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AOPV in action

His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) Frédérick Rolette conducts Cold Weather Trials and Ice Operations Training in the Northumberland Strait in late February. The ship paused for photos before passing under the Prince Edward Island Confederation Bridge alongside sister ship HMCS Robert Hampton Gray.

HMCS ROBERT HAMPTON GRAY





THE FORMIDABLE SHIP 336 - CPL MORGAN LEBLANC

Halifax Image Techs capture national recognition

Winners were recently announced for the 2025 Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Imagery Contest, with two local Imagery Technicians taking top honours.

Corporal (Cpl) Mitch Paquette claimed first place in the Military Community Life category for *Her Watch Begins*, while Cpl Morgan LeBlanc earned a win in the Military Operations category with *The Formidable Ship 336*. Contest judges praised both images as standout examples of the talent and skill found among CAF photographers.

The annual contest is open to both professional and amateur photographers from across the Defence Community, including service members and their families, welcoming submissions ranging from operations and work milestones to family events and travel. Photographers interested in next year's contest can expect submissions to open in August 2026.



HER WATCH BEGINS - CPL MITCHELL PAQUETTE

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Future naval occupations determined to ensure readiness

By RCN

The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) is entering a period of purposeful change. Change that is focused on ensuring our people, skills, and structures are ready for the fleet we will operate in the decades ahead.

New platforms, new combat systems, and increasingly complex operating environments demand a workforce that is agile, adaptable, and aligned to how we fight, operate, and sustain the fleet.

How We Got Here

To meet this challenge, the RCN undertook a comprehensive Occupation Analysis (OA). This work examined what sailors do at sea, ashore, and in training establishments, how technology has changed the nature of work, and where legacy occupation structures no longer reflect modern reality.

The outcome of that analysis was clear. While our people continue to de-

liver outstanding operational effect, the way our occupations are structured has not kept pace with evolving demands. In December, the OA presented Commander of the RCN with a course of action to transition nine existing RCN-managed occupations into thirteen modernized occupations. This change is designed to better align skills, training, career pathways, and workforce management, and to create a more resilient workforce that

can grow alongside new capabilities, such as advanced combat systems and future classes of ships.

The following illustrates the redistribution of job tasks, duty areas, and responsibilities from legacy occupations to the newly designed occupations.

Current Occupations	Future Occupations
Naval Combat Information Operator (NCIOP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combat Systems Operator
Naval Electronic Sensor Operator (NESOP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combat Systems Operator • Electromagnetic Warfare Specialist • Fire Control Specialist • Weapons Specialist
Naval Communicator (Nav Comm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Systems Specialist • Information Systems Specialist
Sonar Operator (Sonar Op)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underwater Warfare Specialist
Weapons Engineering Technician (W Eng Tech)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electromagnetic Warfare Specialist • Communication Systems Specialist • Information Systems Specialist • Underwater Warfare Specialist • Fire Control Specialist • Navigation Systems Technician • Weapons Specialist • Submarine Warfare Specialist
Naval Warfare Officer (NWO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWO
Naval Combat Systems Engineering Officer (NCS Eng)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCS Eng
Marine Systems Engineering Officer (MS Eng)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MS Eng
Naval Engineering Officer (Nav Eng)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nav Eng

Where We Are Now

With this occupation change now endorsed, the Navy is moving into implementation planning. This phase focuses on translating analysis into an executable transition plan: One that is deliberate and carefully balances personnel, training, fleet readiness, and career progression.

At this stage, no individual changes are being taken. Instead, the Navy is deliberately sequencing the work to ensure transitions are coherent, fair, and

operationally sound. This includes close coordination across formations, schools, fleet authorities, and headquarters.

What We're Hearing

As implementation planning continues, the Navy is tracking the questions most frequently raised by sailors, which seem to be related to pay considerations and the protection of specialized skill sets. Pay implications for new occupations will be examined through established review processes at the appropriate stage

of planning, with the intent of ensuring transparency and consistency across the workforce. Similarly, occupation transitions will be carefully sequenced and phased, considering specialization, time invested within skill streams, and operational requirements, to avoid unintended impacts.

