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LOOKOUT

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MORALE & WELFARE NEWS | CFB ESQUIMALT, VICTORIA, B.C.

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ICEDIVEX23



Participants cut a hole in the ice at Sheridan Lake before setting up their shelters at ICEDIVEX23 a five-day training exercise led by Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific). An international team of 39 divers arrived at the lake to challenge their extreme cold-weather diving skills.

READ THE FULL STORY ON PAGE 3

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Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

Two recently-retired Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) members are the latest recipients of a Command Commendation by General (Gen) Wayne Eyre, Chief of Defence Staff.

Gen. Eyre was on-hand at Maritime Forces Pacific (MARPAQ) HQ on March 15 to personally recognize and thank Lieutenant-Commander (ret'd) Chris Maier, formerly of Naval Fleet School Pacific, and Chief Petty Officer First Class (CPO1) (ret'd) Mark Anthony Chambers, a former Coxswain of HMCS *Calgary*.

"You are both being recognized today for the importance of what you have accomplished here and your time-consuming work," Gen. Eyre said after presenting the awards.

The Chief of Defence Staff Commendation recognizes activities and accomplishments beyond the demands of regular duty. It includes a signed certificate or scroll and a gold bar insignia bearing three maple leaves to be worn by serving members in their uniform.

RETIREES HONORED WITH COMMAND COMMENDATION



Chief Petty Officer First Class Gilles Grégoire, Canadian Armed Forces Chief Warrant Officer, and General Wayne Eyre, Chief of Defence Staff, present a Command Commendation Award to Chief Petty Officer First Class (ret'd) Mark Anthony Chambers at MARPAQ Headquarters, March 15.

MARK ANTHONY CHAMBERS

Chambers retired in May 2022 after serving 33 years in the RCN.

Gen. Eyre credits Chambers for his 'strategic outlook and exemplary efforts' that directly contributed to *Calgary's* record-breaking drug seizures during their counter-terrorism, maritime security and global security operations.

"A remarkable leader, CPO1 Chambers enhanced the cohesion of the crew during the unique challenges presented throughout the deployment and fostered a culture that furthered *Calgary's* global strategic impact," Gen. Eyre said.

Chambers was *Calgary's* Coxswain from February to August 2021, while the Halifax-class frigate was deployed to the Indo-Pacific region. During the drug-seizing efforts in Operation *Artemis*, the

ship halted the flow of more than thirty three thousand kilograms of illicit narcotics worth approximately CAD\$130 million. In a bust on Apr. 23, 2021, *Calgary* seized 1,286 kilograms of heroin, ranked as the largest heroin bust in combined maritime forces history.

Chambers noted the length of the deployment at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of shore leave weighed heavily on his crew, and the successful seizures boosted the crew's morale.

"It's nice to be recognized, but the crew did a lot of the hard work, so this award is really a reflection of their efforts," said Chambers.

Chambers may have retired from the RCN but hasn't stopped working. These days, he is working as a manager with Mechanical Insulation.



Chief Petty Officer First Class Gilles Grégoire, Canadian Armed Forces Chief Warrant Officer, and General Wayne Eyre, Chief of Defence Staff, present a Command Commendation Award to Lieutenant-Commander (ret'd) Chris Maier at MARPAQ Headquarters, March 15. Photos: Peter Mallett/Lookout

CHRISTOPHER MAIER

Maier bid farewell to students and staff at the Fleet School in September 2022 after 25 years of service.

He volunteered as Commodore of the Canadian Forces Sailing Association (CFSA) Esquimalt from 2017 to 2022. Gen. Eyre said Maier enabled the club to overcome 'severe challenges'.

"LCdr Maier's leadership saved a sailing club benefiting the morale and welfare of the Canadian Armed Forces, Defence Team Members and the surrounding community," Gen. Eyre said.

Maier is credited with leading the successful relocation of the CFSA floats from Monroe Head to its new location at Lang Cove in Esquimalt Harbour, helping the club preserve its 75-year legacy as a fundamental sail-training resource.

In accepting the award, Maier told the Lookout being honoured with such an award was incredible.

"On the one hand, I feel humbled people thought I deserved this, but I also realize it was an entire team of dedicated volunteers who pulled this off, and they deserve as much credit as I do," Maier said. "It was no easy task for our volunteers and steering committee, who put in a ton of hours working to make this happen."

