS) X and Facebook accounts to rusinsdispatches@gmail.com. Preferably, send the material ready to post. We are still looking for a volunteer(s) to be editor(s) for these accounts in order to keep them active.

2024 Liz Hoffman Memorial Commendation Nominations Close March 31

The Liz Hoffman Memorial Commendation is given to recipients who have gone above and beyond to make lasting and positive change to the Defence Community. Nominations are open (<https://www.canada.ca/en/ombudsman-national-defence-forces/information-about-office/hoffman-memorial-commendation/nominations.html>) for the 2024 recipients until Sunday, March 31st, 2024.

Margaret A. MacKenzie
Portfolio Coordinator / Coordonnatrice du portefeuille
Office of the DND/CAF Ombudsman / Bureau de l'ombudsman MDN/FAC
Department of National Defence, Government of Canada | Ministère de la Défense nationale -
Gouvernement du Canada
Margaret.MacKenzie@forces.gc.ca
Toll free / Sans frais: 1-888-828-3626

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.

RUSI(NS) Events:

Amended: Date TBD - RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker RAdm Luciano Carosielli, Commander Cyber Force, the Cyber Force and digital/information management/J6. The speaker became unavailable so a new date is being arranged.

Pre-event readings:

Now the 'most dangerous time I can remember,' warns British military's cyber general

<https://therecord.media/gen-jim-hockenhull-most-dangerous-time-national-security>

Canadian Forces wants to expand offensive cyber capabilities, briefing says

<https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/canadian-forces-wants-to-expand-offensive-cyber-capabilities-briefing-says>

New: 5 April, Friday - Center for Strategic and International Studies "Strategic Landpower Dialogue: A Conversation with General Christopher Cavoli." 12:45-2:00 pm EDT. Livestream. The discussion will explore military challenges in Europe, the ongoing war in Ukraine, and General Cavoli's vision for landpower in the joint force. To register:

<https://www.csis.org/events/strategic-landpower-dialogue-conversation-general-christopher-cavoli>

17 April, Wednesday – RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker MGen Bernard, Canadian Joint Operations Command, "The Canadian Armed Forces and Climate Security Challenges." 1300-1500 Atlantic time. Via Zoom. Details TBA.

Pre-event reading: Draft principles on protection of the environment in armed conflict

<https://lieber.westpoint.edu/draft-principles-protection-environment-armed-conflict/>

29 May, Wednesday - Distinguished Speaker RAdm Kurtz, Commander Maritime Forces Atlantic. 1300-1500. Royal Artillery Park Officers' Mess.

TBD, likely late May – planning is ongoing for an event with Col Dr. Randall Wakelam, RCAF (ret'd), speaking about his new book “On the Wings of War and Peace: The RCAF during the Early Cold War” (<https://utorontopress.com/9781487526764/on-the-wings-of-war-and-peace/>). May be held at the Cambridge Military Library. Not a RUSI(NS) event per se but members may be interested. MTF. Meanwhile, as some readings:

Book Review No. 20 – Ricketts on Wakelam, Cold War Fighters – Canadian Aircraft Procurement, 1945-54

<https://cdainstitute.ca/book-review-no-20-ricketts-on-wakelam-cold-war-fighters-canadian-aircraft-procurement-1945-54/>

AirWarBooks – Dr Randall Wakelam

<https://balloonstodrones.com/2018/08/15/airwarbooks-dr-randall-wakelam/>

Education for 21st Century Aviators

<https://balloonstodrones.com/2018/03/23/education-for-21st-century-aviators/>

Other Events:

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/rmcsd/625-romeo-dallaire>

Wargaming Events:

Georgetown University Wargaming Society long-range schedule:

<https://www.guwargaming.org/guwsevents>

2 April, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation “Wargaming in the Brazilian Navy.” 7-9 pm ADT. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wargaming-in-the-brazilian-navy-tickets-829534378657>.

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>

21 May, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation “Simplifying Large Scale Conflicts.” 7-9 pm ADT. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/simplifying-large-scale-conflicts-tickets-779522571997>.

9 July, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation “Kriegsspiel - past and present.” 1-3pm ADT. Online. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/kriegsspiel-past-and-present-tickets-781141072977>

20 August, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation " Wargaming outside of War: How NGO's use games and gaming to expand maritime governance." 7-9pm ADT. Online. Development and deployment of an IUU fishing wargame. To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wargaming-outside-of-war-how-ngos-use-games-and-gaming-to-expand-maritime-tickets-791506887407>

Publications

RUSI(NS) Paper "The Royal Canadian Air Force Second Century of Operation - The Change to an Expeditionary Air Force – A Concept" by Murray Lee, 7 March 2024, https://rusi-ns.ca/air_expeditionary_wing/

RUSI(NS) Comments "Canada's National Disaster Challenge" by Murray Lee, 1 January 2024, https://rusi-ns.ca/national_disaster_challenge/

Royal Alberta United Services Institute Research Brief Volume 4 Issue 1 "UK Arms Diplomacy and International Law on the Black Sea" by LJ Howard, 30 January 2024, <https://rausi.ca/publications/research/631-uk-arms-diplomacy-and-international-law-on-the-black-sea>

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/>

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/>

Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies – Australia New South Wales Journal *United Service*, March 2024 Vol. 75 No. 1 <https://www.rusinsw.au/Papers/2024AU.pdf>

The following publications are received by RUSI(S) from other associations. The latest edition, where not otherwise indicated, may be requested by emailing RUSI(NS). To readers of *Dispatches* from other associations, sharing of your publications is appreciated.

weekly:

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Defence Update*
Vancouver Artillery Association and Royal United Services Institute Vancouver *Members News*

bi-weekly:

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

monthly:

Canadian Gunner News
Edmonton United Services Institute President's *Enews*
Military Institute of Windsor *Communiqué*
Naval Reserve Association of Canada Mess Deck *ConneXions*
Royal Alberta United Services Institute *Dispatches*
Royal Canadian Logistics Service *The Logistician*
Royal Canadian Naval Association Admiral Hose Branch *Scuttlebutt*
Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island *Newsletter*
Veterans Affairs Canada *Salute!*

quarterly:

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Quarterly Newsletter*

@RUSI_NS on X 🇨🇦

@RUSI_NS posts may be viewed by clicking on the icon at <https://RUSI-NS.ca>.

To have something posted or reposted, email RUSI(NS).

National Defence @NationalDefence 7 Mar posted and RUSI(NS) quoted: We've awarded a contract of up to \$211.6 million to Calgary's Arcfield Canada to upgrade and support our current @RCAF_ARC fleet of CF-18 fighter jets and to ensure that the fleet is operationally ready for Canada. <https://canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/news/2024/03/canada-investing-2116-million-in-calgarys-arcfield-canada-to-sustain-the-royal-canadian-air-force-cf-18-fleet.html>

(Canada investing \$211.6 million in Calgary's Arcfield Canada to sustain the Royal Canadian Air Force CF-18 fleet)



Vanguard @VanguardMag 8 Mar posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: Discover Canada's new polar icebreakers! From navigating Arctic ice to supporting indigenous communities, these vessels are set to redefine maritime exploration. Read more in our latest article! <https://vanguardcanada.com/navigating-arctic-challenges-canadas-cutting-edge-polar-icebreakers-set-to-redefine-maritime-exploration/> #Arctic #Maritime #Exploration

(Navigating Arctic Challenges: Canada's Cutting-Edge Polar Icebreakers Set to Redefine Maritime Exploration)



Canadian Armed Forces @CanadianForces 13 Mar posted: Last week, members from the Arctic Response Company Group (ARCG) braved subzero temperatures and conducted combat exercises including simulated attacks as part of #OpNANOOK-NUNALIVUT in Resolute Bay, Nunavut. Photos: Mcpl Alana Morin and Sgt Vincent Lafond
RUSI(NS) quoted: RUSI(NS) paper "Arctic Response Company Group" <https://rusi-ns.ca/arctic-response-company-group/>



National Defence @NationalDefence 15 Mar posted and RUSI(NS) reposted: #NATODIANA has added a Canadian footprint including two accelerators and 13 test centre sites to its growing network to ensure Canada and its Allies keep ahead of evolving threats from new disruptive technologies.






<https://canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/news/2024/03/canadian-test-centres-and-accelerators-join-nato-diana-network.html>

(Canadian test centres and accelerators join NATO DIANA network)
"NATO's overall program is to be co-ordinated out of the Halifax office and an office in London. To date, the program has named 23 accelerators and 182 test sites in 28 NATO member nations."

Dave Mazur @WestCoastCmdre Mar 14 posted (more pix:
<https://twitter.com/WestCoastCmdre/status/1768307607922753724>): Welcome to the RCN Teal 2. The RCN has been operating various uncrewed subsurface, surface, and air vehicles for over 2 decades now - usually as targets. Today we welcomed the Teal 2 and started training the trainers. A first step towards a full RCN ISTAR capability.



RUSI(NS) quoted: Teal 2 sUAS #UAS #drone
<https://tealdrones.com/solutions/aircraft/> Every @RoyalCanNavy ship an aircraft carrier @TealDrones sasksailortech75 @sasksailortech1 asked: Will the pilots have to be full flight medical cleared like other CAF drone pilots?
@WestCoastCmdre answered: No, there will be an internal training and certification process, but they will not have to meet pilot requirements.
@berthibodeau Mar 15 asked: And doctrinally it won't fly without integrating within the ship's airdet ATO cycle right?
@WestCoastCmdre answered: Affirm (if an air det is embarked). The ATO aspect will depend on what size is being flown. It will also become even more critical for aircraft to check in with a ship before entering the controlled access zone now.


