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Operation HORIZON 2026

A boatswain onboard HMCS Charlottetown stands watch on the bridge while sailing during Operation HORIZON on June 25. The ship left Halifax in February for the six-month Indo-Pacific deployment and will soon be set to return home.

MS ALEX HEAGLE



Commander Justin Robicheau, seen here as the ship departed from Halifax on July 16, is the new Commanding Officer of HMCS Margaret Brooke.

MCPL CONNOR BENNETT

HMCS Margaret Brooke welcomes new CO as ship heads for refit

By Nathan Stone,
Trident Staff

His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Margaret Brooke* has undergone a change of command following a two-year tenure under Commander (Cdr) Teri Share that saw the ship achieve a number of historic firsts for a Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) vessel. Under her command, *Margaret Brooke* became the first RCN ship to visit Antarctica, supported the first all-Canadian Antarctic scientific expedition, and completed the only RCN voyage to both the Arctic and Antarctic in the same year.

Commander (Cdr) Justin Robicheau took command of the vessel from the outgoing Commanding Officer Cdr Share during a ceremony on *Margaret Brooke*'s flight deck on July 10.

In 2025, the ship completed a 119-day deployment to South America and

Antarctica as part of Operation PROJECTION, supporting a team of Natural Resources Canada scientists in climate change research. Along the way, *Margaret Brooke* visited nine ports throughout South and Central America to strengthen the bonds between Canada and its partners in the region.

"Not only were we able to do all this amazing scientific work in the South and in Antarctica, but the relationship building we were able to accomplish within Latin American countries... was phenomenal," Cdr Share said of the deployment, which saw the ship sail over 25,000 nautical miles.

Speaking at the ceremony, Commander Canadian Fleet Atlantic, Commodore (Cmdre) Jacob French praised Cdr

Share's tenure, noting she took over two years ago and ensured the ship's company was "immediately ready for all the operational commitments."

He also praised her ability to build a cohesive and motivated team.

"Your leadership and your personality are a contributing factor to the great morale and positive attitude that pervades throughout the ship and it's infectious throughout the entire fleet as well."

Cdr Share, reflecting on her command, expressed gratitude to her family and the crew for their support throughout her tenure.

"It truly takes a village to raise and sustain a captain."

The incoming CO, Cdr Robicheau, previously served as Executive Offi-

cer aboard HMCS *William Hall*. In his incoming address, he shared the three leadership principles he received from his grandfather on the day he joined the Navy: to be "fair, firm, and approachable."

He praised the example set by Cdr Share, stating "the professionalism, pride, and confidence I have witnessed in this ship's company over recent days are a direct reflection of her leadership."

Cdr Robicheau and the crew of *Margaret Brooke* are now tasked with sailing the ship up the St. Lawrence River for participation in the Marine Careers Expo 2026, followed by repairs and refits in Quebec. The ship left Halifax on July 16, less than a week after the change of command ceremony.

"It is no small feat," said Cdr Robicheau of the coming work, "but by applying lessons learned from previous refits, we will regenerate this asset for the RCN and prepare her for the next operational cycle."

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CJOC Chief meets with clearance divers at RIMPAC 2026

Canadian Joint Operations Command Chief Warrant Officer Pascal Gagne meets with Royal Canadian Clearance divers during Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2026 on July 13. Thirty nations, 30 ships, five submarines, 15 national land forces, more than 190 aircraft and more than 30,000 personnel are participating in RIMPAC in and around the Hawaiian Islands, June 24 to July 31.

MCPL JESSICA VOS



RCN divers in the water during RIMPAC 2026.

FDU(A)

RCN divers showcase salvage and humanitarian relief skills at RIMPAC

By RCN

Canadian Navy divers from Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific) and Fleet Diving Unit (Atlantic) as well as Port Inspection divers from across Canada are showcasing their specialized capabilities and strengthening partnerships with allied and partner nations during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2026, the world's largest international maritime exercise.

Throughout the exercise, Canadian Port Inspection Divers and Clearance Divers have been integrated into multinational diving teams, conducting operations ranging from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to advanced salvage and underwater engineering tasks.