The club completed their 11th-hour move to Lang Cove near the Naden main gates in March 2022. The club got confirmation of their new location in late December 2021, which allowed approximately 90 days to organize the move.

Since his retirement, Maier has continued his volunteerism with the CFSA and remains Project Manager as the club works to finalize its move to Lang Cove. While not volunteering, he is kept busy studying for a Ph.D. in Philosophy at the University of Victoria.

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General Wayne Eyre, Chief of the Defense Staff, visits Canadian Forces Esquimalt as part of the Visit Ashore Program in Victoria on Mar. 15.

Photo: Sailor First Class Kendric C.W. Grasby

FDU leads ‘Ice-cold’ international diving ‘ex’

THE INTERNATIONAL DIVING TEAM CONSISTED OF THE FOLLOWING:

- 15 Clearance Divers of FDU(P);
- 12 divers of the United States Navy Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One;
- 5 from the Royal New Zealand Navy;
- 2 observers from the Royal Netherlands Navy; and
- 4 from the Royal Navy.

The main focus for divers from visitor nations were learning what it takes to conduct ice diving and if it’s something they can facilitate back home. The divers were housed at Sheridan Lake Resort for their stay.

GEAR:

- Cold-weather clothing and diving gear;
- Snow sleds;
- Trailers;
- Augers;
- Chain saws;
- Snow blowers;
- First aid kits; and
- An ice-lifting device.

The divers relied on Ultra-Light Weight Surface Supplied Dive System (ULWSSDS). The ULWSSDS includes a 90-meter-long tether which is their lifeline to the surface and is connected to SCUBA tanks and communications equipment.



An FDU(P) team member is monitored after taking a plunge below the surface of Sheridan Lake. Photo: FDU(P)



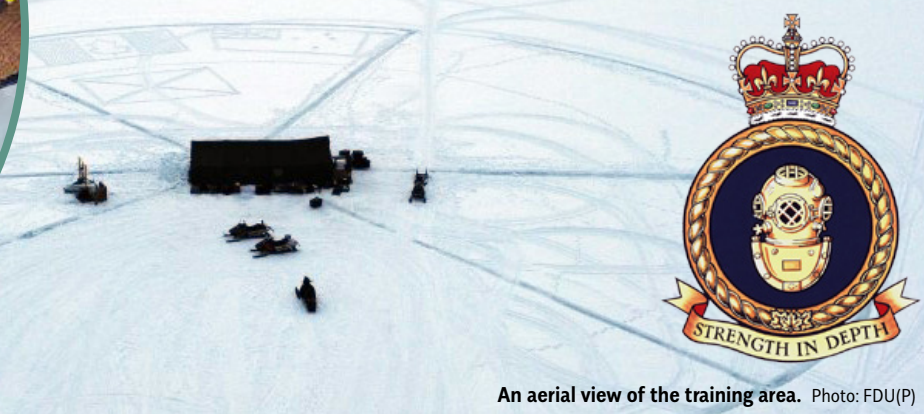
Two members of the ICEDIVEX23 team return to the surface of Sheridan Lake after a dive. Photo: Patrick Davies, 100 Mile Free Press

Peter Mallett Staff Writer

Using snowmobiles and military toboggans, they towed their equipment onto an ice-covered lake in B.C.’s southern interior. After carving out holes in the ice, the divers slipped below the surface. The team of 39 divers from Canada and four other nations arrived at Lake Sheridan on March 6 to challenge their extreme cold-weather diving skills. The training was part of ICEDIVEX 23, a five-day training exercise led by the Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific) (FDU(P)). Lieutenant (Navy) Demetris Mousoulitis, Operations Officer of FDU(P) and the exercise’s team leader, said the exercise helped maintain operational diving expertise in extreme cold weather and under-ice environments. “Adapting to the unforgiving conditions was the most challenging aspect of the exercise,” Lt(N) Mousoulitis said. The diving exercise was conducted below a 40-cm-deep layer of ice that covered Lake Sheridan, located approximately 40 km southeast of 100 Mile House. The divers conducted their training about 11 meters below the surface. The divers deployed in teams of two, with a third ‘Standby Diver’ remaining on the surface, ready to respond in an emergency.