<p>Royal Canadian Air Force @RCAF_ARC 15 Mar posted: Members of Arctic Response Company Group (ARCG) board a CC-130J Hercules transport aircraft for their departure to Eureka during Operation NANOOK-NUNALIVUT in Resolute Bay, on March 5, 2024. 📷: Master Corporal Alana Morin RUSI(NS) quoted: RUSI(NS) Information Paper "Arctic Response Company Group" https://rusi-ns.ca/arctic-response-company-group/</p>	
<p>NSIRACanada @nsiracanada 21 Mar posted: NSIRA released its second Review of the Canadian Forces National Counter-Intelligence Unit. @NationalDefence, @CanadianForces. RUSI(NS) quoted: "Review of the @CanadianForces National Counter-Intelligence Unit - Operational collection and privacy practices" https://nsira-ossnr.gc.ca/en/reviews/ongoing-and-completed-reviews/completed-reviews/review-of-the-canadian-forces-national-counter-intelligence-unit-operational-collection-and-privacy-practices/</p>	
<p>"First Person View (FPV) Drones and Canadian Defence" https://www.cgai.ca/first_person_view_fpv_drones_and_canadian_defence #drones @NationalDefence @CanadianForces</p>	

“Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia” on Facebook
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Army Watercraft Depart for Gaza Port Mission, Navy Preparing East Coast Reserve Ship to Sail
<https://news.usni.org/2024/03/12/army-watercraft-set-sail-for-gaza-port-mission-navy-preparing-east-coast-reserve-ship-to-sail>

Sal Mercogliano (WGOW Shipping) 🚢 ⚓ 🏠 🚚 📧
@mercoglianos 7 Mar posted on X: We are about to see how well we can actually conduct a JLOTS (Joint Logistics Over the Shore). The issue will be how well can we move commercial cargo through a military system, with an aged and obsolescence #sealift fleet.

Could Canada mount a similar over-the-beach operation at austere (Arctic) or damaged locations (storm devastated port), overseas or even on our own coasts? Yes, the Royal Canadian Navy has three powered barges to operate from Joint Support Ship project replenishment oilers when those ships are operating (see: "Ship-to-Shore Connector Barges")



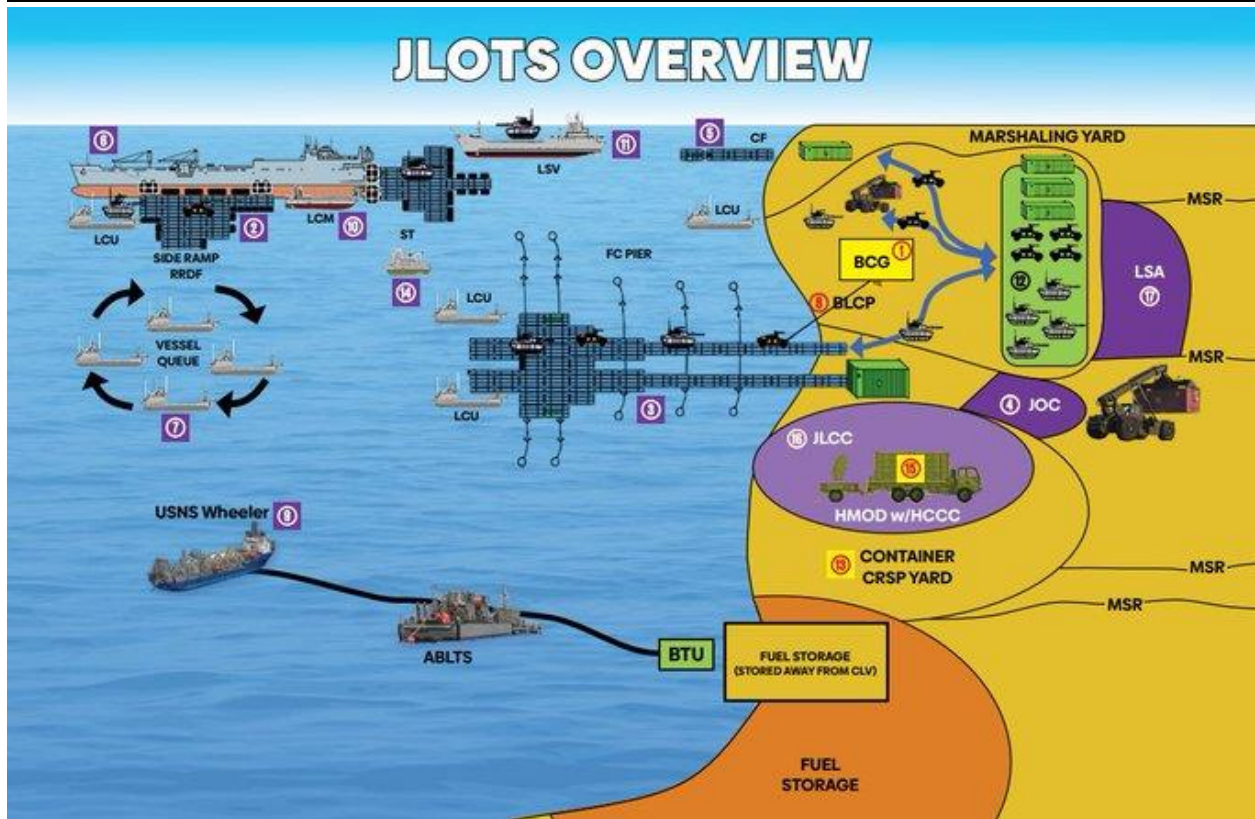
<https://rusi-ns.ca/ship-to-shore-connector/>). But there are a lot more engineering and logistics capabilities (e.g., see @thinkdefence's <https://twitter.com/thinkdefence/status/1767264760179879937> comments about surf zone excavators) that make such operations successful. And organizing, planning and exercising such capabilities takes time. Does the Canadian Armed Forces have staff and units whose responsibilities and roles include such operations?

And then there's the potentially major issue of availability of sealift for Canadian operations.

Konstantin Toropin @KToropin 12 Mar posted: I have finally seen everything. Army ships, being piloted by warrant officers, are heading for open ocean....

Editor: Kinda puts 'command' into perspective.

The Canadian Army operated ships in the Second World War. The US Army has more ships than the US Navy.



'Gaza Pier'

As I read the large number of articles now out about the challenges of establishing a Gaza pier (which pre-supposes a solution so maybe another name is suitable - 'sea point of disembarkation' [mis-use of SPOD intentional]), I think of the RCN's new powered barges



(see: "Ship-to-Shore Connector Barges" <https://rusi-ns.ca/ship-to-shore-connector/>) and wonder what scenarios have been planned/gamed/exercised for their use, and what other resources (e.g., mobile support equipment, security ashore and afloat) would be needed.

The Center for Maritime Strategy article below is a good read:

A Bridge Over Troubled Waters

<https://centerformaritimestrategy.org/publications/a-bridge-over-troubled-waters/>

The U.S. Navy's Real China Problem Won't Be Easy to Fix

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/us-navys-real-china-problem-wont-be-easy-fix-209979>

An article of shipbuilding, politics and strategy.

"The arithmetic of war is stern. A force that can speedily regenerate combat power after taking a punch, as all forces do, is resilient; one that cannot is fragile."

The strength of a country's shipbuilding industry is part of the defence calculus.

"Sea power is a conscious political choice..." "Peacetime strategy is about designing and fielding forces fit for war. That being the case, lawmakers make strategy through the budgetary process all the time." "Constancy is a virtue on the demand side when courting the supply side."

Though the article may be written from a US perspective, the author's points are applicable to Canada.



China's nascent railgun is just the tip of its shipboard R&D

<https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2024/03/chinas-nascent-railgun-just-tip-its-shipboard-advances/394970/>

..."shipboard power—needed in vast quantities for sensors, jammers, networks, and weapons, including electromagnetic weapons—was a bottleneck in its development of a modern navy."

One can guess that the Royal Canadian Navy ships what will be acquired under Canadian Surface Combatant project will not have the power for railguns. Besides, there may not be Canadian research into such weapons, at least as evident by open reporting, and allied research has not progressed to fielding (hmm, army term, that) the weapon. Hopefully, Canadian research efforts into railguns are ongoing quietly somewhere.

And into greater power generation onboard ships.



M114 howitzers, aviation rockets, and millions of rounds: Greece prepares military aid for Ukraine

<https://newsukraine.rbc.ua/news/m114-howitzers-aviation-rockets-and-millions-1710524473.html>



"Greece has informed EU officials responsible for coordinating assistance to Ukraine that they could provide the following aid through Czechia this year" to include 70 M114 155mm howitzers.

The Canadian Army had M114 howitzers, known as M114Cdn, but disposed of them almost a couple decades ago. Storing weapons for mobilization or to make available to needy friendly countries is expensive, so apparently a decision was made to dispose of the guns. A regret, however unforeseeable, because they could have been of use in Ukraine. Maybe Canadian military equipment disposal policies should be reviewed.

More on the M114Cdn at

http://www.missing-lynx.com/reviews/canada/155mmhowitzerbookreviews_1.html
and <https://en.rcamuseum.com/155mm-howitzer-m114-39-exp-can/>.

This is an 18 March 2024 picture of a M114Cdn howitzer at Canadian Forces Base Halifax. The M114 were supposed to be the new militia gun in the late 1980s. They were to be modernized with a new Dutch designed barrel, allowing for modern ammunition. The program was cancelled with the end of the Cold War. Only two out of 54 were completed. They were kept in storage in Montreal, and one can suspect all were scrapped. It should also be mentioned that these guns were built for the Korean conflict and the Canadian brigade group in Germany in the 1950s.



From a knowledgeable source: This gun was in front of building D201 along with a naval destroyer mount as monuments until the addition of the new jetty to support AOPV required more room and they were removed. The M114 was repainted and stored at Windsor Park awaiting its relocation to RA Park as a monument. It is awaiting a concrete pad large enough to accommodate it, which has been in the works for some time. I have no information as to whether the Cdn M114 are still in storage in depot or if they were already disposed of nor aware of any intent.