What Comes Next

Over the coming months, the RCN will engage broadly to refine the implementation plan and address key considerations

raised through stakeholder and formation engagement. Dedicated working groups and senior-level governance are being established to address key areas including personnel management, training, recruiting, pay and compensation, and required policy updates. As planning matures, additional information will be shared.



Government, RCN and King's Harbour Master representatives were on hand for the announcement at HMC Dockyard.

FORMATION IMAGING SERVICES

Government announces expansion of Naval Large Tug contract as CFAV *Canso* welcomed to Halifax

By Nathan Stone,
Trident Staff

The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) is increasing its order of Naval Large Tugs from four to six to meet the needs of an expanding and modernizing fleet.

On February 27, The Honourable Lena Metlege Diab, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, visited Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax on behalf of Minister of National Defence David McGuinty to announce the expanded purchase and welcome the first of the new tugs to arrive on the East Coast, Canadian Forces Auxiliary Vessel (CFAV) *Canso*.

The Department of National Defence formally accepted CFAV *Canso* in January 2026 after the vessel completed a more than 1,000-nautical-mile journey from the Ocean Industries Inc. shipyard in Île-aux-Coudres, Que., to Halifax. Ownership will transfer to the RCN once crew training is complete, anticipated to be later this month.

CFAV *Canso* is the first Naval Large Tug delivered to the East Coast. Two

others, CFAVs *Haro* and *Barkerville*, were delivered to the RCN in Esquimalt, B.C., in August 2024. A fourth tug, *Stella Maris*, is scheduled to arrive in Halifax in November 2026.

In December 2025, the Government of Canada amended the contract to include two additional tugs. The vessels are to be named *Sansum* and *Belle Isle*, continuing the Navy's tradition of naming Naval Large Tugs after Canadian straits.

Naval Large Tugs provide essential harbour and coastal support to the RCN, including harbour berthing, coastal towing and harbour firefighting. As the Navy continues to modernize its fleet; including the Harry DeWolf-class Arctic and Offshore Patrol Vessels, Protecteur-class Auxiliary Oiler Replenishment vessels and future River-class destroyers, the demand for harbour support services is expected to grow.

The new vessels will replace the Navy's five Glen-class tugs, which entered service between 1975 and 1977, as well as



The RCN's new East Coast Naval Large Tug, CFAV *Canso*, is seen in Halifax on February 27.

FORMATION IMAGING SERVICES

the two Fire-class fireboats that entered service in 1978.

Ocean Industries Inc., the Quebec-based shipbuilder delivering the first four tugs, has been selected to fulfill the expanded order.

"We're building on proven expertise and workforce," said Diab. "We're further supporting domestic suppliers, domestic economies and domestic communities, and streamlining production so that the Navy gets these tugs faster."

Speaking at the announcement, Commodore (Cmdre) Jacob French, Commander Canadian Fleet Atlantic, stressed the importance of the new vessels to the RCN's ability to carry out operations.

"Without the ability of an auxiliary fleet to manage dockyard operations, assist larger vessels in winter storms or monsoon winds, and push and pull wherever required so ships can receive ammunition, refuel and make safe arrivals and departures, the operational tempo

we maintain abroad or domestically cannot be sustained," said Cmdre French. "Canada's international successes, and the RCN's representation abroad, are only possible if we first succeed here in our own harbour."

Cmdre French added that the new tugs provide increased towing and pushing capability that will be required to handle new warships.

All six tugs are expected to be delivered by 2029. Once fully operational, three will be stationed at CFB Halifax and three at CFB Esquimalt, providing redundancy to offset maintenance periods and strengthening overall fleet readiness.



S3 Marco Petrucci is seen in a still from the RCN video series "To Serve".