THE TEAM CONDUCTED THREE TASKS:

1. Task one was to search, locate and recover a dead body, represented by an OSCAR Dummy, typically used for training by water-rescue personnel;
 2. Task two was to search, find, identify and retrieve a fictitious air-dropped explosive device;
 3. Task three involved a puzzle box suspended under the surface of the ice that divers had to try and solve while maintaining buoyancy within their water column.
- To enhance the team member’s safety, the divers also practiced a rescue procedure drill involving the Standby Diver and a ‘Lost Diver’. The Lost Diver anchored themselves to the underside of the ice while the Standby Diver located and rescued them.
- Lt(N) Mousoulitis said the diving conditions were excellent, despite the chilly water temperatures that hovered just above the freezing point.
- “Overall, ICEDIVEX23 was a success,” Lt(N) Mousoulitis said, adding their success was enhanced by the 4th Ranger Patrol Group’s positive attitude and eagerness to help.
- Outside ice diving, the FDU(P) and the United States Navy divers visited Peter Skene Ogden Secondary School in 100 Mile House for an outreach mission. They set up multiple displays in the main foyer. They spoke about Royal Canadian Navy programs such as the Raven Indigenous Youth Employment Program, Canadian Students at Sea program, RCN’s Naval Experience Program, and the Canadian Leaders at Sea program. The divers also helped serve lunches and played sports against the students.



An aerial view of the training area. Photo: FDU(P)



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Defence Team Champion for Visible Minorities Message:

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Commodore Jacques Olivier

**Defence Team Champion for Visible Minorities
Director General Professional Conduct and
Development, Chief Professional Conduct and
Culture**

*This special message was released in recognition of
the International Day for the Elimination of Racial
Discrimination last week.*

On this International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, we remember the 69 victims who were shot and killed by police for peacefully protesting apartheid 'pass laws' in Sharpeville, South Africa, in 1960. This is a day to stand in solidarity with those who have struggled and those who continue to struggle against racism and racial discrimination.

As the Defence Team Champion for Visible Minorities and a member of the Chief Professional Conduct and Culture Team, I am deeply honoured to connect with you on this important occasion. It saddens me that racial discrimination is an ongoing problem in our world, and that its harmful effects continue to have a profound impact on individuals, communities, and societies around the globe.

This day is an opportunity to reflect on the fact that while progress has been made, racialized people in Canada continue to face discrimination every day. It's also a day to reaffirm our goal to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination in our workplace. All human beings are born equal in dignity and rights, and any act or omission motivated by racism is unacceptable, objectively wrong, and morally reprehensible.

The Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) are institutions that safeguard the security of Canadians of all backgrounds. To best serve the country we defend, our Defence Team needs to better reflect the Canadians who depend on us every day. Therefore, we must prioritize greater representation,

diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organization.

Each of us has a responsibility to contribute to the evolution of our culture. We must challenge ourselves to improve our racial literacy, acknowledge our past mistakes, and make amends to be anti-racist moving forward, meaning we must actively affect change. It is imperative that we educate ourselves on the challenges faced by our racialized colleagues, listen to their experiences, and support them in every possible way.

I am proud to say there are resources and organizations available to Defence Team members to help eliminate racial discrimination. The Defence Visible Minority Advisory Group (accessible only on the National Defence network) strives to contribute to employment equity objectives and enhance diversity within DND/CAF. Within the Chief Professional Conduct and Culture, the Director Anti-Racism Implementation (DARI) is focused on examining racism and discrimination within the Defence Team and identifying and supporting measures to increase the representation and advancement of racialized Defence Team members. DARI recently launched the Anti-Racism Resource Hub, a website with guides, tip sheets, and resources to help Defence Team members on their journey to accelerate systemic change within the Department.

Let us ensure that all new and current members of the organization feel they belong and can contribute meaningfully to operational success. It is important to promote safe and open dialogue regarding racial discrimination throughout all levels of the Defence Team to prevent its occurrence. Additionally, it is important to advocate for supporting those who stand up against racism and address their concerns. Ultimately, it is crucial to oppose discrimination in all forms and make the DND/CAF a safe, inclusive environment for all members, free from harassment or violence.

We must do everything in our power to ensure every human being is treated with dignity and respect.



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Join Us for the Next **MENTORSHIP PROGRAM SESSIONS**

Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) sailors – Regular and Reserve Force – at all ranks and civilian employees at all levels are invited to the next session of the RCN's Mentorship Program.

