



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia Dispatches

1 May 2026

The Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia provides a forum for the study, promotion and debate on 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 RUSINSDispatches@gmail.com.

Comments to articles can be from members or non-members of RUSI(NS). Any comment in *Dispatches* is the sole opinion of the author and does not necessarily represent the views of the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia, the Department of National Defence or other government department, the Canadian Armed Forces, or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or other agency.

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

LAST WEEK IN CANADIAN HISTORY

- On **25 April 1945**, Canada, one of the 50 nations, attended the founding United Nations Conference on International Organization, in San Francisco, California; eventually the United Nations Charter was approved on June 26. The UN replaced the League of Nations which was created by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.
- On **25 April 1967**, the House of Commons passed Bill C-243, “The Canadian Forces Reorganization Act,” unifying the RCN, Canadian Army, and RCAF into one service, the Canadian Armed Forces, with common uniform and rank designations; the Act came into effect from 1 February 1968.

The next issue will be on **15 May 2026**.
Other editorial comments as desired.

Quick links:

[Events](#)

[Publications](#)

[@RUSI_NS on X](#)

[Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia on Facebook](#)

[Other Sources](#)

[Odds and Sods](#)

[SAC Notes](#)

Contributions to RUSI(NS) social media

You are also encouraged 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.

Writing for RUSI(NS)

The content of *Dispatches* and other RUSI(NS) channels is representative of the submissions by RUSI(NS) members. If you want more published about certain fields and topics, you are encouraged to submit material to RUSIDispatches@gmail.com and RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. The public face of RUSI(NS) is what we, the membership, makes it.



Articles of Association of the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia

At our Annual General Meeting 12 March 2026, the Institute's Articles were amended to change the process for proposing and seconding of candidates to the Institute. The amended Articles, Revision 6 Amendment 3, are available to members on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.



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:

May-June 2026 Schedule:

- May - Col. Tarra Willis, Comd 12 Wing, Future of Maritime Air, hybrid, in-person and virtual, Shearwater Aviation Museum.
- June - Mr. Harvey Vardy, Director Intervention Response Atlantic Director, in-person only, at 50 Discovery Dr, Dartmouth, 18 June 2026.
 - Summer Meet and Greet, RA Park, 25 June 2026.
- July - Nil.
- August - Nil.
- September - Army Procurement program.
- October - Naval Modernization Program.
 - Altn NORAD Modernization details TBC.
- November - Remembrance Dinner 4 November 2026, RA Park.
- December - Winter/Holiday Meet and Greet, 10 December 2026, RA Park.

Other Events:

New 2 May 2026, Saturday: Jane's Walk - York Redoubt, Halifax, 11:00 am

Tom Tulloch, MSM CD FRIN Capt (N) RCN (ret'd), will be conducting a guided tour of *York Redoubt* as part of the annual Jane's Walks program that weekend. Details regarding the walk will be published on the Jane's Walk website (<https://www.janeswalkhalifax.com/>) along with information about the other walks being offered.

Essentially the tour will be conducted in two parts: first, taking about an hour, will involve a tour of the fort itself; while the second, talking about an hour and a half, will be a bit more physically strenuous and will involve descending 150 feet down the slope to visit the York Shore Battery at sea level, and back. Participants can choose to do the whole tour or if they wish or just the first part. Sturdy walking shoes or boots are a must.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to learn about one of the most significant sites that formed Fortress Halifax, evolving from a small smooth-bore cannon emplacement in the last decade of the 18th century, through a powerful Victorian-era gun battery to being the lynchpin of the port's defences in the Second World War. It will include interesting locations underground that are hidden from site, and so visitors may wish to bring a flashlight.

New 1 June 2026, Monday: Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation “Five Wargames Every Force Design Process Needs.” 6-7:30 pm ET, online.

For more information and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/five-wargames-every-force-design-process-needs-tickets-1986853899498>

Wargaming Events: Georgetown University Wargaming Society long-range schedule: <https://www.guwargaming.org/guwsevents>

Publications

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:

Naval Association of Canada

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

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

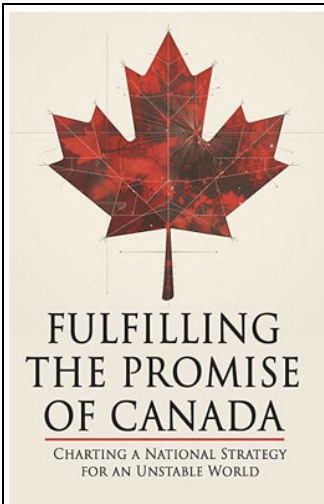
Royal Canadian Naval Association Admiral Hose Branch Scuttlebutt

Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island Newsletter

Veterans Affairs Canada Salute!

Quarterly:

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) Quarterly Newsletter



Fulfilling The Promise of Canada: Charting a National Strategy for an Unstable World

Paperback – April 22 2026

by Charles S. Oliviero (Author), Phil Halton (Editor)

Canada has relied for too long on comforting assumptions.

That the United States would always protect it.

That prosperity would continue without effort.

That serious geopolitical danger remained somewhere else.

Those assumptions no longer hold.

In *Fulfilling the Promise of Canada*, a distinguished group of military, intelligence, academic, and policy thinkers examines the hard realities of an increasingly unstable world and asks what Canada must do to meet them. Covering defence policy, air power, naval strategy, reserves, special operations, foreign intelligence, Arctic security, digital vulnerability, higher education, China, Taiwan, and the future of Canada-US relations, this volume offers a wide-ranging assessment of the country's strategic position and the choices now before it.

Urgent and forward-looking, *Fulfilling the Promise of Canada* argues that Canada cannot lead abroad unless it rebuilds strength, seriousness, and confidence at home. This is a book about sovereignty, competence, and national renewal, and about whether Canada is prepared to match its values with the means to defend and sustain them.

Col (ret'd) 'Chuck' Oliviero is a member of RUSI Vancouver Island and writes that he is not the author, despite the promo, and that all royalties are being given to RUSI (50% to RUSI VI and 50% to RUSI NB).

The book is now on sale on Amazon in e-format and paperback

(<https://www.amazon.ca/Fulfilling-Promise-Canada-Charting-National/dp/1998501833>).

@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).