Port Inspection Divers Support Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Scenario

Working alongside the United States Coast Guard, the Canadian Port In-

spection Diver team participated in a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) serial focused on restoring safe navigation following a simulated maritime disaster.

The combined team conducted a light salvage operation to recover and reposition a damaged Aid to Navigation (ATON) before installing a replacement marker. The evolution demonstrated how quickly divers can help reopen ports and waterways after storms, accidents, or other emergencies.

"Operations like this show the immediate impact diving teams can have during a disaster response," said a Canadian diving team leader. "Restoring navigation aids and ensuring ports are safe to operate is often one of the first steps in getting humanitarian assistance moving where it's needed."

Port Inspection Divers specialize

in underwater inspections, harbour clearance, and light salvage operations, providing a rapid-response capability that supports both domestic and international maritime operations.

Elsewhere during RIMPAC, Canadian Clearance Divers have been embedded with a United States Navy salvage team, working shoulder-to-shoulder with divers from New Zealand, Mexico, and Peru.

Using the Kirby Morgan KM-37 surface-supplied diving system, the team has conducted a series of increasingly complex underwater tasks, including hydraulic tool operations, underwater welding, and oxy-arc cutting. The training is expected to progress into mixed-gas diving operations later in the exercise.

"RIMPAC gives us the opportunity to train with some of the best military diving teams in the world," said one

Canadian Clearance Diver. "Whether we're using hydraulic tools, conducting underwater repairs, or preparing for mixed-gas dives, we're learning from each other every day."

The multinational environment allows divers to exchange techniques, procedures, and best practices while building the interoperability required for real-world coalition operations.

Building Readiness Through Partnership

For the Royal Canadian Navy, RIMPAC 2026 is an opportunity to strengthen relationships with trusted partners while refining the specialized skills required for salvage, harbour clearance, underwater engineering, and expeditionary diving operations.

As operations continue across the Hawaiian Islands, Canadian divers remain fully integrated within the broader multinational force, contributing expertise that helps ensure maritime forces can respond rapidly to emergencies, support humanitarian efforts, and operate effectively together wherever they are called.

Royal Canadian Navy Cyber Team strengthens interoperability during RIMPAC

By LCdr Linda Coleman

More than 30 cyber specialists from six nations gathered at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, for advanced cyber warfare training during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2026, the world's largest international maritime exercise. Participants from Canada, Australia, the United States, Germany, the Philippines, and the Republic of Korea worked together in a Persistent Cyber Training Environment to enhance multinational cooperation and cyber readiness.

The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) was represented by Lt(N) Charles Mottet, CPO2 Gavin Flannigan, PO1 Nicholas Fenton, MS Steve Gosling, MS Chris Harris, S1 Alexander Reed, and S1 Jeff Tsang. The exercise provided an opportunity for Canadian personnel to strengthen professional relationships and exchange expertise with allies and partners.

Conducted during RIMPAC's harbour phase, the training immersed participants in realistic cyber scenarios requiring integrated multinational teams to respond to simulated threats. "This exercise is designed to challenge personnel in a dynamic environment, requiring them to coordinate responses, share information, and solve complex cyber threats collaboratively," said CPO2 Flannigan. "By working together in these scenarios, we gain valuable experience operating across national boundaries while improving our collective ability to defend critical military networks and systems."

A key objective was to identify best practices and lessons learned that can be shared among participating nations.

These outcomes will help inform the development of common procedures, reporting standards, and operational frameworks for future multinational cyber operations.

Lt(N) Mottet highlighted the value of the RCN's Fleet Cyber Team participation. "Fleet Cyber Teams (Pacific and Atlantic) participation in the exercise at RIMPAC has been a great opportunity to learn and build on each other's experiences in Defensive Cyber Operations," he said. "The close ties we are deepening with our allies have been invaluable for Canada's reputation as a global player in the cyber domain."

The exercise also emphasized the importance of relationship-building alongside technical training. Participants developed trust, communication, and collaboration skills that will support future joint operations and responses to shared cyber challenges. "It's been an amazing opportunity to collaborate with multiple nations to share diverse experience and knowledge within the Cyber Warfare Domain," noted PO1 Fenton.