→ **SESSION #7**

Part A for the first of a 2-part session on Physiological Safety, Moral Injuries and Trauma

SESSION 7 INFORMATION:

Date: Wednesday, April 12th

Time: 0900 to 1030 PST

Location: Microsoft Teams*

→ **SESSION #8**

Part B for the Second of a 2-part session on Physiological Safety, Moral Injuries and Trauma

SESSION 8 INFORMATION:

Date: Wednesday, May 10th

Time: 0900 to 1030 PST

Location: Microsoft Teams*

→ **SESSION #9**

Junior Officers Q&A Leadership Session with the Chiefs

SESSION 9 INFORMATION:

Date: Wednesday, June 14th

Time: 0900 to 1030 PST

Location: Microsoft Teams*

→ **SESSION #10**

Community, Sports and building Relationships through Mentorship

SESSION 10 INFORMATION:

Date: Wednesday, July 12th

Time: 0900 to 1030 PST

Location: Microsoft Teams*

*Visit the Mentorship Intranet page for links.

These programs are open to all Canadian Armed Forces personnel and all Department of National Defence civilian employees and if you can't make it, the recordings can be found on the SharePoint page.

These sessions will be available to all on Microsoft Teams and everyone is encouraged to actively participate, share their insights and ask questions. For more information, visit the Mentorship Program's intranet page.

Esquimalt MFRC launches a new housing program

"Our intention is to house as many military members and their families as possible; our team is confident we can make positive impact during this housing crisis."

~Lisa Church, Community Engagement/
Housing Manager, Esquimalt MFRC

The Community Engagement Team is happy to announce the **Esquimalt MFRC Housing Support Services Program**. Due to the current housing shortage on Vancouver Island reaching a crisis point, our team is eager to begin sourcing housing for military members and their families.

WHAT IS THE INTENTION OF THE NEW PROGRAM?

To locate affordable housing options for Military Members and their families.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

Stay tuned for updates and announcements on the EMFRC social media platforms. Landlords interested in renting to a military member can email housingsupport@emfrc.com. The Community Engagement Team will forward an intake form to any interested landlords, who will then forward the completed intake form to the housing support email (above). The data is compiled, and a connection is made with a suitable military/family member.

Military/family members looking for housing options will also complete an intake form and send it to housingsupport@emfrc.com. The intake forms are specifically designed to help make that ideal connection!

WHAT TYPE OF HOUSING OPTIONS WILL BE TARGETED?

We are looking for many housing options as everyone's needs are different.

We hope to secure houses, condos, apartments, suites, townhouses and homestays.

WHAT IS A HOMESTAY?

A homestay is a family home offering up a bedroom for rent. This could be beneficial as a stepping stone until more private housing can be secured.

The Landlord will decide what they offer, such as:

- Furnished/not furnished;
- Meals/no meals;
- Laundry facilities;
- Parking, to name a few.

The intake form will capture all the required information (what's included) to help the military member decide if this is a good fit.

The Housing Support program is scheduled to launch this week. If you have questions or know of accommodations in our community that fit our criteria, please connect with the Community Engagement Team.

We will have a new phone number dedicated to housing calls in the coming weeks. In the interim, please direct calls to (250) 480-9304 or direct folks to our housing support email housingsupport@emfrc.com.

DO YOU HAVE A SPACE TO RENT?

*Support the Canadian Armed Forces and consider a military / family member!
We are looking for houses, condos, apartments, suites, townhouses and homestays!*

Please send an email to housingsupport@emfrc.com

Please include your name and phone number

Our team will connect with you promptly for next steps!

ARE YOU A MILITARY / FAMILY MEMBER LOOKING FOR HOUSING?

*The Esquimalt MFRC
Housing Support Services Team
Can Help!*

Please send an email to housingsupport@emfrc.com

Please include your name and phone number

Our team will connect with you promptly for next steps!



Corporal Audrey Enocq, a member of HMCS Fredericton's dive team, jumps into the water to conduct a hull inspection during Operation Reassurance on Feb. 22 in Souda Bay, Greece. Photo: Corporal Noé Marchon



Sailor First Class (S1) Austen Webb of the Patrol Craft Training Unit (PCTU), aboard the Raven, passes a line rope to S1 Michael Halkett, PCTU, aboard the Renard, in Esquimalt on May 18. Photo: Aviator Bastien Beauceage



Petty Officer First Class Kristian Fitzgibbons, Naval Communicator aboard HMCS Fredericton, smiles for a photo while the ship conducts a replenishment at sea with USNS Arctic during Operation Reassurance on Mar. 9 in the Ionian Sea. Photo: Corporal Noé Marchon, Canadian Armed Forces Photo