- - -

As an example of Ukrainian adaptation (in extremis measure?) and where Canada has not gone in doing everything it can for Ukraine:

Ukraine Plunders Howitzer Graveyard to Keep Big Guns Firing

<https://www.wsj.com/world/ukraine-plunders-howitzer-graveyard-to-keep-big-guns-firing-94967fee>

Indian Navy Corners Pirates and Rescues Bulker After Months of Captivity

<https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/indian-navy-corners-pirates-and-rescues-bulker-after-months-of-captivity>



"The Indian (Navy) vessels *Kolkata* (destroyer) and *Subhadra* (patrol vessel), along with remotely piloted aircraft and a team of elite marine commandos (Marine Commando Force -MCF - MARCOS) air-dropped by C-17 aircraft, were able to successfully confront the bulker with the pirates aboard."

"The IAF described the airdrop of the Combat Rubberised Raiding Craft (CRRC) boats and the MARCOS commandos as a "remarkable display" of "jointness" between the two forces."

Impressive, the variety of resources employed in the operation. And complex. Such an operation is well one that would do with a lot of advance planning, training and exercising. The Canadian Armed Forces do exercise this sort of operation, though it doesn't appear to get much public coverage.

"The pirates shot down one of the Navy's drones."

Considering the increasing use of drones by the Royal Canadian Navy, procedures and tactics to avoid counter-drone measures, even by pirates, is something for attention. And counter-drone measures to be used by our forces, as surely pirates and other 'bad actors' will use (are using) drones.

More about the Indian operation at: IAF'S C-17 Aircraft Executes Precision Airdrop in Arabian Sea, Helps Navy Seize Hijacked Vessel (<https://www.indiandefensenews.in/2024/03/iafs-c-17-aircraft-executes-precision.html>).

How the Royal Navy provides support to merchant shipping under threat around the world

<https://www.navylookout.com/how-the-royal-navy-provides-support-to-merchant-shipping-under-threat-around-the-world/>



"The RN-led UK Maritime Trade Organisation (UKMTO) coordinates the flow of information around commercial shipping sailing in dangerous waters. Here we look at how this valuable service provides reassurance to mariners, improves safety of life at sea and helps reduce their risk of exposure to piracy or attack."

It would be interesting to know how much, if any, are Canadian shipping, the Canadian Armed Forces and Transport Canada linked (inputting info to, receiving reports from, contacting during incidents) the UK Maritime Trade Organisation. The safety of global shipping is important for Canada's security and prosperity. There would be great benefit to being linked with like-minded 'maritime domain awareness' and similar organizations.

What's in a Name - French warship arrives

<https://shipfax.blogspot.com/2024/03/whats-in-name-french-warship-arrives.html>

"The 1,000 ton displacement ship is a Type A69 Estienne d'Orves class "aviso" which loosely means a lighter weight vessel such as a sloop or corvette."



A number of European navies keep 'guardships', usually frigates, deployed throughout the globe for the security of related areas (can be read as territories, protectorates and former colonies). Often the French ships are avisos. At about the time of Gulf War I, a US/NATO fleet decided to invite guardships in the Caribbean into a major carrier battle group exercise. The French Navy guardship was an aviso. Seeking a translation and appreciation of an aviso's capabilities and roles, fleet staff learned that aviso seemed to hark back to dispatch vessels of sailing times (aviso = advice = dispatch?). It wouldn't be the first modern type of ship with the name of an earlier type; there are, for example, sloop and corvette. These are useful types of vessel, to deploy on missions when a more capable frigate or destroyer would be too much capability and expense. Part of a 'balanced navy.' Canada's Kingston-class serve as that, and they should be replaced by a similar, second tier or second rate to use terms of other nations, ships.

GA-ASI Tests Sonobuoy Dispensing System with MQ-9B SeaGuardian

<https://www.canadiandefencereview.com/news/ga-asi-tests-sonobuoy-dispensing-system-with-mq-9b-seaguardian>

"GA-ASI's SeaGuardian flew the full test flight event configured with the SDS pod and SeaVue multi-role radar from Raytheon, an RTX business. During the test, the SDS pod dropped eight AN/SSQ-53 and two AN/SSQ-62 sonobuoys. Upon dispensing, the sonobuoys were successfully monitored by the SeaGuardian's onboard Sonobuoy Monitoring and Control System (SMCS)."



The Royal Canadian Air Force's Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS; see: <https://rusi-ns.ca/rpas/>) does not include a sonobuoy dispensing pod. Although the baseline aircraft is the Protector (SkyGuardian), the Canadian aircraft will have many of the components of the SeaGuardian including electronic support measures (ESM) systems, automatic identification system (AIS) and SeaSpray radar.

Other Sources

#A2R

Canada's military facing 'death spiral' on recruitment, minister says

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10341588/canadian-forces-recruitment-death-spiral/>

"The first responsibility of any government is the national defence of its country,..."

Military ditching aptitude test for some applicants, will start accepting recruits with medical conditions

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/military-aptitude-tests-medical-standards-recruitment-trials-1.7141214>

Missing the Mark: Reevaluating Eligibility to Serve

<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2024/march/missing-mark-reevaluating-eligibility-serve>

USN (and RN) experiencing similar challenges to RCN.

Be All We Can Be: Reclaiming the Army Identity

<https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/articles/all-we-can-be/>

Similarities and lessons/way-aheads for Canada?

#Arctic

Shouldn't the Army be Able to Defend Canada's North?

<https://vanguardcanada.com/the-last-word-shouldnt-the-army-be-able-to-defend-canadas-north/>

Russia considering withdrawal from UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in the Arctic – Eye on the Arctic

<https://www.rcinet.ca/eye-on-the-arctic/2024/03/19/russia-considering-withdrawal-from-un-convention-on-the-law-of-the-sea-in-the-arctic/>

Editor: A colleague knows Tore Henriksen and fully agrees with his comments. The Russians have just about nothing to gain from withdrawing. And a state cannot simply say the convention does no longer apply to a specific marine region, because that would be considered a reservation, and reservations are not allowed. On the contrary, their blue water fleet benefits from international navigation rights safeguarded by the convention, as well as customary law.

#drones

Study on fighter pilots and drone swarms sheds light on the dynamics of trust within human-machine teams

<https://www.psypost.org/study-on-fighter-pilots-and-drone-swarms-sheds-light-on-the-dynamics-of-trust-within-human-machine-teams/>

Taiwan Buys Four Additional MQ-9B SkyGuardian Drones From US
https://www.thedefensepost.com/2024/03/13/taiwan-buys-skyguardian-drones/#google_vignette

Possibility for a MQ-9 users group that includes Taiwan and Canada?

AWS Legal Review Series – Protracted Debate, Incremental Progress, Unexpected Outcomes
<https://lieber.westpoint.edu/protracted-debate-incremental-progress-unexpected-outcomes/>

#drones in logistics

Russian ground delivery drone. Logistics in a drone contested environment. This one was taken out by a Ukrainian FPV (first-person view) drone. Video at: https://twitter.com/bayraktar_1love/status/1768955850503192669.



#drone off-route mine

They're coming looking for you, chasing you...

Now this adds to the complexity of ground warfare.



#drone mine-layer

Special Kherson Cat 🇺🇦 @bayraktar_1love 14 Mar posted (video: https://twitter.com/bayraktar_1love/status/1768364270247350478): Tests of Ukrainian mine laying drone equipped with 15 TM-62 anti tank mines



#drone casualty evacuation

Special Kherson Cat 🇺🇦 @bayraktar_1love 19 Mar posted (video: https://twitter.com/bayraktar_1love/status/1770178496955830404): Experimental Ukrainian ground drone TerMit. Potentially can carry out cargo delivery missions or fail to evacuate the wounded.



tethered #drone

Samuel Bendett @sambendett 17 Mar posted (video: <https://twitter.com/sambendett/status/1769343576243073311>): Ukrainian "Banderyk-Strychkla" FPV drone flown on a fiber-optic cable to a distance of (only?) 1 km - this is probably an initial prototype and the flight distance will increase in subsequent drones.

Editor: This could complicate counter-measures.



counter-#drone

Russian Submarines Now Appear To Be Getting Anti-Drone "Cope Cages"

<https://www.twz.com/sea/russian-submarines-now-appear-to-be-getting-anti-drone-cope-cages>

Editor: Okay, <grin> is this a cope cage to counter UUV?

Seriously, though, does say something about the effect of concern (fear?) that drones are causing. Great info ops!



#information operations

New Russian Disinformation Campaigns Prove the Past Is Prequel

<https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/new-russian-disinformation-campaigns-prove-the-past-is-prequel>

Note "narrative laundering."

HMS Diamond and a case study on disinformation

<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/hms-diamond-and-a-case-study-on-misinformation/>

Government Use of Deepfakes

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/government-use-deepfakes>

#intelligence

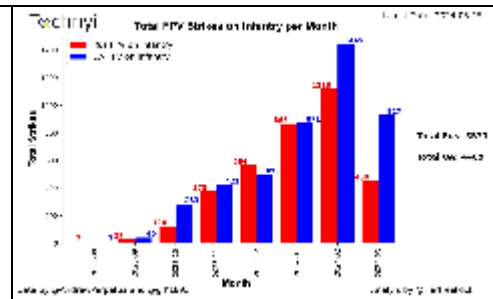
Intelligence Community Open Source Intelligence Strategy for 2024-2026

<https://www.dni.gov/index.php/newsroom/reports-publications/reports-publications-2024/3785-the-ic-osint-strategy-2024-2026>

Open Source #Intelligence

Daniele 🇺🇸 @HartreeFock 18 Mar posted (thread: <https://twitter.com/HartreeFock/status/1769432026766025066>): FPV usage update 17-03-2024

Editor: Worthwhile thread to read.



#legal

Draft Principles on Protection of the Environment in Armed Conflict

<https://lieber.westpoint.edu/draft-principles-protection-environment-armed-conflict/>

Introduction of the Military Justice System Modernization Act

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/news/2024/03/introduction-of-the-military-justice-system-modernization-act.html>

#logistics

Learning to Live in a Logistician's World – Strategic Logistics and the Future of Military Resilience

<https://logisticsinwar.com/2023/06/30/learning-to-live-in-a-logisticsians-world-strategic-logistics-and-the-future-of-military-resilience/>

"Perhaps, soon, logistics will be seen as more than a collection of jumbled-together pieces of kit, a tapestry of installations, and groups of people. It is a system of connections that define military power more profoundly than any other"

#maritime security

Seablindness' and the Royal Navy Today

<https://www.jameswesmith.space/p/seablindness-and-the-royal-navy-today>

The US Navy versus Seablindness: par for the course for America?