RCN

S3 Marco Petrucci: "There has to be trust at every level"

By RCN

A family history rooted in sacrifice is anchoring Sailor 3rd Class (S3) Marco Petrucci's journey in the Royal Canadian Navy.

"My great, great grandfather served in World War 1 and World War 2 in Italy. He was actually captured," he explains. "A few German soldiers were actually found killed in the area of Pianosinatico, where my family comes from. Because of that, they actually lined up 25 Sisis and 25 Petrucci's and they all shot them."

A shared gravestone bearing 50 names stands in Pianosinatico, memorializing the soldiers executed as a result of the German casualties. Twenty-five of these names end with "Petrucci". "We've all gone and visited that grave," says S3 Petrucci.

You come out of high school thinking 'the world is your oyster, everything is going to be easy', says S3 Petrucci.

"But it is absolutely not."

Before joining the Royal Canadian Navy as a Marine Technician, S3 Petrucci tried a variety of odd jobs.

"I did lifeguarding, I was a substitute teacher at one point. But in the end, they

Marine Technicians (MARTECHs) serve a crucial role at sea. They troubleshoot internal issues, advising command and restoring system functions.

Every system on board is connected; a ship's crew must function like a well-oiled machine. Even a minor equipment fault at sea can escalate quickly if not addressed, putting every crew member at risk.

"Our gearbox, that's the most important part of the ship for us. If anything goes wrong, that can cause the ship to stop," says S3 Petrucci. "And now I'm responsible for all that."

"Fights, fires, floods, damage, Helo crashes." The S3 and his team are responsible for dealing with all of these.

"There has to be trust at every level," S3 Petrucci says of life at sea. "Because we know if anything happens, we're looking at each other."

Through shared challenges, S3 Petrucci and his shipmates have built a powerful camaraderie. Having seen "the best and the worst of all of us" has created a bond he calls family.

With the experience he has gained in

privilege of mentoring new recruits.

"We're getting new guys on, new recruits, and now I'm one of the guys they look towards."

Mentorship is an important part of any sailor's progression, allowing them to apply what they have learned and reinforce their knowledge by sharing it.

This is especially true for technical trades like MARTECH, as sailors like S3 Petrucci must evolve with the times and instill modernization efforts into the new generation of recruits.

S3 Petrucci also carries out any metal work required, such as welding and machining. He has found himself responsible for the vital systems, from mechanical to electrical, that keep the ship moving.

playing a key role in building the Navy of tomorrow, all the while enhancing his leadership skills and furthering his career.

Historical memory, like that of S3 Petrucci's great-grandfather, shapes modern identity in the Navy. He carries forward a dual legacy: the resilience memorialized in Pianosinatico and the critical role of today's Navy, proving that service bridges generations and oceans.

"I'm proud to be part of that lineage that stood up for themselves and made sacrifices, and in the end, succeeded."

[Watch S3 Petrucci's full story](#) in the first episode of "To Serve", a new RCN video series.

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Beatrice Wilkins (left) and Bernice Arsenault-Byers (right) lived in Africville as children prior to the displacement of residents in the 1960s.

CPL MITCHELL PAQUETTE



Attendees gathered at Juno Tower for a Black History Month presentation led by Africville Museum staff on February 19.

CPL MITCHELL PAQUETTE

Africville Museum team shares history during Black History Month event

By Griffin Bjerke-Clarke,
Trident Staff

CFB Halifax marked Black History Month and African Heritage Month on February 19 with a presentation at Juno Tower featuring representatives from the Africville Museum, highlighting the legacy of the historic African Nova Scotian community.

Africville Museum Executive Director Juanita Peters was joined by elders Beatrice Wilkins and Bernice Arsenault-Byers, as well as Halifax Needham MLA Suzy Hansen. The event was hosted by the Defence Racialized Persons Advisory Group (DRPAG) and emceed by its military co-chair, Petty Officer 2nd Class Korey Tynes. Halifax Peninsula North Councillor Virginia Hinch was also in attendance.