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Dive Task Force members show their diving equipment to students of the Simon Alaittuq School in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, during Operation Nanook-Nunalivut on Mar. 16. Photo: Corporal Antoine Brochu, Assistant Deputy Minister (Public Affairs)



Sailor First Class Ron Hiscock (left) helps a child colour at the Mayesadoh Children's Foundation Children's Home during Operation Projection in Madina, Ghana, on Feb. 8. Photo: Sailor First Class Bryan Underwood



A child sticks a Canadian Flag on their head, while members of HMCS Glace Bay help other children create art using Play-Doh during a visit to the Mayesadoh Children's Foundation Children's Home during Operation Projection, in Madina, Ghana, on Feb. 8. Photo: Sailor First Class Bryan Underwood



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DEFENCE WOMEN'S ADVISORY ORGANIZATION looks to EMPOWER co-chairs during national meeting

Major-General Lise Bourgon, national champion for the Defence Women's Advisory Organization (DWAOW), spoke at the group's national conference in Halifax March 14-15.

Photos: Warrant Officer Samantha Crowe

Ryan Melanson
Trident Staff

Local co-chairs from Defence Women's Advisory Organization (DWAOW) chapters across the country and beyond gathered in person recently for the first time since 2017.

The group held two days of meetings in Halifax on March 14-15. It was an opportunity for members to get acquainted after years of virtual meetings and allowed for briefings, working groups, and a celebration of DWAOW achievements over recent years.

"The goal is to better inform all our co-chairs, and also to help empower them with the work they do at their local bases," said Lieutenant (Navy) Chantel Helwer, one of DWAOW's two National Co-chairs.

Lt(N) Helwer represents the civilian side, although she also serves as a Lieutenant (Navy) in the Naval Reserve. Lt(N) Helwer and Lieutenant-Colonel (LCol) Tania Maurice, her military co-chair counterpart, have been in the national positions for four years. They were joined in Halifax by Major-General Lise Bourgon, the DWAOW National Champion, along with co-chairs from bases around Canada and OUTCAN (postings outside of Canada) in Europe and the United States.

Lt(N) Helwer pointed to several recent successes that resulted from DWAOW work, including changes to the CAF dress instructions, a new nursing policy, and even the support and reimbursement for field urination devices for members.

"It's very illuminating and empowering to acknowledge that people in this room have made a real impact on the Canadian Armed Forces and Department of

National Defence. It's a very passionate and very inspiring group of people," Lt(N) Helwer said. "We want it to be clear that people's voices can be heard and they can make a difference."

The group also looked at positive changes and issues at the local level at bases across Canada to identify challenges shared by women across the CAF and DND.

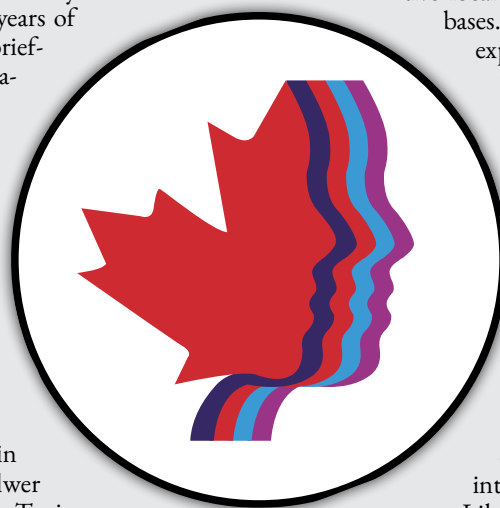
The group also looks at opportunities for positive local initiatives to spread to other bases. Examples included the recent expansion of designated lactation spaces across CFB Halifax and 12 Wing Shearwater.

"Local co-chairs are very in-tune with what's happening at their local base, and if it applies to multiple bases, they can raise that with us," Lt(N) Helwer said. The national executive can raise issues at the CDS/DM level, which can lead to changes to policy or clear up issues around policy interpretation.

Like other DND Employment Equity groups, the DWAOW relies on volunteers to fill their co-chair roles and perform duties in addition to their regular jobs. The national team thanked more than 50 local co-chairs across the DWAOW who helped improve CAF policies and culture for female members. They also stressed that the organization's work has spillover effects, and having an equal workplace for women benefits everybody.

After reviewing recent wins, the group touched on the more significant picture issues with CAF culture and equity for women and set plans to develop briefing notes from the discussions.