<https://www.jameswesmith.space/p/the-us-navy-versus-seablindness-par>

Red Sea Cable Damage Reveals Soft Underbelly of Global Economy

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/red-sea-cable-damage-reveals-soft-underbelly-global-economy>

#legal

US supports Philippines over SCS island

<https://navalinstitute.com.au/us-supports-philippines-over-scs-island/>

Naval Institute @AusNavInst 18 Mar posted: Great piece providing the background and legal issues around the Second Thomas Shoal which has been in the news lately. Very important to understand what is going on as a challenge to anyone's EEZ is a challenge to all.

#NATO

The Secretary General's Annual Report 2023

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_223291.htm

#naval warfare

Ukraine-style naval attack drones present challenges, but they are not revolutionary

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/ukraine-style-naval-attack-drones-present-challenges-but-they-are-not-revolutionary/>

#policing

Ottawa eyeing 'more responsive' police service models under RCMP contract

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10372137/rcmp-contract-policing-canada/>

#Royal Canadian Navy

Naval Appointments

<https://www.mapleleafnavy.com/2024-naval-appointments/>

New Sonar Capabilities for Canada's Surface Fleet

<https://gdmissionsystems.ca/articles/2024/03/05/new-sonar-capabilities-canada-surface-fleet>

New Towed Low Frequency Active Passive Sonar (TLFAS) capability.

#Russia

New (US) Army Techniques Publication informs force on Russian Tactics

https://www.army.mil/article/274433/new_army_techniques_publication_informs_force_on_russian_tactics

with link to ATP 7-100.1 Russian Tactics.

#Russia-Ukraine War

Canada's \$406-million missile system for Ukraine hung up in U.S. red tape

<https://edmontonjournal.com/news/national/canadas-406-million-missile-system-for-ukraine-hung-up-in-u-s-red-tape-blair>

Nine Things Western Analysts Got Wrong About Russia and Its Invasion of Ukraine
<https://jamestown.org/program/nine-things-western-experts-got-wrong-about-russia-and-its-invasion-of-ukraine/>

Lessons and Legacies of the War in Ukraine: Conference Report
<https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratperspective/inss/strategic-perspectives-43.pdf>

What Russia's momentum in Ukraine means for the war in 2024
<https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/military-balance/2024/03/what-russias-momentum-in-ukraine-means-for-the-war-in-2024/>

Unity at risk: The domestic strife testing Canada's commitment to Ukraine
<https://ecfr.eu/article/unity-at-risk-the-domestic-strife-testing-canadas-commitment-to-ukraine/>

How invading Russian forces destroyed media in Ukraine's occupied territories and what they built instead
<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/how-invading-russian-forces-destroyed-media-in-ukraines-occupied-territories-and-what-they-built-instead/>

Occupation technique.

Russia appears to be using chemical weapons in Ukraine. And admitting it.
<https://thebulletin.org/2024/03/russia-appears-to-be-using-chemical-weapons-in-ukraine-and-admitting-it/>

Russian grip on Crimea looks shaky
<https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/russian-grip-on-crimea-looks-shaky/>

#drones

Drones are Transforming the Battlefield in Ukraine But in an Evolutionary Fashion
<https://warontherocks.com/2024/03/drones-are-transforming-the-battlefield-in-ukraine-but-in-an-evolutionary-fashion/>

Inside an overnight mission with a Ukrainian drone unit stalking Russian troops
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/ukraine-drone-warfare-1.7137836>

#industrial warfare

US lacks long-term sustainment plan for key Ukraine weapons, Pentagon watchdog says
<https://www.defenseone.com/threats/2024/02/us-lacks-long-term-sustainment-plan-key-ukraine-weapons-pentagon-watchdog-says/394358/>

Spares and repairs are good contributions to the conflict in Ukraine and Canadian defence.

decoy

Russia is painting fake silhouettes next to its ships, hoping to trick Ukraine into attacking the wrong targets, UK intel says

<https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-painting-fake-ship-silhouettes-try-trick-ukraine-drones-uk-2024-3>



#space

Every War Is a Space War Now

<https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/every-war-is-a-space-war-now/>

#strategy

Admiral Raoul Castex: The Naval Strategist for Non-Hegemons

<https://warontherocks.com/2024/03/admiral-raoul-castex-the-naval-strategist-for-non-hegemons/>

"Castex, in contrast, served a country that never was and never would be the world's preeminent naval power. This made him far more sensitive to countries with smaller navies and offers far more of value to them as a guide to thinking about seapower, the kinds of navies they needed, and for what purpose."

Comment from a RUSI(NS) member: "Enjoyed the article. Given the rising effect of drones on naval warfare, wonder if submarines are the only useful means of sea denial for Canada. However, force protection against air, surface and sub-surface threats for elements of force projection and re-supply remain necessary, to which Canada has historical and current considerations as part of a coalition effort. Unless, of course, the opposition's navy in its multiple dimensions can be destroyed."

Strategy and Security

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/strategy-and-security/>

Military Strategy Magazine @milstrategymag 18 Mar posted: Strategy is about #security, and it is always made in a political process. #Strategy always must be done tactically and operationally, and a primary challenge is the need to achieve the strategic effect necessary for political success.

A grand strategy for Canada?

<https://macdonaldlaurier.ca/grand-strategy-canada-patrick-james/>

#warfare

Understanding the "Victory Disease," From the Little Bighorn to Mogadishu and Beyond

<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/combat-studies-institute/csi-books/karcher.pdf>

The future of war is unmanned and underwater

<https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/4524251-the-future-of-war-innovation-will-be-unmanned-and-underwater/>

#wargaming

AWC uses wargame to prepare for GPC

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/464924/awc-uses-wargame-prepare-gpc>

War-Gaming for Democracy

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2024/03/war-game-constitution-trump-biden/677779/>

A different use of wargaming?

#writing

A MINISCULE CHANGE

<https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/articles/a-miniscule-change/>

GREAT IDEA!

Other

University of Calgary **Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies** *Journal for Military and Strategic Studies* Vol. 23 No. 1 | Canadian Air force Centennial

<https://arts.ucalgary.ca/centre-military-security-strategic-studies/research/publications/journal-military-and-strategic-studies>

contents:

The Past, Present and Future of Canadian Military Air Power

An Orphan Air Force

Some Problems with Airpower History

Sitting Ducks and Strategic Change. The Air Division in Europe, 1959 to 1967

Transformation of Canada's Fighter Capability: A Generational Perspective

The Royal Canadian Air Force and the 2021 Kabul Air Evacuation: Lessons from an ad hoc mission

The Calculus of Procurement

RCAF Procurement

Considerations for the Future of Canadian Military Air Power

Future of Air and Space (Aerospace) Power and the RCAF: An Exploration

Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicle

OPP Highway Safety Division @OPP_HSD 20 mar posted: Rollover: EB #Hwy401/Harmony. Single vehicle rollover, no injuries. 2 left lanes blocked, clean up ongoing, expect to have all lanes reopened shortly.

Editor: Can someone explain the projections from the top of the TAPV?



Piers (Land the Landing Force!)

Think Defence @thinkdefence 11 Mar posted (more pix: <https://twitter.com/thinkdefence/status/1767263989585617042>): Different types of RORO ramps in ports. For disaster response, these tend to be the most versatile and valuable thing to have because a wide variety of ships can access them



Editor: Lots of ‘Gaza pier’ related content getting posted.

HMC Dockyard Halifax Jetty NB has such a ramp. HMC Dockyard Esquimalt advised they only have small boat launch ramps, no ro-ro ramps.

Have naval or any government planners inventoried RO-RO ramps across Canada and in likely operating areas?

Note RUSI(NS) Information Note "Jetties, Piers and Wharfs" (<https://rusi-ns.ca/jetties-piers-wharfs/>).

Coincidentally, there's this X posted showing Canadian use of ro-ro-ramps:

LGen J.J.M.J. Paul, CCA / CAC @Army_Comd_Armeec 13 Mar 24 posted (https://twitter.com/Army_Comd_Armeec/status/1767940715902902613): Getting further into the build-up of our Multinational Brigade ✖️🇨🇦! Over 1500 tonnes in vehicles are headed for #Latvia as we speak. #WeAreNATO

One of our eagle-eyed members noted a “Farine Five Roses” billboard atop a building where the Canadian Army vehicles are being loaded, so it's pretty certain the port is Montréal.

Beach combing...

Think Defence @thinkdefence 11 Mar posted (more pix at:

<https://twitter.com/thinkdefence/status/1767264760179879937>): Surf zone excavators, quite uncommon machines, but very handy for clearing beaches of debris or preparing them for pontoons and landing craft

Editor: Might Canada have anything like this?



Franken-gun

B-AREV @trip_to_valkiri 12 Mar posted: Wild looking S-60 57mm AA technical based on what looks like Onezhets tractor chassis in service with Russian forces in Ukraine, exact date and location unknown.

Gotta admire the adaptation. Or maybe it's desperation?

The industries to make such changes are part of the strength of a state's defence.



'From Chancay to Shanghai': Peru's Strategic Role in PRC Maritime Strategy

<https://jamestown.org/program/from-chancay-to-shanghai-perus-strategic-role-in-prc-maritime-strategy/>

From a 'global game of Go' perspective, one can almost feel like one is being flanked. A war can be lost before it starts if the 'weapons' being used by the other side are not recognized.



Maritime routes used by COSCO.

Lesson for those writing formal publications and for senior officials

(UK) Defence Committee @CommonsDefence 6 Mar 24 posted:

(1/3) In reaction to today's budget announcement, the Defence Committee has issued a statement. Chair of the Defence Committee, Sir Jeremy Quin MP, said:

(2/3) The Defence Secretary has referred to us being in a "Pre-War" state. This does not appear to be reflected in his Department's Budget allocation.