David Pugliese @davidpugliese 27 Apr posted and RUSI(NS) reposted:

NATO eyes Swedish-Canadian jet for AWACS role in shift away from Boeing

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2026/04/24/nato-eyes-swedish-canadian-jet-for-awacs-role-in-shift-away-from-boeing/>



Underway transfer of Hammerhead boat from MV ASTERIX to HMCS CHARLOTTETOWN, historically first cross-ship transfer of Hammerhead, #OpHORIZON, SPacific Ocean, 7Apr26. Demonstrates future capability to transfer #USV #drone from logistics ship to surface combatant H/T @ReadyAyeReady



NATO Association of Canada @NATOCanada 26 Apr posted and RUSI(NS) reposted:

As the US and Israel's campaign against Iran continues, it has potential to draw NATO, and Canada as a member of the alliance into uncharted territory. Tanweer Shahid argues that Canada is currently banking on de-escalation but the Tehran precedent, is still a work in progress. (<https://natoassociation.ca/iran-precedent-canadas-support-without-participation/>)



Murray Brewster @Murray_Brewster 24 Apr posted and RUSI(NS) reposted:

Canada's top general tries to reassure Ukraine as NATO tensions flare #cdnpoli #RussiaUkrainewar #NATO (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/ukraine-war-nato-carignan-trump-9.7175303>)



CTV News Vancouver @CTVVancouver 26 Apr posted:

Canada joins Philippine war games in 'significant step' in Indo-Pacific security

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/vancouver/article/canada-joins-philippine-war-games-in-significant-step-in-indo-pacific-security/>



RUSI(NS) quoted:

#ExBALIKATAN #OpHORIZON=CAN🇨🇦 comprehensive military approach to promote peace & stability in support of an international system based on international law in Indo-Pacific region <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-horizon.html>

David Pugliese @davidpugliese 23 Apr posted and RUSI(NS) reposted:

My latest article...Canadian military to launch initial steps in new \$5-billion warship project. <https://ottawacitizen.com/public-service/defence-watch/canadian-navy-warship-corvette-military> via @ottawacitizen

The article led to some discussion amongst RUSI(NS) members who questioned that 20 plus corvettes could be procured for \$5 billion dollars. A query was sent to RCN contacts, who advised: “It is very early days on this project ...Funding levels for projects are described in general terms: <\$50M, \$100M-\$250M, \$1B-\$5B, and >\$5B, which is why it indicated greater than \$5B. RCD is currently listed at >\$5B for context.”

[See: “River-Class Destroyer (RCD)” <https://apps.forces.gc.ca/en/defence-capabilities-blueprint/project-details.asp?id=1782>].

It was then asked whether those funding level ranges were tied to funding authorities (e.g., MND), but staff were uncertain, noting “... the ranges themselves haven’t changed over the years despite the changes in authorities for the DM.. so .. I think they are somewhat set and not linked to the authorities.”



“Researchers aim to map trade route through ice and enable year-round shipping from Churchill to Europe

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/study-trade-route-churchill-manitoba-northern-europe-9.7166672>”

Studies should consider basing of @RoyalCanNavy #Arctic Mobile Base ship at #Churchill & @CanadianForces logistics movements from there north.



“Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia” on Facebook

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Iranian Attacks Change Way Navy Refuels Its Ships In Middle East

<https://www.twz.com/sea/iranian-attacks-change-way-navy-refuels-its-ships-in-middle-east>

“The Navy created a commercial "tanker treadmill" to top off its oilers out at sea, offering lessons that could have larger impacts on operations in the future.”



To anyone who has worked with the USN in the Pacific, CONSOL (consolidated cargo operations tanker; distinct from oiler) is not as novel as the article makes out.

The Modular CONSOL Adapter Kit (MCAK) is interesting, though. “By installing it on the deck of a tanker, it can refuel other ships through the receiving ship’s fuel delivery hoses,...” Might Canada look at acquiring one or more MCAK for use with Canadian-flagged tankers in times of need? How many tankers are Canadian flagged and would MCAK work with them? (Need a trial.)

Acquisition of the Wave-class oilers by Inoceca for management by Federal Fleet Services who manage Motor Vessel (MV) ASTERIX is looking to be timely. Might the US contract them to act as a 'shuttle tanker' or station oiler? (USN terms, not used in the article).

Potential employment for ASTERIX once the lease with the RCN is finished?

Comments from a Federal Fleet Services (who operate ASTERIX) colleague: Whilst CONSOL is not new, the Modular CONSOL Adaptor Kit (MCAK) represents a practical evolution in how that capability can be rapidly enabled using non-traditional platforms, particularly commercial tankers.

With respect to Canadian application, MV ASTERIX is already very well positioned to perform this function, with significantly less complexity than adapting commercial tankers from first principles.

Asterix has demonstrated and proven capability in:

- replenishment at sea (RAS) with naval vessels;
- ship-to-ship fuel transfer with commercial tankers;
- high-capacity fuel storage, handling, and controlled delivery; and

- operating within NATO-standard procedures and alongside USN units.

Importantly, ASTERIX is already configured in a manner consistent with CONSOL operations. To enable a full shuttle tanker role analogous to MCAK-enabled platforms, ASTERIX would only require a relatively minor modification, namely the installation or adaptation of a fueling receiver interface compatible with commercial tanker discharge systems (MCAK-like functionality).

From a marine engineering and integration standpoint, this is assessed as:

- low technical risk;
- rapid to implement (a few weeks); and
- fully compatible with existing onboard fuel systems and RAS architecture.

This would allow ASTERIX to:

- receive fuel from commercial tankers at sea (including non-naval sources);
- act as a shuttle tanker, redistributing fuel to RCN or allied/coalition units;
- complement support to purpose-built fleet oilers in higher-risk environments; and
- keep commercial tankers outside threat envelopes while maintaining operational tempo.

On the question of Canadian-flagged tankers and MCAK, compatibility, availability, and regulatory considerations would require validation through trial. ASTERIX provides an immediately available and lower-risk pathway to trial and operationalize CONSOL concepts within a Canadian context, without waiting on tanker modification programs.

In terms of future employment, this concept could represent an additional high-value role for ASTERIX, complementary to its current roles, particularly as allied navies continue to evolve distributed and resilient logistics models. Federal Fleet Services has proposed a CONSOL capability to the RCN for the ASTERIX.

U.S. Considering Foreign Designs, Shipyards for New Navy Frigate, Destroyer Work in \$1.85B Study
<https://news.usni.org/2026/04/24/u-s-considering-foreign-designs-shipyards-for-new-navy-frigate-destroyer-work-in-1-85b-study>



“Specifically, the Pentagon has directed the Navy to consider Japanese and Korean shipyards and designs for use in the U.S. fleet...”