"It's all about bringing voices from the bottom up, and generating ideas from that on how to make the Defence team better," Lt(N) Helwer said.



Lieutenant (Navy) Chantel Helwer, left, and Lieutenant-Colonel Tania Maurice have been DWAOW national co-chairs for the past four years.



The two-day event included a mix of briefings and working groups for all DWAOW co-chairs.

COMMANDER MARITIME FORCES PACIFIC ADDRESSES RUSI-VI

Paul Seguna
Royal United Services Institute
Vancouver Island

Rear-Admiral (RAdm) Chris Robinson, Commander Maritime Forces Pacific, attended the monthly Royal United Services Institute – Vancouver Island (RUSI-VI) luncheon at the Bay Street Armoury on March 8, during which he presented on: *The RCN in the Indo Pacific Operations Overview*.

RAdm Robinson provided the audience of 46 RUSI-VI members – collectively representing hundreds of years of defence and security experience in its ranks – with a comprehensive overview of the Royal Canadian Navy's operations in the Indo-Pacific region. He also discussed key considerations related to the Navy's role in supporting Canada's recently announced Indo-Pacific Strategy for the region.

His presentation was very well-received by the audi-



ence, given the current and future importance of the region to Canadian interests. The presentation is part of the Royal Canadian Navy's ongoing outreach efforts to inform the Canadian public of the Navy's activities and the importance of maritime security to our national well-being.

RUSI-VI, an independent, non-partisan, and non-profit organization, is one of many Canadian and Commonwealth Royal United Services Institute branches. Members include retired and serving members, in all ranks, from the Branches and Elements of the Canadian Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and other police forces, and members of the general public interested in defence and security matters. Monthly luncheon meetings, periodic webinars, and special events with speakers addressing the broad spectrum of defence and security-related issues are held to inform and promote discussion and engagement in these issues.



Rear-Admiral Chris Robinson, Commander Maritime Forces Pacific, addresses the Royal United Services Institute – Vancouver Island.

Photo: Lieutenant-Commander (ret'd) Paul Seguna, RUSI-VI

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A CP-140 Aurora aircraft.
Photo: Corporal David Veldman,
Canadian Armed Forces



Exercise **SEA DRAGON** under way



National Defence / Canadian Armed Forces

For the third consecutive year, a Royal Canadian Air Force CP-140 Aurora aircraft with a crew from 407 Long Range Patrol Squadron and personnel from 19 Wing Comox will participate in Exercise *Sea Dragon* at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam, March 15-30.

Major (Maj) Scott MacDonald, Operations Flight Commander, 407 Long Range Patrol Squadron, said the opportunity to further interoperability with partner nations in an exercise of this nature is invaluable.

"The team has been working hard to get ready for this year's anti-submarine warfare competition and is ready to face the challenges presented by this year's exercise organizers from CTF-72," he said.

407 Long Range Patrol Squadron is one of two CP-140 operational squadrons responsible for the surveillance of Canadian maritime interests. Traditionally, this has meant watching for foreign submarines off our coasts. Today, this is only one part of their surveillance role.

Sea Dragon is a premier multinational anti-submarine exercise, with participating nations competing for the coveted 'Dragon Belt'. 407 Squadron is a back-to-back winner of this competition, having won in 2021 and 2022.

"Exercises such as *Sea Dragon* allow for realistic training

while exchanging skills, tactics and increased understanding of multinational operations," said Major-General (MGen) Iain Huddleston, Commander 1 Canadian Air Division / Joint Forces Air Component.

Exercise *Sea Dragon* consists of three parts: introduction and warm-ups, training exercises, and the Dragon Belt competition. Focusing primarily on anti-submarine warfare, the exercise culminates in over 270 hours of in-flight training, ranging from tracking simulated targets to the final challenge of tracking a United States Navy submarine at sea. During classroom training sessions, aircrew from all participating countries build plans and discuss tactics incorporating the capabilities and equipment of their respective nations.

"The overarching goal of the exercise is to enhance the interoperability of our Long-Range Patrol force in anti-submarine warfare while also supporting Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy as we work with partners and allies to contribute to stability and security in the region," MGen Huddleston said.

This year's participants include the United States Navy, Indian Navy, Japan Maritime Self Defense Force, the Republic of Korea Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force.