(3/3) The Select Committee is keen to meet the Secretary of State urgently on the Department's finances and how it will meet the challenges set out in our recent report "Ready for War?". (<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5804/cmselect/cmdfence/26/report.html>)

Dr. James W.E. Smith @James_WE_Smith King's College London 7 Mar 24 replied: Sigh. 'Pre-war' is a poor term and easily misconstrued: 'You walk into a bar convinced you are going to get into a fight, you'll probably be the one to start it.' It was once known that defence is about deterring war and planning how to stop a 'fight'. Pre-war is a nebulous term: technically, planning for war is always pre-war, in the hope of avoiding war, or 'Pre-War' admits when you had the chance to prevent war by showing strong deterrence and force, but you didn't. "Carry a big stick and speak softly" springs to mind. Furthermore, 'Pre-War' is kind of 'beating the war drum' after doing little to avoid it, and you've accepted the fact that it will happen over doing (could happen) everything to stop it. That war 'could' happen is arguably the state that the Armed Forces are always in (planning/preparedness). You then get into the public thinking the Armed Forces (particularly navies) are sat idle waiting for war in a 'pre-war' state when many are engaged in combat operations in this period of 'war-like peace'...my point (as proven by this tweet), what a mess is made from the use and abuse of terms, jargon and technocratic puke in modern defence. Stop it.

If most of the technobabble nonsense trend were removed from defence documents and formal publications, it would force authors to write more elegant, coherent and consistent (and understandable) arguments, briefs, (etc.) On the positive side, it would also expose authors' arguments for what they are so that it would force improvements in writing and, therefore, hopefully, the thought behind them.

Ships get wet

David Pugliese @davidpugliese 6 Mar posted: AOPS issues -Royal Canadian Navy's new Arctic ships have a severe flooding problem, say sailors
<https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/royal-canadian-navys-new-arctic-ships-have-a-severe-flooding-problem-say-sailors> via @ottawacitizen



Brian Santarpia @BrianSantarpia 7 Mar replied (thread: <https://twitter.com/BrianSantarpia/status/1765603698523439258>): It's not usually worth it to respond to articles like this as it seems to just invite more nasty and uniformed responses but perhaps I can offer a little bit of balance and context so here goes:

1. The photo is of the capstan compartment, which is up forward and high in the ship. If it's full of water then sailors would call out "flood" on discovering this water to get the right people looking for the source but it's not a flood that threatens to sink a ship.
2. The capstan compartment is inside in the AOPS so sailors can work inside and out of the arctic cold. The water is coming up the hawse pipe in rough seas. This happens in frigates but the hawse pipe is on the upper decks so the water just runs over the side: no issue.
3. It's always better to keep steel dry to prevent rust so ideas have been tried to keep the water from coming up the hawse pipe. Those ideas have been mostly successful but I would defer to any bos'n in one of these ships to say how effective the best solution is.
4. The other fix, as stated in the article, has been to create drains at the lowest points in the compartment to let water flow back out. Contrary to the impression left by the article, this is a simple and normal solution, like having a drain at the lowest point in a shower.

5. The first ship is a prototype but unlike smaller purchases, the first ship/prototype needs to be kept. With any new design you have to expect that issues will arise. It was the same with the Halifax Class Frigates when I sailed in the brand new HMCS Vancouver 33 years ago.

6. Just because a sailor is quoted as complaining doesn't mean they hate the ship. Those same sailors are also the ones who come up with the solutions to the growing problems and they are proud to do it. I've sailed in HDW and the crew loved the Ship.

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis 15 March

O Canada

The Canadian Foreign Interference Inquiry is rapidly losing its credibility even before it has really started. Justice Hogue has allowed several politicians to have standing within the inquiry allowing them to question individuals or groups about their testimony. These politicians were widely suspected of having strong links to a foreign government and were viewed as having a favourable opinion of that particular government to the extent they may have helped that government influence people, government and elections against the best interests of the Canadian public. As a result key groups have now withdrawn from the process as they fear these individuals may cause malicious actions against people within those groups. It also should be noted that political parties that have concerns about the situation also have been eliminated as intervenors within the process with ability to ask questions. The main reason is that Justice Hogue does not want a very political process to become political. It does not look good and there is now strong doubt whether anything can be achieved under these circumstances.

Speaking of foreign interference from another view, is Canada becoming a haven for what some countries consider terrorist groups, including Khalistani Separatists, Hamas supporters, anti-Semitic groups and others. It might be somewhat better if Canada cleaned up its own backyard.

Anti-Semitism is at a level unseen since the Second World War. Hamas supporters have been allowed to get away with terrible declarations that can only be a statement of hate against the Jewish people. Their actions have been those of less than good citizens and their actions vile. This cannot be condoned now or ever, it is time for the justice system to take action or this will get worse. It is another form of foreign interference, this time by a group that is a declared terrorist group within Canada.

The ArriveCAN app has also received more than its fair share of bad press that unfortunately has been insufficient to really understand the whole debacle. It needs a criminal inquiry and access to cabinet documents. The actual cost of the ArriveCAN was 60m CAD so far, as not all documents were made available to the Auditor General. This included emails within CBSA and the cabinet. An RCMP investigation could not complete the investigation due to cabinet secrecy being invoked. This is likely to continue as a festering sore on the Canadian political landscape.

The Chinese scientists being fired at the level 4 virology lab in Winnipeg has caused three years' worth of questions and arguments including the government suing the Speaker of the House of Commons. The report was finally released and after review there were no real national security issues but rather one of political embarrassment instead, something the current government did not want broadcast rather than any other reason.

The Minister of National Defence, Bill Blair, did something refreshing and explained to the Canadian people the actual condition of the Canadian Armed Forces which he concluded that in view of recruiting issues, the Forces were on a death spiral for numbers of employable troops (*Editor:* and sailors and air people). The issue is more than just recruiting, although the recruiting structure is a major part of the problem, it is also the retention of the mid-level leadership, the warrant officers and sergeants in the non-commissioned ranks and the captains and majors within the officer ranks needed to plan, prepare, lead and instruct on multiple levels of training in multiple courses in facilities no longer big enough to support a major training campaign on multiple disciplines. This is coupled with a major budget cut which has and will continue to have a major impact on the CAF. This requires thinking out of the box and as one who still has an interest, I am not sure the CAF has the will or permission from the political masters to achieve success. Attraction has never been a problem; there are many folks who are more than happy to join if it is in a reasonable time limit. The folks themselves are as good if not better than in past. The CAF used to train between 14 and 20k per year recognizing that someone just completing a basic engagement was now a better citizen. Insurance policies are expensive and not always seen as a true need...until it is needed and one hopes that one has a good plan. Canada has virtually no plan at the moment. Equipment reliability was also mentioned this week with only the Army achieving a "pass." The bottom line is this was not the military's doing, most procurement issues are a direct fault of our political masters of all stripes who use the military's budget as a piggy bank and we won't even get into the government miracle to get out of debt in years past when they raided the veterans pension fund to the tune of 45b CAD. This is a political mess and they should wear it; unfortunately, it is the sailors, soldiers and aviators who will bear the brunt especially if the Ukrainian war goes much larger.

The Air Force announced the stand down of 419 Squadron, which was the fighter transition training squadron which trained basic fighter tactics on the Hawk before training in 410 Operational Training Unit for transition to the CF188. This also ends an incredible era where Canada trained tens of thousands of British Commonwealth air crew and later NATO air crew. The F-35 is a very different aircraft. There are no twin seat versions for training. Most training is done on simulators and then directly into the actual aircraft itself. It is different and therefore requires a different approach. Mind you, one of the countries that does train pilots is Finland with a population of about 5m people but is getting 62 F-35 in their sized country versus only 88 F-35 for Canada with our vast size. It makes one wonder. This is not good.

United States

The US is sending four ships to build a port in Gaza to allow for the safe transfer of water, food and needed supplies across a prepared pier as opposed to a ferry service. The main builders will be Army engineers. The US administration is becoming less than happy with the

Israeli government's actions in Gaza and the West Bank and have called for at least a limited ceasefire.

The US is maintaining a high level of availability of aircraft carriers and escorts for operations around the world. There is increasing concern that they will not be able to maintain the pace for a prolonged time. There is discussion to extend the life of older carriers if necessary in order to potentially mitigate the issue and still meet the challenge. Older ships have their own issues as well including increased costs of simply operating and maintaining them much less than using them in a fight. The new British carriers have so far proven to be difficult to maintain and have had mechanical problems negating their ability to replace US carriers if necessary.

Moldova

As mentioned last week, Russia is conducting a major influence operation in Moldova. Transnistria has requested that Russia provide protection for the unrecognized area particularly in light of Moldova's increasing efforts to join the European Union. Russia has brought ballot boxes into Transnistria for this weekend's Russian elections scheduled from 15 to 17 March. This is in clear violation of Moldova's sovereignty, however at present there is little that can be done short of a conflict. The Transnistrian army is around 6k troops with a further 1.5k Russian "peacekeepers" also present. Moldova is ramping up defence spending with EU help and training, however, their army was beaten by the breakaway region's army. The Russian forces present are the remnants of the 14 Combined Arms Army which was stationed in Moldova prior to the fall of the Soviet Union. There is a large ammunition and equipment storage area located in the region. Moldova is seen as Moscow's next target.

Belarus

Although Belarus continues to act in a semi-belligerent manner, it is relatively weak despite its new nuclear weapons. Its security forces have been clear that they see no need to invade their neighbour Ukraine and have been careful to avoid any direct confrontation no matter how much Russian pressure is put on the country's leadership. The opposition insurgent group BYPOL has been active in recruiting and training personnel inside and outside the country to be able to overthrow the current government. Belarus partisans have been instrumental in conducting low-level sabotage against Russian targets within Belarus with some success. Active participation in the war will likely be dangerous for the current regime. One is likely to see a very careful display of tight rope walking by the regime and every effort to wiggle out of active combat at a minimum. One can also expect to see a more active insurgent action in the country as well.