Canadian shipbuilders get mentioned but other than the ones which bought US yards, don't seem to be favoured for designs or work.

“During World War II, the U.S. purchased small frigates from Canada as part of the Reverse Lend-Lease program.”

“Reverse Lend-Lease” was unknown to this editor - see “Frigates (K) Built in WWII” (<http://shipbuildinghistory.com/canadaships/frigates.htm>) for list.

General purpose frigate

<https://www.navy.gov.au/capabilities/ships-boats-and-submarines/general-purpose-frigate>

Interesting that Australia is calling the ship a ‘general purpose frigate.’ A term that one would expect from the media but not officially. It’s not a ship type designation and is somewhat meaningless - ships are inherently general purpose (especially when fitted with a vertical launch system) and at the same time the fit of this frigate (frigates usually being anti-submarine vessels) is not such that the ship could be employed at all roles (putting aside the argument about what is the definition of role/purpose/function/mission when describing ships).



Other Sources

#airpower

Regime Change from the Sky: Strategy, Air Power and the Illusion of Control

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/exclusives/regime-change-from-the-sky-strategy-air-power-and-the-illusion-of-control/>

#artificial intelligence #NATO

Advancing Responsible AI Across NATO: Innovation and Interoperability

<https://www.cigionline.org/publications/advancing-responsible-ai-across-nato-innovation-and-interoperability/>

#Canadian Army

LGen Michael Wright, CCA/CAC @Army_Comd_Armee 25 Apr posted: The CA activated its Global Response Task Force (GRTF) through Ex GLOBAL READY 26, testing rapid no notice deployment. The GRTF will deploy to Sweden for Ex AURORA 26, strengthening readiness and interoperability with allies.

Had to look up Global Response Task Force: based on a light force construct, provides highly deployable and scalable forces offering a wide range of options to the GoC for emerging crises around the world and the far reaches at home (“Advancing with Purpose: The Canadian Army Modernization Strategy” <https://www.canada.ca/en/army/services/for-the-soldier/canadian-army-modernization-strategy.html>).

#Canadian Coast Guard

New Renders Of The Mid-Shore Multi-Mission Vessel Released By The Canadian Coast Guard

<https://www.truenorthstrategicreview.ca/p/new-renders-of-the-mid-shore-multi>

#Canadian Coast Guard #shipbuilding

CCGS Donjek Launched

<https://www.truenorthstrategicreview.ca/p/ccgs-donjek-launched>

Cyber Intelligence

FBI Announces Operation Masquerade: US Strikes Back At Russian Cyber Espionage | APT
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcgX6mARDK8>

China has a different methodology, however they have a larger team than Russia and probably a wider impact, when they decide to use it.

China-Linked APT GopherWhisper Abuses Legitimate Services in Government Attacks
<https://www.securityweek.com/china-linked-apt-gopherwhisper-abuses-legitimate-services-in-government-attacks/amp/>

China-linked threat actors use consumer device botnets to evade detection, warn UK and partners
<https://securityaffairs.com/191202/security/china-linked-threat-actors-use-consumer-device-botnets-to-evade-detection-warn-uk-and-partners.html>

Chinese APT Targets Indian Banks, Korean Policy Circles
https://www.darkreading.com/cyberattacks-data-breaches/chinese-apt-indian-banks-korean-policy?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Issue:%202026-04-21%20Dark%20Reading%20Daily%20%5Bissue:84073%5D&utm_term=Dark%20Reading

What type of 'C2 on a sleep cycle' do they leave behind? Novel Chinese spy group found in critical networks in Poland, Asia
https://www.theregister.com/2026/04/30/chinese_spies_lurking_networks/

#defence industry

Aligning the U.S. and Canadian Defense Industrial Bases

<https://warontherocks.com/cogs-of-war/aligning-the-us-and-canadian-defense-industrial-bases/>

defence spending

Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2025

<https://www.sipri.org/publications/2026/sipri-fact-sheets/trends-world-military-expenditure-2025>

#defence spending

A Steep Climb: Financing Canada's NATO Commitment while Maintaining Fiscal Discipline

<https://cdhowe.org/publication/a-steep-climb-financing-canadas-nato-commitment-while-maintaining-fiscal-discipline/>

#defence spending

Global military spending rise continues as European and Asian expenditures surge
<https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2026/global-military-spending-rise-continues-european-and-asian-expenditures-surge>

#defence procurement

Canada's Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association (APMA) and Hanwha Corporation announce landmark joint venture to establish a new Canadian entity that will produce military and industrial vehicle
<https://www.truenorthstrategicreview.ca/p/canadas-automotive-parts-manufacturers>

#drones

Hunter Wolf is the US Army's Newest Ground Robot - Just Don't Call it a Robot
<https://www.wesodonnell.com/p/hunter-wolf-is-the-us-armys-newest>
Multi-purpose ground drone...

#drones

The Shahed Lesson: When Great Powers Emulate the Underdog
<https://balloonstodrones.com/2026/04/20/commentary-the-shahed-lesson-when-great-powers-emulate-the-underdog/>

#drones #land warfare

Aerial Drones Change How Wars Are Fought—Unmanned Ground Vehicles Will Decide Who Wins Them
<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/aerial-drones-change-how-wars-are-fought-unmanned-ground-vehicles-will-decide-who-wins-them/>

“Unmanned air systems have changed warfare. Unmanned ground systems will determine who wins it.”

#drones #land warfare

Missiles, Guns, Lasers . . . and Nets: The Case for Passive Drone Defenses
<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/missiles-guns-lasers-and-nets-the-case-for-passive-drone-defenses/>

#economic warfare

Economic Warfare Reimagined: Insurance as a Tool of U.S. Strategic Influence
Insurfare: Parametric Insurance as Economic Warfare
<https://irregularwarfare.org/articles/insurfare-economic-warfare-global-south/>
“Insurance warfare.”

#Indo-Pacific #cyber operations #wargaming

Wargaming a China-Taiwan Conflict and Its Cyber Scenarios
<https://blog.predictivedefense.io/p/wargaming-a-china-taiwan-conflict>

#land warfare

The Dead Zone and the Empty Battlefield

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/the-dead-zone-and-the-empty-battlefield/>

“...three challenges...are vital for military leaders at echelon to understand, as they are likely to remain the cornerstone of any future conflict: the emergence of a tactical dead zone of contested battlespace between combatants, the increasing emptiness of the battlefield, and the decreasing utility of dispersion in light of mass precision strike.”

