

Summary Points

Today the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) continues to be a world leading, agile, professional military force. The CAF is busy, and it will continue to maintain a high operational tempo around the world. Over the past decade, the CAF has achieved a level of professional battle hardened readiness, in each of the army, navy, and air force, that has not been seen since World War II. It is essential that the CAF train regularly, and sustain that new level of capability and readiness, and pass on this high level of skill to the next generation.

The CAF has a general capability overall, but within each of the three environments there is an established niche, plug-and-play military. Within the niche capabilities that Canada focuses on, there are areas where Canada can always be the “go to” country on the international coalition team, including Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) ; Antisubmarine Warfare (ASW); Special Operations; Coalition Training and Advanced Military Training; and Disaster Relief. Canadian industry is aligned to provide the necessary capabilities in each area listed.

Moving forward, the overall challenge for Canada from a threat perspective is the growing complexity of the threat environment and the resulting future multi-dimensional operations. Canada must participate in space, cyber, and unmanned systems. In participating in these areas, Canada should again target the niche areas where we can truly excel as part of a coalition team within the budgets we provide to defence and security.

In addition, Canada must view the impact of climate change as a threat. Climate change will be a source of multi-dimensional conflict. It will stimulate conflict over resources, it will stimulate the displacement of large numbers of people, and it will open up the Arctic as a new area of security operations.

As a result of these challenges, there will most likely be a shift towards a multi-spectrum defence strategy, covering the three environments (air, land, sea) plus the inclusion of space and cyber. As a result, the scope of CAN-USA collaborations will likely have to expand beyond air defence and now start to include land, maritime, cyber, and space defence for North America.

In making these changes the United States has identified a number of areas where Canada has the opportunity to take the lead in capability development in North America. Examples such as Arctic Operations and Simulation and Training were identified by the Pentagon as areas where Canada could logically take a leadership role in the relationship between the two nations (see Jenkins report).

The opportunity to lead in simulation and training is especially important as Canada has an established tradition of training coalition forces, with significant opportunities to continue that success with international training capability for the Next Generation Fighter or the establishment of international Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) training centers in Canada.

A mission-ready force is the ultimate deterrent. A mission-ready coalition force that is demonstrably coordinated, planned, and rehearsed is an even stronger deterrent. Therefore, the CAF should increase the focus on training their forces, and especially increase the focus on combined training and collective

training in a coalition context, to ensure a rehearsed mission ready force as the ultimate backstop to diplomacy. In doing so, the CAF will sustain the posture of being “Armed, Prepared, but Friendly and Supportive”, a reflection of Canada’s values.

In structuring the modern mission ready force, the CAF has a tremendous opportunity to “green” the defence force. The “green” CAF has the opportunity to leverage simulation based training and mission rehearsal for combined and collective operations. Simulation based training centers reduce the need to use the live operational vehicles to train, which in turn reduces cost and also reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Simulation based training centers also decrease the number of platforms required during acquisition. For example, Next Generation Fighter could introduce simulation based Virtual Training Units (VTU) decreasing the number of fighter aircraft required.

At the most basic force structure level, the CAF will need to embrace changing demographics, in the areas of age and diversity of all types, to create a more balanced workforce structure, and a culture of tolerance. Doing so will be a domestic reality, but will also prove helpful when leveraging the CAF into more international development roles as part of conflict prevention.

Defence procurement provides a unique opportunity for the CAF to have a role in Canada’s Innovation Agenda. CAF procurements targeted at Canadian industry can have one of the largest impacts on innovation across Canada in all domains, including Information Technology and Communications (ICT), Automotive, Aerospace, Cyber Security, Simulation and Training (S&T), Textiles, Space, Ship Building, among others. Key upcoming procurements must leverage these capabilities. The Naval Ship Procurement Strategy must engage Canadian industry. The Multi Mission Aircraft that will replace the CP140 should be an all Canadian aircraft, as the full capability exists in the country to do so.

To leverage these Canadian industrial capabilities, strategic procurement is required. A revision of Defence Policy, must include the need for a Defence Industrial Policy. The government must resolve which Key Industrial Capabilities (KICs) are needed in Canada to ensure effective sovereign operation of the CAF and to ensure the desired Innovation Agenda outcomes through the large defence spend. In implementing the new policy the CAF must first decide on the defence needs before determining what the required resources are and then determine what industrial base is required to deliver.