Israel-Hamas War

The conflict continues as do negotiations for the Israeli hostages. Israel has insisted on all hostages being released; Hamas has realized that hostages are the only reason they still exist. The actions of Hamas on 7 October have put any hope of a new peace beyond the pale. From Israel's point of view the world is in the way. The closest equivalent would be if the allies had

gotten to Berlin in 1945 and were told not to go any further because of the citizens of Berlin. The allies did not stop nor should the Israelis in finishing Hamas in Gaza. The two-state solution is no longer viable as a result of Hamas actions on 7 October. The Palestinian population of Gaza overwhelmingly supported the 7 October attack, they are not a partner for peace. No country would expect to allow a new country with the specific goal of annihilation of their own country on their doorstep. It is unreasonable.

Russia-Ukraine War

The war continues. The real change is that Russia appears to have run out of offensive capability in the near term. The taking of Avdiikva was the most expensive in terms of manpower and equipment since the start of the war. The town was taken and Russians were able to continue their advance until the last two weeks when successes once again slowed to a stop. There is little doubt that some re-fitting and adjustments to military formations is necessary at this time in view of the tremendous effort. Is it a final stop for this spring? No, one expects the Russians to try to carry on trading manpower and equipment for ground.

Russia will try to provide fresh troops and equipment for the next stage. Russian equipment storage sites, recently captured on satellite imagery, show most are close to being empty right across the nation including some in the Far East. Mobilization and troops replacement are issues. How they do this will become more apparent after the so-called Russian election. Is mobilization possible? The answer is yes. The real question is whether Russia will be able to re-equip the army with appropriate material. Will the new troops be trained or will the ongoing "meat attacks" continue with devastating losses? The call up is easy, the training piece will be difficult and therefore same actions again are most likely.

Russia is continuing its missile and drone attacks mainly against civilian targets with more than 150 missiles and drones used since the first of March. This level of attack is not sustainable given Russian missile and drone production. Ukrainian air defence continues to be mainly successful but availability always is an issue. Can they get a resupply of key missiles? There is some doubt.

Ukraine has taken a different approach in most areas. Ukraine also has proven capable of air, drone and missile attacks far into Russia. Its targets seem to be military or industrial targets, especially oil and gas infrastructure, which has yielded good results against Russia's ability to export petroleum products. Russia recently put a ban on the export of gasoline until the end of summer. Since that time, Ukraine has continued to hit refineries and depot sites effectively. In the past two days, Ukraine launched its most powerful multi-pronged attack to date. The attack consisted of four main parts: an air attack on a ship being used for drones and command and control on the Kinburn Spit, a drone raid to multiple locations including up to nine electrical power transfer stations, two major oil facilities and a major cyber-attack against the Russian government on top of an attack on Taganrog aircraft plant responsible for repair and modernization of TU-95, A-50 and IL-76. Damage was confirmed but how extensive it was is unknown. In all cases there are strong indications that a majority of the attacking drones were successful. Best of all, free Russian forces supported by Ukraine crossed the Ukrainian-Russian border in Belgorod and Kursk oblasts, seizing several small towns. This is the third or

fourth time for such an incursion. This time, they came in larger numbers with three different groups including the Siberian Battalion, the Freedom of Russia Legion and the Russian Volunteer Corps, totaling as many as five battalion tactical groups. Still mere days before the Russian election, the Russian world will take notice. It may not cause Putin to lose the election but it will point out that Russia is vulnerable. The main point is that Ukraine has been successfully outthinking their Russian counterparts, showing imagination, adaptability and strategic thought coupled with boldness.

The Black Sea Fleet has been moored in harbour since the sinking of the patrol vessel *Sergei Kotov* by Magura V5 unmanned surface vessels on 5 March 2024. Seven crewmen were lost in the attack. This week saw the destruction of a merchant ship utilized as a drone launching vessel and a command and control facility. This latter point makes little sense as the facility was on a ship that was aground and unable to move. Not the place to be for a command staff of any type. The Black Sea Fleet Commander, Admiral Victor Sokolov, was replaced in February 2024 with Vice Admiral Sergei Pinchuk. VAdm Pinchuk had been the number 2 in the Black Sea. The disasters in the Black Sea also caused another casualty. Admiral Nikolai Yevmenov, Commander of the Russian Navy, was relieved and replaced by Admiral Alexander Moiseev who had been the Commander of the Northern Fleet. Admiral Moiseev is an interesting choice. He is a submariner with extensive seagoing experience including command of several submarines. If war were to break out, the submarine branch would be the most critical organization in the Russian armed forces. Is this an indication of the way ahead?

The war is likely to last for a longer period. This being said, Russian history has shown that once the population has had enough, it will quickly strike and eliminate the old leadership. Is it possible that we are building to this point; is there a military or political leader capable of removing Putin and his regime? This could be messy if it were to occur and no guarantee of a brighter outlook.

China

The Communist Chinese Party (CCP) likes to represent itself as the representative of Chinese people around the globe. This is incorrect, it represents itself and only considers its own survival by any means. China under the CCP has been and is an imperial power starting from the defeat of Nationalist forces in 1949, to its invasion of Tibet and East Turkistan in 1950 as well as quelling any uprisings in conquered areas including internal unrest. The actual numbers killed in China by the CCP is unknown but by their own admission it is at least fifty million. It currently has territorial disputes with virtually all its neighbours and has occupied parts of Bhutan and Nepal, as well there are recent attempts to gain advantage on the frontier with India. The East and South China Sea are both claimed by China and it has continued to increase pressure using air and naval forces despite losing in the International Court of Justice. Where it affects Canada, we have seen China conduct attacks against us including financial attacks in the form of boycotts against canola, beef and pork. It is also not opposed to kidnapping Canadian citizens in Canada by police agents and there are allegations that police stations were set up within Canada where "fugitives" are hunted down by illegal Chinese agents and removed from Canada. China through the United Front Works Program funds various Chinese organizations, certain types of schools and assists Chinese students. These

students are often used to close down criticism of mainland China in their institutions and many are coerced to demonstrate. It also is a way to ensure the "loyalty of Chinese students in foreign institutions by various means such as threatening relatives in China. China is not a friend. Chinese and Canadian troops fought one another in Korea, Canadian blood was spilt. Four Canadian citizens are on death row in China. Most are souls who merely visited relatives close to China and suddenly were whisked away by Chinese agents. China is not a friend, it is a hostile entity and we must remember this point. It will do anything to gain influence within not only our country but throughout the liberal democratic world.

Chinese Vice Admiral Yuan Huazhi announced that China was building its fourth aircraft carrier. He also stated because there are no design or technical difficulties, the next carrier would be nuclear powered. There were no other specifics mentioned nor a start or finish date. This would make China the second largest carrier power in the world as a result. It also means that China will have four very different variants of carriers with vastly different characteristics and capabilities making it difficult for them to act together...not impossible but difficult.

The Chinese economy continues its downward trend this week. The main Chinese stock markets are now down by 8t USD in value despite efforts to prop up the market. Money is fleeing China. The situation was not helped by the announcement that one of largest Chinese property developers called Vanke has asked for protection further rattling the markets. It is thought that the central government will assist however the precise nature of this assistance is not known at this point. Expect further instability to occur in the near term.

China has made the National Security Service responsible for certain aspects of the economy. They do this by encouraging people like bankers and financial analysts to write more positive reviews about certain aspects of the economy such as state owned industries. This is not likely to inspire confidence in investors but it seems to be the way that the President wants to go. Time will tell whether that is successful...likely not.

Security Affairs Committee Synopsis 22 March

O Canada

It is not clear the government understands the current situation. It seems to wander from one plan to another without looking at the second and third order of effects of their actions. There are no modern security, foreign or defence policies. What is written seems to have been left in the 20th century. *Strong, Secure, Engaged* is more of a laundry list rather than an actual policy. Our foreign policy is more informed by badly thought out decisions causing overall international credibility to suffer. As one article put it, "Canada seems like an example of how not to do things."

In defence terms, the military of any nation does two basic tasks: deterrence and lethality if needed. In Canada's case, we are not capable of operating alone, we must operate in concert with allies, most notably our NATO and NORAD allies. Despite the growing possibility of war, the government has chosen not to create preparation for a potential conflict such as speeding the delivery of new fighters or ships, creating war stocks of key material including

uniforms, medical supplies, disaster relief material, ammunition and weapons as replacements of ones we donated. At present, Russia has adopted a war economy and the West has not, despite the overall deteriorating situation. Military preparation can be seen as a way of deterring a hostile power from doing something everyone will regret. Pretending things are okay is not a way to provide that deterrent effect. Preparation, planning and execution of that plan will be expensive but not nearly as expensive as fighting a war. European nations such as Denmark are enacting conscription again which will also include women in conscription for the first time. Canada doesn't need to go that far, but fixing a very broken recruiting system would be an excellent first start, followed by a greatly modified procurement system.

Canada is likely to hear the announcement of a new Chief of Defence Staff in the very near future. Based on the current government's bent, it is likely to be one of three female LGen with the most likely candidate being Army LGen Jennie Carignan, who has extensive operational experience including command of 5 Regiment Genie du Canada in Valcartier, PQ, command of the engineer unit in Afghanistan and overall command of multi-national training forces in Iraq. Other candidates are LGen Francis Allen, Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, and LGen Lise Bourgon, Chief of Military Personnel. All are good candidates for the CDS position at a very difficult time for the CAF and internationally. The bottom line is that whoever gets the position will need almost super-human skills to prepare a very demoralized military and at the same time prepare for a potential international conflict not seen since the Second World War. The *Esprit de Corps* magazine has more information on this topic of possible candidates.

Canada passed a motion sponsored by the NDP which although with many modifications called for Canada to "actively pursue" establishment of a Palestinian state as part of a negotiated two-state solution which is part of the current government's policy. Three Liberal members voted with the Conservatives against the motion. The original motion put forward was a complete departure from Canada's previous position. The amendments which allowed its passage were only provided five minutes before the end of the debate. There was considerable concern by many members that procedures were not followed and that the quick vote without reviewing and discussing the amendments was wrong. It has caused a rift within the Liberal Party. Hamas' horrific actions of 7 October 2024 were ignored, and a victory has been given to Hamas. The two-state solution is no longer viable. This motion was not a good idea. In real terms, this is a poorly conceived idea. The whole two-state solution is no longer viable as Israel cannot permit the existence of an organization/state that has as a major part of its founding documents the eradication of the Jewish people. Its passage was greeted as a victory for Hamas and was celebrated by Hamas, a group that is designated as a terrorist organization. This should be a major concern for all Canadians.