#land warfare #Canadian Army

The Command Friction that the Army’s Division-Centric Warfighting Approach Must Overcome

<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/the-command-friction-that-the-armys-division-centric-warfighting-approach-must-overcome/>

A US article but worth consideration as the Canadian Army goes division-centric.

#land warfare #Russia-Ukraine War

The Campaign Ends at the Breach: Lessons from Ukraine on Why Armies Fail

<https://warontherocks.com/2026/04/the-campaign-ends-at-the-breach-lessons-from-ukraine-on-why-armies-fail/>

“Against prepared defenses, the side that cannot reduce obstacles and sustain crossings under fire often loses the timetable that made the rest of its campaign possible.”

#legal

Can U.S. Blockade Iranian-Linked Ships Anywhere in the World? Yes, But ...

<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/04/19/world/middleeast/us-iran-blockade-expansion.html>

“For a blockade to be legal, ... it must be ‘effective,’ meaning that it is both enforceable and enforced. Some would argue that a ‘global blockade’ is not permissible in conception because it is overly broad ...”

#legal

Both the US and Iran are firing on commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz. Are both sides acting lawfully?

<https://theconversation.com/both-the-us-and-iran-are-firing-on-commercial-ships-in-the-strait-of-hormuz-are-both-sides-acting-lawfully-281008>

Additional Information:

“To be effective, the blockading state need not intercept and capture every vessel attempting to evade the blockade, but there must be a sufficient likelihood that such vessels will be detected and captured.”

Good to read at least that statement about effective blockade, as the article “U.S. Declares Blockade Effective as First Ships Turned Back from Iranian Ports” (<https://gcaptain.com/u-s-declares-blockade-effective-as-first-ships-turned-back-from-iranian-ports/>) could leave the question of what constitutes an effective blockade.

#legal #balloon warfare (!)

Modern Attack Balloons and the 1907 Hague Balloons Declaration

<https://lieber.westpoint.edu/modern-attack-balloons-1907-hague-balloons-declaration/>

#legal #US-Iran War

The Serious but Not Literal Blockade

<https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/the-serious-but-not-literal-blockade>

#logistics #strategy

Sovereign survivability and shared resilience: placing logistics at the centre of new strategy

<https://logisticsinwar.com/2026/04/30/sovereign-survivability-and-shared-resilience-placing-logistics-at-the-centre-of-new-strategy/>

“...’sovereign survivability’ or a capacity for self-sustenance that is nonetheless embedded within a network of allied and partner capabilities.”

#maritime security

Congress May Bring Back Legal Pirates – I’m Not Kidding

<https://www.wesodonnell.com/p/congress-may-bring-back-legal-pirates>

#maritime security #international relations #US-Iran War

Crisis in Hormuz Exposes Fragility of the Rules-Based Order

<https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/crisis-in-hormuz-exposes-fragility-of-the-rules-based-order/>

“Ultimately, the Strait of Hormuz crisis is a warning. It reveals how quickly the scaffolding of global order can buckle under the weight of competing narratives and unchecked escalation. It also underscores a quieter truth: power without restraint on any side leads not to stability but to perpetual insecurity.”

#naval operations #logistics

Iranian Attacks Change Way Navy Refuels Its Ships In Middle East

<https://www.twz.com/sea/iranian-attacks-change-way-navy-refuels-its-ships-in-middle-east>

“The Navy created a commercial “tanker treadmill” to top off its oilers out at sea, offering lessons that could have larger impacts on operations in the future.”

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#Royal Canadian Navy

Updating the Continental Defence Corvette Infobox + Clarifying recent reporting

<https://www.truenorthstrategicreview.ca/p/updating-the-continental-defence-79b>

An official statement that it is too early for an estimate of the project cost would preclude the \$5B being resurrected later by the media when the true cost comes out.

Interesting to use IOC (initial operational capability) and FOC (full operational capability) for ship projects. The milestones/time points work for vehicle and aircraft projects, but what do they mean for a project for a small number of vessels, each of which stands on its own? Would it be better to use points like 'first ship launched (or accepted or commissioned into service)' and 'last ship launched/accepted/commissioned'?

The following resulted from discussion with DND Material Group some years ago:

Initial Operational Capability (IOC) is defined as “the first attainment of the minimum ability to effectively employ a new or improved capability, and for which adequate infrastructure, training, staffing, and support are in place, both for the new capability and for the organization employing it.” At IOC there is the equipment and the trained personnel to start operational use of a capability.

Full Operational Capability (FOC) is defined as: “the full attainment of the ability to effectively employ a new or improved capability, and for which fully achieved infrastructure, training, staffing, and support are in place, both for the new capability and for the organization employing it.” The achievement of a FOC is a major project milestone that signifies that the scope (performance) objectives of the project have been substantially achieved to the satisfaction of the Project Sponsor. The criteria for achievement of FOC are described in the Statement of Requirements.

Early Operational Capability (EOC) - ? Seems much to be a US thing. There is not a definition in DOD Instructions but lots of reference to the term in the context of early test and evaluation to aid further development.

#Russia-Ukraine War

Deadlocked War Subtly Changes to Russia’s Detriment

<https://jamestown.org/deadlocked-war-subtly-changes-to-russias-detriment/>

#Russia-Ukraine War #NATO

Ukrainian Military Offers Lessons Learned to NATO

Part One: <https://jamestown.org/ukrainian-military-offers-lessons-learned-to-nato-part-one/>

Part Two: <https://jamestown.org/ukrainian-military-offers-lessons-learned-to-nato-part-two/>

#strategy

Modern Errors in Discussions on Strategy

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/modern-errors-in-discussions-on-strategy/>

“Strategy links violence to political purpose. Remove the violence, it stops being strategy.

Most confusion starts right there.”

#strategy

What’s in a Name? Clausewitz’s Search to Define “Strategy”

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/whats-in-a-name-clausewitzs-search-to-define-strategy/>

#strategy

Warfare and Strategy

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

"A knowledge of warfare, defined as the study of how armed forces could, do or should fight,

is a critically important aspect to the study of strategy."

Warfare should not be taught without some appreciation of the strategic context.

This monograph got posted again very recently, probably in reflection of current situations in the world.