In her keynote address, Peters shared updates on new initiatives at the museum, including short films celebrating the stories of former residents and plans to further develop the infilled land surrounding the site. She also spoke about

Africville's history as a vibrant community along the Bedford Basin that was demolished under the guise of urban renewal in the 1960s, leaving its people displaced.

Wilkins and Arsenault-Byers later took part in a question-and-answer session and shared personal memories of growing up in Africville. They described a close-knit community where neighbours never locked their doors, but where residents often faced indignities. In a striking example, they spoke of shelters commonly using the neighbourhood as a dumping ground for deceased animals.

This year marks three decades since Black History Month was officially recognized in Canada in 1995, following a motion introduced by Jean Augustine, the first Black woman elected to Parliament. Black history in Canada spans more than 400 years, with Nova Scotia playing a significant role following the

American Revolution and the War of 1812.

"Canada needs to be proud of where we sit in history. Nova Scotia, after the American Revolution and the War of 1812, had the only colony of free Blacks on the continent. People should know that Black life in Canada actually began right here in Nova Scotia," Peters noted.

"Here at MARLANT, it's especially important that we ground ourselves in the history of the region in which we serve," said PO2 Tynes. "Understanding the stories of African Nova Scotian communities strengthens our connection to the people and places that surround us and reinforces our shared commitment to inclusion and respect across the Defence Team."

MLA Hansen, the first Black woman elected to represent Halifax Needham and a descendant of Africville residents, expressed her gratitude to the community.

The event also featured a performance of the civil rights anthem Lift Every Voice and Sing and a video commemorating the No. 2 Construction Battalion, the only predominantly Black Canadian battalion to serve in the First World War. Many of its members were from Nova Scotia.

"As a Defence Team, it is our duty to foster a culture of inclusion and equity in our pursuit of a strong, supportive workforce," added Base Commander Captain (N) Annick Fortin. "It is our hope that this inclusive culture extends to the communities in which our members work and live as we strive to be good neighbours and collaborators."

A reception outside the Ballroom concluded the morning's events, where attendees gathered for coffee and blueberry grunt, a traditional African Nova Scotian dessert.



AOPS project nears completion

Staff at Irving Shipbuilding recently cut the final pieces of steel to be used in construction of the future Canadian Coast Guard Ship *Sermilik*, the last of eight Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships built for the Royal Canadian Navy and Canadian Coast Guard.

The shipbuilder is now turning its attention to the Navy's next major surface combatant. From this point on, Irving says all steel cut in its Dartmouth fabrication facility will be used for the future River-class Destroyers.

IRVING SHIPBUILDING



Site preparation activities to begin at CFB Halifax Stadacona (Porteous Field) for Combatant Training and Integration Centre Atlantic (CTIC-A)

By CFB Halifax

Local Defence Team:

Changes are coming to our Stadacona property as we welcome the construction of a new Defence infrastructure project in early March 2026. See project details below.

Background

Future construction of Combatant Training and Integration Centre Atlantic (CTIC-A), a new training facility at CFB Halifax, was [announced](#) in November 2023.

CTIC-A will be a collaborative training and operational support facility whose cutting-edge training systems will prepare Canadian sailors for the incoming fleet of [River-class destroyers](#), the Royal Canadian Navy's (RCN) next generation of warships. The facility will be a war-fighting centre of excellence, enabling rapid technological change with agile capability development, and a secure training facility for classified individual and collective training, featuring advanced

simulators for underwater, above water, and maritime air warfare.

CTIC-A will be constructed on Porteous Field (see Figure 1 below for reference). This site was chosen as it meets the facility's security requirements, presenting minimal disruption to operations as it is located near other RCN training facilities, and is suitable for future utility tie-ins.