Australia

News and views from down under from our correspondent there. The links will show first followed by our correspondent's comments. Any comments from me are after those comments.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/security-cooperation-steps-up-with-japanese-f-35-access-to-australia/>

Time cures relationships.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/china-shows-how-western-governments-should-stockpile-minerals/>

What is Ottawa doing? Stockpiling or snoozing?

Note: Canada currently has laws and regulations that potentially slow development of mines, etc., which preclude immediate stock piling. It would also mean that Canada impose restrictions on private commercial operations over and above normal legal requirements. It is a slippery slope and possibly a step too many in the present atmosphere. Canada has not woken up as yet to the actual world situation.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/why-asean-australia-summits-matter/>

The last paragraph in this article says it all. Our politicians and civil servants should be taking note.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/former-defence-minister-and-ambassador-to-the-us-if-trump-is-elected-will-australia-need-a-plan-b/>

There is increasing concern about AUKUS. Will the US remain committed? Is there an alternative?

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/one-year-along-australias-optimal-pathway-to-nuclear-powered-submarines/>

This is a generally positive article on the status of AUKUS.

<https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/transcripts/2024-03-13/television-interview-abc-afternoon-briefing>

This is a recent interview on the nuclear submarine production plan. It is interesting to see the Minister disclose that USS *Annapolis* is visiting Garden Island. It has received little to no notice here, and that is as it should be.

<https://eastasiaforum.org/2024/03/15/china-loses-strategic-waters-in-the-south-china-sea/>

Attached is an interesting article on the success or lack of success on the part of the Peoples' Republic of China in the South China Sea.

<https://www.australiandefence.com.au/news/news/hmas-choules-fitted-with-ceafar-radar>

The additional radar system is visible in the above document. It would seem HMAS *Choules* has an additional role.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/australia-should-grow-its-own-fuel/>

The availability of oil based fuels is a real strategic concern in Australia.

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/punishing-the-dragon-its-not-about-tomahawk-missiles-from-ssns/>

More thoughts on how the RAN can employ the SSNs when they arrive. There are practical limitations.

<https://breakingdefense.com/2024/03/new-zealand-in-aukus-no-guarantee-but-discussions-active-defence-minister/>

Enclosed are some thoughts from NZ on its position with Australia and AUKUS. I think joining AUKUS as a full participant is unlikely. NZ and other states may gain a secondary status

United States

The US House of Representatives continue to delay a major aid bill which would provide substantial resources to Ukraine, Taiwan and Israel. The main purpose seems to be to put US internal politics ahead international requirements no matter what the potential hazards might be. It is disturbing.

Moldova

Russia is continuing its extensive program of disinformation as well as threats in Moldova. Last week the Transnistrian break away area, formally asked Russia to recognize this area as a separate country. A total of six ballot boxes for the Russian election were also set up and locals were asked to participate and have their votes for the Russian Presidency counted. Allegedly, most citizens of the breakaway area participated although there were incidents of coercion to make people vote. As one could probably guess, President Putin was the candidate of choice. It should be noted that the Government of Moldova expelled a Russian diplomat based on his actions in acquiring and setting up these ballot boxes. There will be further fallout from this incident according to Al Jazeera Live on 19 March 2024.

This week saw the creation of a false flag event in Transnistria. The video provided showed a small drone hit an MI-8 helicopter which burst into flames and was subsequently totally destroyed. The drone was reported to come from Ukraine. The truth is somewhat less than an honest portrayal of the event. The MI-8 was a derelict and had been in place on a largely abandoned military airfield just outside Tiraspol, the erstwhile capital of the breakaway region. Satellite imagery show the helicopter has been sitting there since at least 2003. The video itself captured the entire event clearly...in fact too clearly. Why would anyone have a video set up covering a derelict helicopter at that particular time? The helicopter itself was missing windows from the flight deck area and side panels were not in place as well. Strangely the helicopter caught fire spilling fuel on the ground and was totally consumed. Most commentators have suggested this was a false flag event and may be a warning of future incidents to reinforce the request for Russian protection.

President Maia Sandu announced a referendum on EU membership will take place in October 2024, according to a Bloomberg article by Lina Grau on 18 March 2024. Moldova's 2.6m people have been slowly working towards EU membership. President Sandu suggested that this is the only way to stop further internal conflict.

Moldova is receiving Western support for security and defence issues. Although Transnistria has a larger military capability at present, it will not remain that way for much longer. Time will tell.

Belarus

Ukrainian sources and other media from the Baltic states are stating that a large portion of the Belarus military are near the Polish border. Recently, Belarus rhetoric has ramped up the talk of war suggesting that NATO is going to attack. NATO is conducting defensive exercises, so there is some latitude to some aspects of the Belarus actions. NATO, however, is a defensive alliance and any invocation of article 5 depends on NATO being attacked, therefore invoking the defence by all countries within the alliance. As mentioned in my previous notes, Belarus has walked a very sharp edge in order to balance the need to show support for Russia and at the same time not to antagonize its neighbours nor go to war. Words are fine but violent action is unlikely in at least the near term.

The EU is about to launch an entirely new set of sanctions against Belarus and Russia, causing further difficulties for the economies of both these countries. Sanctions may be slow and sometimes they can be worked around but actions are being taken to ensure these loop holes are closed in the long term.

Israel-Hamas

Israel is now participating in talks to negotiate a ceasefire. At the same time, Israel has refused to back down from an attack on Rafah despite overwhelming pressure from the international community. Approximately 1.4m people are located in Gaza's last stronghold and there are concerns that civilian casualties will be heavy. Still Israel did not start this, Hamas did on 7 October 2023. Hamas conducted the worst attack on the Jewish people since the holocaust. What country in the world would permit this to continue? Hamas can have no part in the future of the Palestinian people. It should also be clear that UNRWA can have no further part in the Middle East. It is not trusted by Israel and its actions in allowing Hamas to create an underground fortress under their own eyes proves they have no credibility... it must be replaced as soon as possible. If Hamas survives it means to prolongation of conflict, they cannot remain in existence.

Russia-Ukraine War

The war continues with Russia having some success despite its lack of tactics and finesse in operations. Casualties continue to be disproportionate for the minor gains they make, often 5 to 7 to every Ukrainian casualty. This past period, say from mid-February onwards, Russia has employed two capable assets to gain the initiative, its preponderance of artillery and ammunition, and their greatly larger air force. This has led to success on the battlefield to a degree. Within the last week, Russian efforts appear to be weakening despite the firepower provided by Russia's air and artillery. Logistics has always been a Russian problem. Based on the EU efforts, larger amounts of ammunition is going to be available to Ukraine soon, but Ukraine will take a beating until this comes available at the front.

The biggest news was there was a 'surprise' result from the Russian Presidential election; Vladimir Putin won with 87.8 % of the votes. His other three rivals all got less than 5% each. Video of voting clerks stuffing ballot boxes after closing were filmed and are available on

YouTube. The election process was something to behold with armed soldiers entering individual voting booths to check whether everything was 'OK' - no intimidation was involved...sort of. The internet was filled with individual actions of people destroying individual ballot boxes by various inventive means, and the opposition "Noon for Putin" demonstration had huge line ups showing up at noon hour on 17 March including at Russian embassies around the world. It was depiction of Russian democracy in action, particularly the police arrests. There is opposition in Russia. The vote percentages are more due to coercion and manipulation than real. Russia has a long history of sudden violent removal of various leaders. Putin is not immune to this disease either - his actions are having a major impact on most Russians as sanctions continue their slow but inevitable consequence. The real issue is whether Putin will take unthinkable action in his moment of final desperation. Time will tell.

There was an interesting article in a magazine called *Simply Flying* dated 13 March 2024 by Vincenzo Claudio Piscopo covering Russia's fighter fleets. It is worth a look; the numbers appear to be based on Russia's actual total holdings rather than operational aircraft available for duty during this conflict.

Sukhoi

Su-24 fighter bomber 3 generation 273 This number is probably high due to poor maintenance etc.

Su-34 fighter bomber 4 generation 127. This aircraft has had a high casualty rate recently.

Su-27 fighter 3 generation 101

Su-30 fighter 4 generation 110

Su-35 fighter 4+ generation 110. Several lost recently to Ukrainian missile defences.

Su-57 fighter 5 generation 10. Suggestions that there could be several more. It is still very much in development. There are orders for 76. Only one known sortie to fire a long range missile and it required an escort.

MiG

MiG-29 fighter 3 generation 85. Good solid fighter but long in the tooth. It is used by both sides of the conflict.

MiG-31 fighter 4+ generation 90. Fires long range missiles outside

MiG-35 fighter 4+ generation 6. Still in development. Pre-Production models only.

Fighter-Bombers

Su-25 ground attack 3 generation 163. Actual operational number is thought to be near 130 due to heavy losses. It is used by both sides.

Tu-22M Bomber 3 generation 67 Modernized. Known in Soviet and later Russian terminology as a 'vodka hauler.' Initial models were prone to crash.

Tu-95 Bomber 2

Tu-160 Bomber 4 generation 17. Known as the White Swan. It is in limited production based on airframes built to basic stage but not finished. Two 'new' Swans have been delivered.

Tuesday night, early Wednesday, Engels air force base was attacked by multiple drones. As many as four impacted the base although there was heavy anti-aircraft fire used in defence. The base has been attacked before and is a key base for bomber aircraft. There are no details as yet. In the past satellite imagery was available within a couple days of an attack.