#strategy

What's in a Name? Clausewitz's Search to Define "Strategy"

<https://www.militarystrategymagazine.com/article/whats-in-a-name-clausewitzs-search-to-define-strategy/>

#US-Iran War

Forcing the Dardanelles and Forcing the Strait of Hormuz - Flagging a 2011 CNA Study

<https://markssw.substack.com/p/forcing-the-dardanelles-and-forcing>

#warfare

The New Revolution in Military Affairs

<https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2026/04/ukraine-russia-war-changing-warfare-practice-military-strategy>

"These trends include the emergence of affordable precise mass, the fragmentation of the air domain, the growing difficulty of maneuver, the centrality of networked warfare, the elevation of rapid adaptation as a core military capability and the role of autonomy."

#warfare

Turning the Corner: Momentum Builds in Ukraine's Strike & Ground Defence Campaigns While Pacific Democracies Enhance their Strategic Deterrence.

<https://mickryan.substack.com/p/turning-the-corner-momentum-builds>

#warfare #A2R

Warfare in an Aging World

<https://dispatch.bazaarofwar.com/p/warfare-in-an-aging-world>

#warfare #US-Iran War

The Strait Is Not a Chokepoint: How Hormuz Became Administrative Terrain

<https://www.xinanigans.com/p/strait-not-chokepoint-hormuz-administrative-terrain>

"Governance warfare describes how states compete by shaping the legal, bureaucratic, economic, demographic, and narrative systems that determine strategic options before crises emerge." (<https://www.cypherstrat.com/governance-warfare>)

#wargaming

Outmaneuvering D.C.: How the Naval War College Won the Bureaucracy Game and, in the Process, the War in the Pacific

<https://www.hoover.org/research/outmaneuvering-dc-how-naval-war-college-won-bureaucracy-game-and-process-war-pacific>

#wargaming

War Gaming is Everything: Lessons from the Navy's Golden Age of War Gaming

<https://www.hoover.org/research/war-gaming-everything-lessons-navys-golden-age-war-gaming>

#wargaming

The (Australian) Army Battle Lab's Professional Gaming List 2025

<https://cove.army.gov.au/article/army-battle-labs-professional-gaming-list-2025>

#wargaming

War Gaming at the Naval War College—Then and Now

<https://www.hoover.org/research/war-gaming-naval-war-college-then-and-now>

#wargaming #artificial intelligence

Wargaming Needs AI. The Department of War Isn't Ready.

<https://ari.us/policy-bytes/wargaming-needs-ai-the-department-of-war-isnt-ready/>

#warfare #wargaming #Indo-Pacific

A Review of “The First Island Chained: Taiwan Resistance and Resilience” Wargame and Workshop

<https://dkiapcss.edu/a-review-of-the-first-island-chained-taiwan-resistance-and-resilience-wargame-and-workshop/>

“For Taiwan and its allies, the lesson was one of endurance and strategic foresight. Resistance is a whole-of-society phenomenon that succeeds not just through combat, but by refusing to allow the occupier to convert battlefield control into durable political and informational dominance.”

#weapons

Missiles, Drones, and Missile-Drones? A Primer on Missile Classification

<https://missilematters.substack.com/p/missiles-drones-and-missile-drones>

linked to: Missiles - a comprehensive analysis of missile systems (part of EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament eLearning Course)

<https://eunpdc-elearning.netlify.app/lu-07/>

Odds and Sods...

(Australian) Navy names autonomous systems unit

Defence Australia @DefenceAust 14 Apr posted: The @Australian_Navy has formally named the Maritime Autonomous Systems Unit (MASU), marking a key step in Navy's transition to a more integrated and highly advanced technology-enabled future force. ⚓ MASU has

been created through Project SEA 1200 to accelerate the development, integration and operational employment of maritime autonomous systems, optimised for persistent, long-range intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance and strike missions. Read more →

<https://www.defence.gov.au/news-events/news/2026-04-14/navy-names-autonomous-systems-unit> #YourADF #AusNavy



Dr Elizabeth Buchanan @BuchananLiz 14 Apr replied : 🐟 Masu is name of fish native to west Pacific Ocean

Interesting, the markings on the Ghost Shark in the picture. Do the various badges, number (pennant number?), etc., indicate the RAN consider such a vehicle to be a vessel, and managed/supported as such? Or an equipment, and treated accordingly (stock number, etc.)? A similar question has been posed to CAF staff: When is a drone a vessel/aircraft/vehicle and when is it an equipment?

The RCN has its version of the MASU with a section in the ANCU – Advanced Naval Capabilities Unit (<https://www.canada.ca/en/navy/campaigns/ancu.html>).

DND's Material Group stood up a new division last December, called Joint Equipment Program Management, under Mark McKiel (DGJEPM). The division has a directorate on robotics meant to manage most UxV in the future. "Meant" because it won't be clear cut as other divisions have expertise that's essential to manage acquisition of drones that won't get duplicated under JEPM. Staff are still working on relationships.

King Charles III version of the Operational Service Medal unveiled

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/maple-leaf/defence/2026/04/king-charles-iii-version-operational-service-medal-unveiled.html>

The OSM recognizes military and civilian personnel who served in a theatre of operations or provided full-time direct support to such operations. It also applies to those who served under dangerous circumstances outside Canada, as long as that service is not counted towards another service medal, with the exception of the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal where applicable.



Macdonald-Laurier Institute, 21-22 April 2026

Reclaiming control, restoring caution – Fixing Canada’s broken immigration system, Vol. 4:
Michael Barutciski

<https://macdonaldlaurier.ca/reclaiming-control-restoring-caution-fixing-canadas-broken-immigration-system-vol-4-michael-barutciski/>

Gatekeepers: Russia’s Coast Guard and the control of Arctic sea lanes

<https://macdonaldlaurier.ca/gatekeepers-russias-coast-guard-in-the-arctic/>

Naval Association of Canada – NAC News, 17-24 April 2026

Canada:

[CANADIAN PATROL SUBMARINE: Diving into a Secure Future for Canada](#)

[Cellula’s Envoy AUV Exceeds 2,000 km Submerged on Hydrogen Fuel Cell Power](#)

[Electric ferries are breaking records — and quietly joining Canada's fleet](#)

[HMCS Labrador: An Operational History](#)

The World:

[Australia, Canada, and U.S. conduct multilateral operations in South China Sea](#)

[China-Japan tensions escalate after Taiwan Strait passage](#)

[EU approves huge new loan for Ukraine, just days after objector Orban's defeat in Hungary](#)

[How The Great Pacific Garbage Patch Is Finally Being Conquered](#)

[Japan's JS Izumo shows off its new bow for the first time](#)

[HD Hyundai Finalizes Its First International Contract for an Icebreaker](#)