Site preparation for CTIC-A

Location: Porteous Field

Timeline: Early March 2026

Site preparation activities to include:

- Installation of a construction fence around the perimeter of Porteous Field to delineate the construction zone, providing a safe working environment for our workforce and contractors;
- Relocation of underground utilities (waterlines, gas lines, sewer lines, etc.); and

- Installation of a construction crane.

During this site preparation period, local Defence Team members and visitors can expect:

- Pedestrian and vehicle traffic detours (vehicular access will be maintained to roadways that border Porteous Field);
- Increased noise and construction traffic;
- Occasional impacts to Base utilities (planned power outages, etc.); and
- Occasional impacts to S82 building access through the exterior door facing Porteous Field, though emergency exiting will be maintained at all times.

Efforts will be made to communicate detours, utility outages, and building access changes that impact our Defence Team ahead of time.

Recreational facilities

While the construction of CTIC-A means that Porteous Field will no longer be available to our workforce for recreational activities, there are a variety of PSP Halifax-managed facilities throughout CFB Halifax that remain available to you.

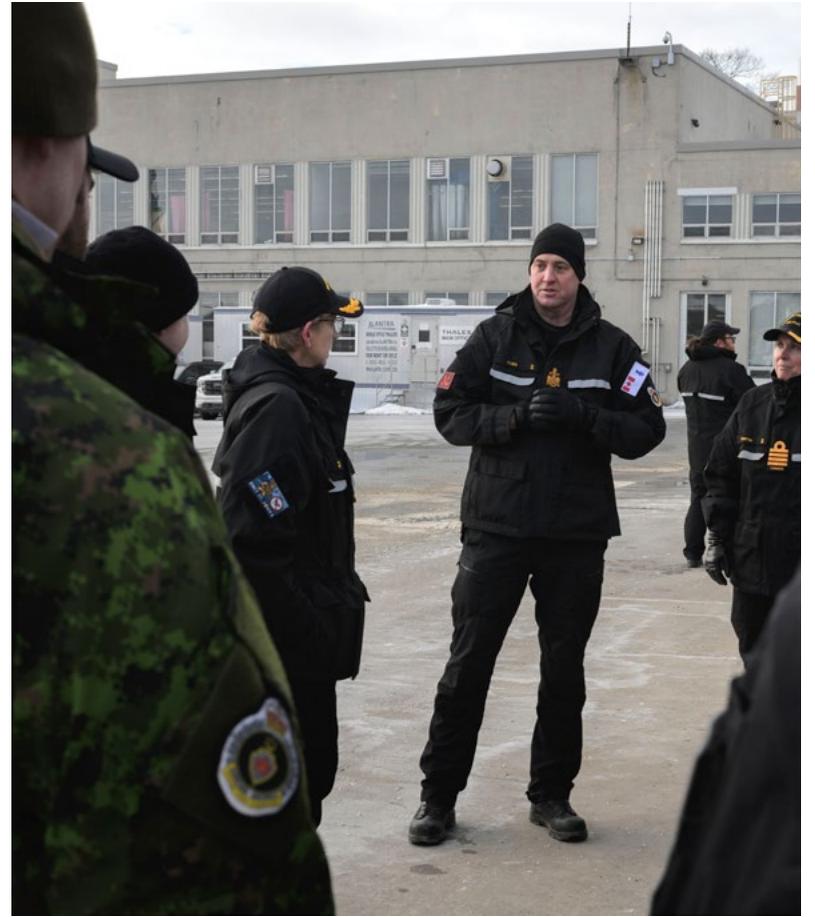
Please visit this website for a list of facilities: <https://cfmws.ca/halifax/facilities>

Construction timelines n

Construction of CTIC-A is expected to run from April 2026 – February 2030. More information on what to expect during the construction period will be provided as it becomes available.