A CH-148 Cyclone helicopter and a CP-140 Aurora maritime patrol aircraft fly over HMCS Winnipeg. Photo: Sailor First Class Valerie LeClair, MARPAC Imaging Services



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Under the supervision of Lieutenant-Commander (LCdr) David Canning, CSC Project Director (DNMCP), MARPAC sailors familiarize themselves with the layout of the proposed Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) bridge design. Left to right: Sailor First Class (S1) Nicholas Campbell, S1 Isaac Priyanthan, (Obscured), Sailor Second Class Daniel Yaretz, and Lieutenant (Navy) Aidan De Boer.

During the week of Mar. 6, LCdr David Canning led a Bridge Design Validation exercise at the Nixon Building, Work Point. Supported by a team of Department of National Defence managers, Canadian Armed Forces personnel and Defence Industry representatives, the exercise allowed MARPAC sailors to provide feedback as they conducted a range of operational scenarios on a full-scale bridge mock-up.

A TIMELINE:

- 2011 - Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) articulated in National Shipbuilding Strategy
- 2015 - Irving Shipbuilding Inc. announced as prime contractor.
- 2016 – Request for Proposal (RFP) submitted to prequalified industries.
- 2019 – Government of Canada announces Lockheed Martin Canada as design team for winning bid based on the BAE Systems Type 26 Global Combat Ship.

A SIGN OF THINGS TO COME

Michael McWhinnie
Public Affairs Advisor, NPTG

By definition 'the future' is something that will never arrive. It is a term that evokes a sense of abstraction and of fantastical things that exist primarily in our imagination.

And so it must have seemed to senior naval leadership as they used the term 'future fleet'

during the first decade of the current millennium, when discussing the eventual and inevitable replacement to the Iroquois-class destroyers and the current workhorse of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) - the Halifax-class frigates.

It's only natural. With a planning horizon in excess of 25 years, none of those who initiated the Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC)

programme could have reasonably expected to be in uniform to see those vessels enter service. And so it remained for the majority of RCN personnel. As the years have passed, CSC has continued to be a distant and abstract idea. Until recently, when a select group of sailors and officers stepped foot on the bridge of a Canadian Type 26 frigate (albeit a full-scale replica) for the first time.

"You could sense the excitement amongst the participants," observed Lieutenant-Commander (LCdr) David Canning, organizer. "For most, it was the first time they encountered anything tangible connected to the CSC design process. Their eagerness to serve aboard this fast-approaching class of warship was evident."

LCdr Canning is the Deputy Project Director for CSC and normally works in the offices of Director Naval Major Crown Projects (DNMCP) in Ottawa. He oversaw the bridge design validation exercise, which was a collaborative effort involving DND managers, RCN personnel and Defence Industry representatives. The event ran March 6-10 within the Nixon Building gymnasium at Work Point. The weeklong agenda began with information sessions and ended with a short visits programme. The bulk of the effort entailed running naval personnel through a range of notional evolutions and operational scenarios as they 'crewed' a purpose-built, full-scale bridge mock-up.

"The first thing people commented on is the scale of the thing," said LCdr Canning in reference to a bridge area delineated by large ribbons of brown parcel paper denoting bulkheads and bridge wings.

Measuring ten per cent longer, a quarter again as wide and at almost double the displacement, the CSC will be significantly larger

than our current warships.

Although nobody was fooled into believing they were on an actual warship, the mock up accurately represented the CSC dimensions and included a wide range of displays and instruments ranging from the familiar (compass repeaters, helm and throttle station) to the new (electronic chart table) or improved (reconfigurable digital overhead displays and bridge wing selectable navigation displays). There were even two easily recognizable bright red action alarms.

"The sailors seemed very enthusiastic to be participating," observed LCdr Canning. "I think they all understood how the validation process is essential to assuring we get things right and that this was their opportunity to influence the design of a vessel we are building to meet the demands of naval operations for the coming decades."

Real-time feedback from the sailors was noted and compiled alongside staff observations and miscellaneous recorded data. All collected information will be analysed and serve to inform future project design decisions.

"The ultimate objective is to ensure the CSC's bridge configuration incorporates the best technology available from Canadian Defence Industry and its layout is optimized to support the operational success of our sailors well into the future," stressed LCdr Canning.

The CSC vessels will be constructed at Irving Shipyards in Halifax, NS. The initial keel is expected to be laid in the next two years with the first-of-class ship entering service early in the next decade. Although navigators calculate distance in nautical miles, most sailors measure it in time. The bridge design validation exercise was a reminder to all present, not only is CSC making steady headway – it is getting closer than we realized.

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