[Royal Navy makes Pitcairn Island safe during explosive visit](#)

[Royal Navy nuclear submarine completes longest patrol on record](#)

Royal Canadian Navy International Outlook, 17-29 April 2026

The World:

["Countries are rethinking U.S. fossil fuels after Iran war"](#)

["IMO Passes Major Reform of Ship Registration Process"](#)

Bulgaria: ["A new foothold for Moscow in Europe after Bulgaria election"](#)

Ecuador / South Korea: ["S. Korea Donates Patrol Vessel to Help Ecuador Fight Drug Smuggling"](#)

Gaza Strip: ["Gaza needs \\$US71 billion in next decade for recovery, UN and EU report finds"](#)

Germany: ["Germany unveils strategy for becoming Europe's strongest military by 2039"](#)

Japan: ["Japan to Sell More Weapons Abroad, Breaking With Postwar Pacifism"](#)

Japan / China: ["China-Japan tensions escalate after Taiwan Strait passage"](#)

Philippines / Japan: ["Japan to join largest Balikatan war games with 1,400 troops, Type 88 missiles"](#)

Russia / Ukraine: ["EU unblocks €90 billion loan to Ukraine"](#)

Sri Lanka / Iran: ["Sri Lanka repatriates 238 Iranian sailors stranded after US torpedo attack"](#)

United Kingdom / Mauritius: ["UK pauses plan to cede Chagos Islands to Mauritius after US opposition"](#)

The RCAF has Super Pumas?

I knew defence procurement was attempting to be quick these days, but to slip in a buy like this?...

This (bloop(er)?) was brought to the attention of CJOC PA, who expeditiously reached out to USN PA to make a correction.

Does lead to some thoughts. Media monitoring is done (extensively, one can suspect), across the CAF/DND, both contracted and internal, and one hopes (it'd be interesting to learn more) that media analysis (i.e., where might a breaking story go in term of messaging, etc.) is done in some parts of the organizations. A fair question is what is the policy and expectations with respect to correcting media reporting? Is there a DND PA Group policy? Or are PAOs expected to reach out on their own when they note an error in a public report? Easy to do when correcting another military organization, but maybe sensitive when correcting civil reporters (especially leading ones).

In reply to the questions, one retired PAO wrote: The working model at least throughout my career in uniform is that the PA office/Group most directly affected/implicated in a substantive media error would be expected to initiate corrective action.

Not all mistakes of course generate some action to seek to correct. That would be function of consideration of media source, context, degree of harm, breadth of reach by article available time, etc.

The real trick of course is for the PA folks to spend less time in the media correction business and more time in the informing media business in the hopes of reducing opportunity for error in the first place.

From another retired PAO: If you have questions for me and I basically ignore you, delay, provide text only responses and then you run a story that requires small corrections, am I really in a position to call you out on your mistakes (even in a helpful way)? I think this is a bit the quandary they may find themselves in. If you have free engagement more along the lines of what we had roughly 20-30 years ago, you would monitor and proactively reach out to correct. You were also less likely to find errors because the journo's would contact us and confirm things. We would reply quick enough that we could iterate a series of questions and context before they published. There is a big difference between a phone call with real-time back and forth and a text exchange going up several layers of approvals.



A Royal Canadian Air Force Super Puma assigned to Royal Canadian Navy Halifax-class frigate HMCS Charlottetown (FFH 339) prepares to land on the flight deck of U.S. Navy Whidbey Island-class dock landing ship USS Ashland (LSD 48) during a multilateral exercise with the Royal Australian Navy and Royal Canadian Armed Forces in the South China Sea, April 18, 2026. Ashland

Issues to Watch

Hungary surprised us with a peaceful handover of power to the new incoming Government of Peter Magyar of the Tisza Party. Orban has kept a low profile. Peter Magyar made it clear that Hungary will support Ukraine and the EU's loan to Ukraine. He did however ask for the resignation of the country's president as well as key appointments made by Orban. It is evident there will be changes.

The US and Iran are essentially at an impasse at the Straits of Hormuz. Iran has displayed a clear understanding of the situation and has been able to close the straits and is continuing mining operations. Peace talks between the two countries are unlikely to go anywhere at present. The US has been successful in getting friendly nations to generate mine clearance operations once hostilities are over. The US reasoning, planning and conduct I think was best described by the Economist as "Blind Fury." It simply lacks any coherence starting at the top. The US public is increasingly upset as prices climb and the war drags on; the Trump Administration has had the lowest polling numbers since polls on the US presidency were started. This will not end well.

Mali has seen the resurgence of Islamists which have now taken several towns and villages. The Russian "Africa Corps" bravely ran away once they were surrounded at their base. The Malian Government has been dependent on Russian support to remain in power. The loss of Russian support plus the rise in Islamist numbers will likely result in the overthrow of the Government of Mali. What is important is that there are several other countries dependent on Russian troops for their survival. There is a potential for a domino effect across the Sahel.

The Russian economy is increasingly weaker as the war continues. According to Russian sources including usually pro-Kremlin ones, all are now stating that the war has to stop or risk greater problems. Ukraine's deep attacks, success on the battlefield, sanctions, corruption and lack of allies make Russian success unlikely.

China in the South China Sea and efforts to practice amphibious landings will continue, Given China's recent purges of senior officers, the likely ability of China to gain success of an assault on Taiwan is low. China continues to practice but with new team members. China has threatened the US after a ship coming from a Chinese port was intercepted and boarded. China will not accept such actions in the future. This could become very sensitive. For the US, failure to conduct blockade operations will negate future success. Iran's economy is in poor shape; time is not a friend to either side. The possibility of a major confrontation between the US and China is still low but it is certainly more likely with increasing threats.

O Canada

Canada has been aware of foreign interference for some time. CSIS in particular has been aware and has passed its assessment of these threats and regularly has warned the Federal Government of the threats posed by foreign governments intelligence or security services.

The most recent one was in 2024. The comments made in this column are based on the CSIS Public Report of 2024 found at

link: https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2025/scrs-csis/PS71-2024-eng.pdf.

Canada is a target for multiple countries' intelligence services. The major players are the Peoples' Republic of China, the Russian federation, India, Pakistan and Iran. Although not mentioned in the report in 2024; friendly nations such as the US and France have occasionally dipped their ore into Canadian politics most notably in the last Canadian election in 2025. The goals of the intelligence services vary however, only one has a very definite goal to achieve a politically desirable outcome that serves a general purpose and that is the Peoples' Republic of China.