Ukraine is continuing its rather masterful drone campaign against strategic targets, currently aimed at oil and gas refineries and storage sites but including specialized factories producing critical electronics and major military facilities such as Engels. Ukraine appears to be playing a long game in comparison to Russia. Russia is not able to fix certain infrastructure as they have used Western technology; there will be an accumulative effect. Ukraine's campaign will take its toll in the long term, the question is when does the second and third order of effects of this campaign really take hold? Russia announced this week that Pantsir air defence systems will be placed shortly around all refineries. It should be noted that the Pantsir is most notable for being somewhat ineffective. European sources have stated that Russian refinery production has dropped by almost 1m tons of product per day, although another article suggested that it was down by only 600 barrels per day. Given that most refineries have been hit in critical areas, the former figure is likely closer to the truth.

China

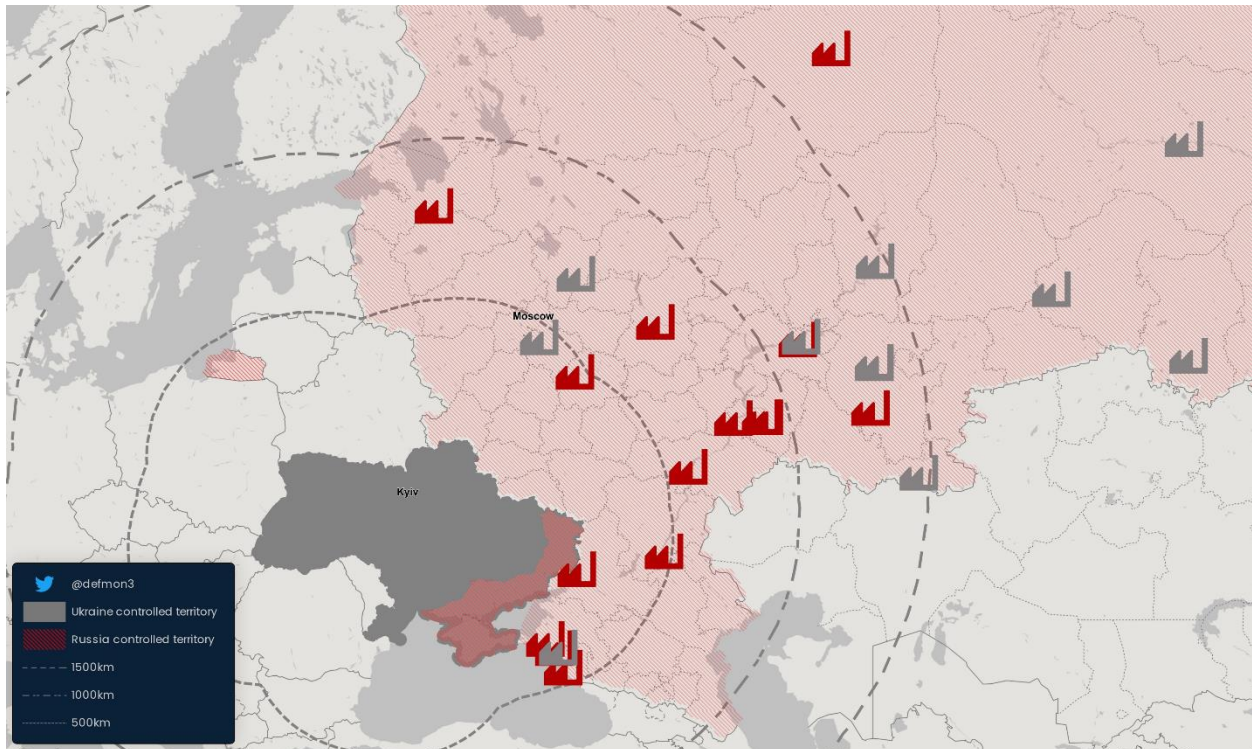
The annual parliament set a growth target of 5% for this year. It is highly unlikely for China to achieve this goal. Nearly a third of China's GDP is based on the role of the property development sector which continues to have almost weekly disasters. Most of the property development has provided the bulk of local government funding...now it isn't and new models of financing will be required. Foreign industry has been leaving China for allegedly greener pastures mostly in South East Asia such as Vietnam and Thailand. The Chinese regime has chosen to use state-owned industries as the basis for further growth and development even though it has been the private sector that has produced the most jobs and growth. China's "new plan" is to develop new technologies and become more self-sufficient in the creation of AI, chip technology, electric vehicles, etc. This being said, state-owned enterprises are more known for their inefficiency and corruption and are not likely to attract foreign investment or even basic level of confidence. Increasing sanctions and concerns of both the US and the EU are also causing a downturn in the Chinese economy, at least in the near to medium term. Xi's actions and decisions will prevent success.

China continues to harass both Taiwan and the Philippines in the South China Sea. One media outlet stated that 15 aircraft and ten ships were detected near Taiwan on 20 March. The Philippine Navy and Coast Guard are being harassed constantly by their Chinese counterparts in waters acknowledged as Philippine territorial waters. China has continued to state that their former nine dash line (now ten dash line) constitutes their territorial waters no matter what the courts state, thus creating a de facto condition of ownership over these waters from their point of view. China protested the announcement by the US and the Philippines over the renewal and reaffirmation of the defence pact between those two countries. It should be increasingly clear that the US will support smaller countries in their challenges with China.

Hong Kong has passed article 23 Self-National Security Ordinance which tightens the regulations regarding Beijing's control over the former British colony. It was passed quickly with little fanfare. It covers five areas: treason, insurrection, sabotage, theft of state secrets, and espionage. It also increases penalties for any of these charges. It is considered a way to prevent Western infiltration. The speed of passage was to prevent the international community from causing difficulties. Commentators in Europe suggested that this was the end of Hong Kong as an international city. The actions in Hong Kong is probably an excellent example of how authoritarian regime eliminates democracy and freedom. It is not likely to improve China's ability to create a positive aspect for Taiwan unification. Many foreign companies are leaving as the new laws are not conducive to future relations with the West. Foreign investment in China is now at a thirty-year low. China is not a good investment.

Targeting

Def Mon @DefMon3 17 Mar posted: I made a map of Russian refineries. Those marked red has had a "drone incident" or fire this year.

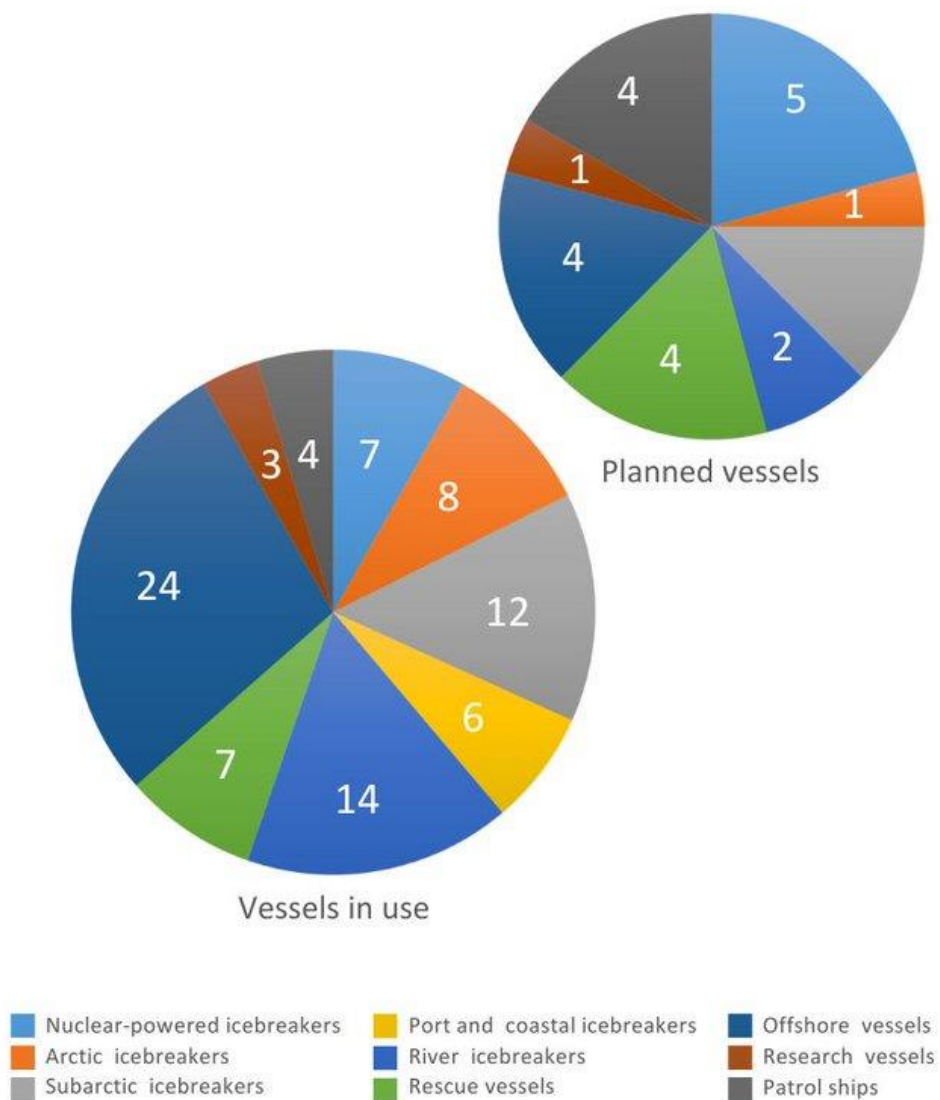


Icebreaking Power!

Aker Arctic @AkerArctic 14 Mar posted: How many #icebreaking vessels* does Russia have? We counted and grouped them! Guess what? It's not 40! Read more in our #ArcticPassion News: <https://akerarctic.fi/en/arctic-passion/world-icebreakers-overview/> (* excluding oil tankers, cargo ships, LNG carriers and the like, obviously)

Editor: I don't know how Canada compares, but the Russian numbers are indicative of that state's intentions in the North.

RUSSIAN ICEBREAKING FLEET



Know your operating and security environment

Rhodes Cartography @RhodesMaps 18 Mar posted: Cables and Pipelines. Updated this one to include both gas and oil pipelines, thanks to data from @GlobalEnergyMon and @TeleGeography