Questions

Infrastructure project questions can be directed to: Sean.hanlon@forces.gc.ca



Dockyard Demonstration Highlights Emerging Counter-UAS Tools

The Advanced Naval Capabilities Unit recently demonstrated the TRD Orion-H10 handheld counter-UAS system for local leaders at HMC Dockyard in Halifax. Pictured is a Maritime Tactical Operator using the device to take on an uncrewed aerial system.

Protecting the airspace around naval ships and infrastructure is an increasingly important task, and the demonstration highlighted emerging counter-drone capabilities designed to detect, track, identify, and defeat uncrewed aerial systems in support of naval security.

PL MORGAN LEBLANC



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35 Years Later: Gulf War veterans recognized in Halifax



While the event at HMCS Scotian focused on recognizing Canada's role in the Gulf and the service members who took part, speakers also touched on difficulties faced by Gulf War Veterans and the push to have Operation FRICTION designated as Wartime Service.

CPL GREGORY COLE



Local CAF leaders and government representatives joined Gulf War veterans from across the country for a commemorative event at HMCS Scotian on February 28 to mark 35 years since the end of the conflict that began with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August of 1990.

CPL L. BROLLY



A sailpast and flypast were observed at HMC Dockyard on February 28 before attendees moved inside HMCS Scotian for the commemoration.

CPL GREGORY COLE



Gulf War veterans were also recently recognized in the Nova Scotia Legislature to mark the anniversary, as well as with a reception hosted by Nova Scotia Lieutenant Governor Mike Savage at Government House.

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SPORTS & FITNESS



The combined Halifax/Shearwater women's team won gold at the CAF Atlantic Region Volleyball Championship, held at 14 Wing Greenwood from February 24-26.

CPL L. BROLLY



The Mariners men's team also won gold, with a straight-set victory over Gagetown in the championship game.

CPL L. BROLLY

Mariners take two: Halifax men's and women's teams win volleyball gold

By Sara White,
The Aurora

A snowy start to the Canadian Armed Forces Atlantic Region men's and women's volleyball tournament pushed opening play back a couple of hours and required some early schedule adjustments. Once things got underway, however, teams from 12 Wing Shearwater, Canadian Forces Base Halifax, 5th Canadian Division Support Base Gagetown and the host 14 Wing Greenwood were ready to compete.

By the end of the three-day tournament, the Halifax-based Mariners had claimed both the men's and women's titles.

Women's Action

In the February 24 opener, the Halifax/Shearwater Mariners defeated the Greenwood Bombers 25-17 and 25-15. The afternoon's second game saw the Mariners continue their strong start with a

25-13, 25-20 win over Gagetown.

On Day 2, February 25, Greenwood defeated Gagetown in three sets, 23-25, 25-4 and 15-6. With the round robin complete, Halifax/Shearwater secured first place in the standings and advanced directly to the championship match.

Greenwood and Gagetown met in a February 26 semifinal, with Greenwood earning the second spot in the final.

When the teams met again for the title match, Halifax/Shearwater came away with the gold, winning 25-22, 25-16 and 25-10. Corporal Christina Souza was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

Greenwood coach Corporal Leo Gauthier said the Halifax/Shearwater team had built momentum through the tournament.

"They'd elevated their game — they played well," he said.

Men's Action

The Halifax Mariners also opened their tournament on February 24 with a win over the Greenwood Bombers, taking the

match 25-18 and 25-14.

Later that day, Gagetown defeated Shearwater before returning to the court to face Halifax, where the Mariners secured another victory, 25-21 and 25-17.

On Day 2, three more games were played. Greenwood defeated Shearwater before adding a second win against Gagetown. Halifax also picked up a victory over Shearwater, 25-12 and 25-22, finishing first in the standings and advancing directly to the final.

In the February 26 semifinal round, Gagetown defeated Shearwater and then Greenwood to earn a place in the championship game.

The final followed the women's title match, with Halifax facing Gagetown for the gold. The Mariners secured the championship in straight sets, 25-14, 25-23 and 25-18.

Halifax Naval Cadet Justin Gallant was named the final's Most Valuable Player.