The CSIS report's opening line in regard to China's interference says it all: "With one of the world's largest and most active security intelligence systems, the PRC poses the greatest counterintelligence threat to Canada." P 34 CSIS Public Report. It raises the question why the Canadian Government consistently keeps going back to China on bended knee for trade and other activities. Michael Kovrig who "enjoyed" the hospitality of the Chinese black prison system and has also warned of expecting China to react differently. China can and will use its economic size to counter any Canadian offer. It can and will continue to use the "Three Wars Concept" against us. It will continue to interfere whenever the situation allows. The Carney Government needs to rethink relations with China.

I was intrigued by various articles on the development of RCAF helicopter fleets for support the Army. No less than five different fleets will be acquired or maintained. These include a reconnaissance, attack, medium lift/utility helicopter, special operations and heavy lift. The price is 18 B CAD. It makes me wonder why there is such a ruckus over a mixed fleet of fighters. In the sixties and seventies, we maintained four fighter fleets including electronic warfare, ground attack, air defence and nuclear attack/reconnaissance.

Australia

<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/national-defence-strategy-2026-views-in-the-strategist/>

The attached notes the planned increase of defence expenditures to 3 percent of GDP. This is a substantial increase boost, if it is achieved. Clearly, the government is concerned about the situation the country faces.

<https://www.navy.gov.au/capabilities/ships-boats-and-submarines/general-purpose-frigate>

The RAN has chosen the Japanese Mogami Class frigate. This is a major departure from history!

RUSI NS Note: Interesting that Australia is calling it a general-purpose frigate. A term that one would expect from the media but not officially. It's not a ship type designation and is somewhat meaningless - ships are inherently general purpose (especially when fitted with VLS) and at the same time the fit out of this frigate (which are usually anti-submarine focused vessels) is not such that the ship cannot be employed at all roles.

<https://www.australiandefence.com.au/news/news/australia-and-japan-sign-general-purpose-frigates-contract?>

This is an interesting article. Note the 92-person crew for the new frigate.

RUSI NS Note: The French - Italian FREMM has a similar complement.

Small crews seem to be a way forward, however the US does not as battle damage needs more manpower according to them. We have examples in the Middle east where massive tankers are destroyed with relatively small missiles and drones. The crews are too small to

deal with battle damage. Crews on some of the larger tankers are around 20.

There does seem to be a difference in philosophy regarding ship and crew survival.

<https://www.skynews.com.au/australia-news/politics/australian-army-to-receive-next-generation-laserarmed-bushmasters-as-part-of-12-billion-defence-industry-investment/news-story/685ad8797431e573904bed0062ed15ca>

The Bushmaster is being armed for the future.

<https://www.australiandefence.com.au/news/news/defence-to-consolidate-its-estate>

This appears to be a thoughtful decision.

United States

The United States has been mercurial in their actions. One hesitates to think what the current administration will do next to antagonize friends and allies and other actions based on poorly thought-out plans of countries with a “chip on their shoulders” as we have seen in Israel.

The news media can do a better job on the day-to-day aspects.

The US has basically changed the world order in a significant way. Former allies are now contemplating functioning without US support and how they can achieve this capability as soon as possible. Even now we have seen the rise of the Nordic countries plus Canada to develop a suitable defence of the Arctic. The EU is also working towards developing a European defence alliance based on EU countries plus invitees such as the UK and Norway. Canada is also mentioned.

The world has decided not to count on the US. In the case of ASEAN countries, it means closer relations with China. Africa is contemplating how to align and the signals at present are mixed. Still the US did want countries to stand on their own two feet and it appears they are doing so, in spite of the US and not as allies or customers.

One suspects in the long term, the Trump administration will have done massive damage to the US brand. The hardest capability the US has had was the ability to get countries to trust them and allow for great coalitions for a cause. The Trump Administration has achieved isolation of the US.

King Charles the III gave a speech to the US Congress. It was described as a master class in diplomacy, saying the hard things without seeming to do so throughout the speech. One had to wonder at the end whether the King could have run for President given the handshaking, standing ovation crowd. It was delivered with humour and carefully selected prose and lessons from history. It was well worth watching.

Moldova

On 26 April 2026, President Maia Sandu made a state visit to Kyiv for the 40th Anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster. In her statement, she expressed her gratitude for the sacrifice of those who prevented a much wider disaster that could have been considerably worse. She made it clear that disasters of this nature have no borders and that the sacrifices made at that time had global impact.

President Sandu and President Zelensky had further discussions on security issues affecting both countries. This includes Russian drones, sabotage, espionage, disinformation and low-level insurgency amongst pro-Russian elements of the population in both countries. Russia has also made its offensive intentions clear in regard to both countries as well. Both Moldova and Ukraine have moved towards a pro-European position. Both countries have applied to join the EU ascension program in 2022, and both have made major strides to achieve the

standards required for membership in the EU. Information provided was through Kyiv Independent and others.

As if to emphasize the overall threat, on 22 April 2026, Sergei Shoigu made threats of Russian intervention due to ongoing discussions with the authorities in Transnistria. The Government of Moldova entered into reunification discussions with the breakaway region at the exclusion of Russia. Russia maintains that 220 k people are citizens of Russia and Russia will protect them. Moldova and Ukraine have largely blockaded the breakaway region in recent months after the Russians stopped delivery of natural gas to the breakaway region. More than 70% of Transnistria's exports now go to the EU at better prices. Still Russia has proven that its agents can cause disruption.

The OECD reported on 24 April 2026, that "Moldova has made progress in advancing key reforms and accelerating structural reforms in the areas of state-owned enterprises, financial markets, and competition will be crucial for boosting productivity and supporting stronger and more sustainable economic growth." Moldova and Ukraine have both made significant strides to remove corruption from politics, business and justice and are close to attaining EU membership within the foreseeable future.

Georgia

Georgia has not made strides towards a pro-European view. The EU has suggested that Georgia is continuing to backslide on the limited reforms it had made. The Georgia Dream Party has delayed future ascension talks with the EU until 2028 and a year and a half ago. Demonstrations on this issue continue despite a security force crackdown on demonstrations. Georgia's government is under the control of a pro-Russian oligarch, Bidzina Ivanishvili, who also happens to be the richest man in Georgia. He has largely controlled the country since 2012 with the election of the party he founded and funded, the Georgia Dream Party.

Belarus

Belarus also marked the 40th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. Belarus was also badly affected by the event. The self-appointed president of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, announced this week that he wants to reestablish agriculture on the lands affected by the event. Russian forces who occupied the ground during the early part of Russia invasion also had health issues as a result. It is unlikely that these lands will be useful in the near to medium term due to overall contamination.

After a period of relatively bellicose comments towards Ukraine and Europe from Lukashenko, most news from Belarus involved agriculture including visits to foreign countries. Lukashenko still walks a tightrope in hopes of extending the survival of his regime, the absence of bellicose language is a necessity.

The Iran-US-Israel War

Israel has been at war since 7 October 2023. If one looks further back Israel has been under sporadic attack since the fall of the Shah of Iran in 1979. Yesterday, the Israeli Chief of Staff, LGen Zamir, cautioned that Israeli forces are overextended on no less than seven different fronts. While he is right to bring this forward, Israel is still moving on regime change in Iran and the removal and disarming of Iranian proxy forces.

What is not clear is what is actually happening in Iran itself. Questions are now being asked whether the Guardian Council of Clerics still exists, whether the President and the elected

representatives are active or have hardline IRGC generals taken control? Have other opposition groups started to show such as the Kurds? How much of the Iranian forces are still operational? What is the condition of the key ammunition and equipment plants are still operational and still producing? Most importantly, is the war going into a new phase of combat over the Straits of Hormuz and the civil war potentially being fought inside the country between various factions of the IRGC? Who actually is in control? Will the US continue its attacks and whether they will put “boots on the ground” at least for short periods.

This conflict is not over, and we may not be seeing the actual fight at all. Will internal IRGC factions fight for control over the government and more importantly, are the ones offering to negotiate the actual team that should be negotiating? It is difficult to know.

The Russia-Ukraine Conflict

One could almost repeat the opening paragraph to the last set of notes. One point is clear; Russia no longer has the ability to win this war. Russia has failed to adapt its method of fighting. Its losses are staggering and there have been very limited advances or gains. The size of the country and the ego of the President have left the country vulnerable to Ukrainian attacks as the air defences are too widely spread to be effective. Ukraine has been more successful at determining solutions to the Russian attacks, often achieving over 90% kill rate on drones and cruise missiles. Ballistic missiles continue to be a problem.

Ukraine’s defence is so great that their interceptor drones and method of operating a complex system is now in high demand especially in the Middle east and in the Gulf States. Russia on the other hand has seen the defeat of the Russian Africa Corps in Mali and the destruction of one of the largest loading docks, storage facilities and refinery in Tuapse which has undergone four major attacks and satellite imagery shows massive destruction of the facility.

On the ground, Ukraine has had more success than Russia achieving the recapture of more ground than Russia last month and currently so far this month. Russian troops seldom make it to the front as Ukrainian drones now eliminate the troops long before the line of contact. Ukraine has also established a large, unmanned ground vehicle fleet that allows saving of infantry resources, using their mechanical partners to lead the way. Russian troops are so far limited to motorcycles, golf carts and small wheeled vehicles.

In Russia itself, the economy continues to deteriorate at a rapid rate. Rumours of a planned coup abound although quite frankly information is questionable. Putin still has officially a very high favourability rate. Still, it appears that the economy is running out of capacity to adjust. How much longer can the Putin regime carry on? The answer is unknown but there are major difficulties ahead that cannot be ignored.

China

The Peoples’ Republic of China is an adversary. As noted in the O Canada section it has a large, pervasive multi-sector intelligence campaign across the world. It is an authoritarian regime and there are some that would suggest genocidal as it attacks the culture, religion and way of life of its large number of minorities in favour of Han Chinese, It continues to occupy two countries, Tibet and East Turkestan also known now as Xinjiang Province. They were invaded and occupied by the PLA in 1950. The CCP continues to state that it will retake Taiwan by force if necessary despite Taiwan never was part of China. Nor can we ignore the

fact that China does not honour its agreements such as with Hong Kong. It conducts extra-territorial actions against those it perceives as enemies such as pro-democratic activists or people fleeing CCP persecution such as Falun Gong practitioners. China continues to conduct influence operations under the “Three Wars Concept” and many countries including Canada have been “attacked using information operations, lawfare, and economic warfare such as creating “new regulations” to hamper the sale of the commodity. Canada saw this most recently with canola and lobster. China cannot be trusted.

The PLAN has been ramping up drills with the apparent view to land aggressively in Taiwan. This includes both the Type 75 and type 76 assault aircraft carriers and landing ships. These recent drills are the first ones in which a type 76 has participated. China is continuing to improve its overall capacity to conduct large landings. The main question is what happens to Chinese operations once the “enemy” no longer follows the script that is a key characteristic of Chinese drills?

In the last two years, the PLAN has lost a significant number of senior and flag officers as part of an overall “corruption” purge of the PLA. In the PRC, it was a common approach to remove political opposition by “charging” the target with corruption charges or worse yet, espionage and accepting bribes from foreign powers. As a general observation, the PLA is rampant with actual corruption. Promotion is often attained by “buying” the rank to whoever had the ability to grant it. Fortunes were made and continue to be made. The level of competence is variable. “Payment can also be made by carrying out deeds that help one's “patron.” Again, this calls into question the ability of the PLA and specifically the PLAN's actual ability. The kit looks great but looks can be deceiving; good work on drills does not necessarily mean success in combat.

China continues to cause chaos and mayhem in the South China Sea, along the Indo-Sino border, against Japan as well as harassing the ships of other nations in International waters. More recently, they restarted their island building program on reefs that lie in the territorial waters of other nations. Most nations are unable to do anything about it, however both the Philippines and Vietnam have made efforts to thwart Chinese ambitions. It is a work in progress.

One last point, China Belt and Road Initiative has been badly mauled by Israeli and American attacks in Iran. Most of the rail bridges vital for the success of the BRI have been eliminated. These cost billions to build and will likely cost more to replace. China has a large oil reserve estimated to be 1,2 B tons, however, the CCP government has been reluctant to release this reserve, saving it for future operations and emergencies. China has opted for purchasing Russian oil from tankers at sea. China was angered by the US stopping an Iranian vessel that had loaded and left a Chinese port. It was shelled and then boarded and taken by US forces. Chinese authorities specifically warned against this in future and seemed to directly threaten the US. None of these issues are good news for China and its place in the world. The US is busy making enemies and at the moment are considered the bigger threat to global economic efforts and trade.

The unknown ally: Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/maple-leaf/defence/2025/03/unknown-ally-osiss.html>