RIMPAC brings together naval, air, and land forces from around the world to strengthen partnerships and enhance collective security. For Canada, participation reinforces relationships with key allies while improving operational effectiveness in both traditional and emerging domains. As cyber threats continue to grow in complexity, multinational initiatives such as this demonstrate a shared commitment to maintaining a secure and resilient international security environment.



Persistent Cyber Training Environment personnel from Australia, United States, Germany, Canada, the Philippines and Republic of Korea pose for a photo during Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2026 at Ford Island, Hawaii on June 29.

LS SHAUN CHATFIELD, ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY



Personnel worked together to identify best practices and help inform future multinational cyber operations and exercises.

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Le Collège militaire royal du Canada a participé au Royal Nova Scotia Tattoo pour la première fois depuis 1989.

LE MAT 1 ELIJAH MAIRS



Des élèves-officiers et du personnel de soutien du Collège militaire royal posent pour une photo de groupe au Scotiabank Centre, au centre-ville d'Halifax, alors qu'ils se préparent à participer à l'édition 2026 du Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo.

LE CPLC CONNOR BENNETT

Royal Military College of Canada returns to the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo after 37 years

By Leah Coughlin,
Base Public Affairs, Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax

This year marked the first time since 1989 that the Royal Military College (RMC) of Canada participated in the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo (RNSIT) held July 1 - 5 in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The RNSIT is an annual musical and cultural event whose mission is to honour the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and other first responders, and to celebrate the heritage of Canadians' contributions to national and international peace and stability. The CAF has participated in the RNSIT for over 45 years, providing musicians, other on-stage performers, and backstage support staff from all three elements.

This year, in celebration of RMC's

150th anniversary, 35 cadets and recent RMC graduates, two supervising officers, and an imagery technician travelled to Halifax to perform in and support the RNSIT alongside over 200 CAF members. Of those 35 cadets and recent graduates, 13 were brass and reed musicians, three were pipes and drums musicians, and 19 were part of the ceremonial guard. The RMC contingent was also joined by Colonel Chantal Tétreault, RMC's Director of Cadets, who acted as the Parade Commander during the July 4 RNSIT performance in celebration of RMC's 150th anniversary.

"Participating in the Tattoo has been an unforgettable experience," said Second Lieutenant Kalen Delaney, a trombone player in the RMC Band who

elected to delay their next posting to participate in this year's RNSIT. "The RMC Band is composed of volunteer student musicians, so the opportunity to perform alongside professional musicians has been both exciting and challenging, but it has brought out the best in us."

The RMC Band makes up the largest volunteer band in the CAF with around 120 members. The band members rehearse early in the mornings or late in the afternoons outside of their regular commitments as cadets and provide support to numerous functions, events, and ceremonies.

Captain Samantha Parent, the RMC Band's Director of Music, oversaw RMC's contribution to this year's RNSIT. As the Director of Music, she provides

oversight for all instruction and administration of the music program and offers mentorship and guidance to cadets.

"The cadets and I were very excited to represent RMC at the Tattoo this year," she said. "With none of the cadets being musicians by trade, they worked tremendously hard to ensure they were putting their best foot (and notes) forward."

The 2026 RNSIT included five, two-and-a-half-hour performances at the Scotiabank Centre in downtown Halifax from July 1 to 5. There was also CAF participation in the Tattoo Canada Day Parade and Tattoo Festival events across the Halifax region.

To learn more about the RNSIT, visit <https://nstattoo.ca> (available in English only).



The previous flagship of Standing NATO Maritime Group One (SNMG1), FGS Sachsen, hosted a Force Reception whilst alongside in Halifax on July 10.

NATO MARITIME COMMAND

NATO ships strengthen transatlantic partnership during Halifax port visit

By NATO Maritime Command

Four ships from Standing NATO Maritime Group One (SNMG1) visited Halifax, Nova Scotia, reinforcing NATO's enduring transatlantic partnership and commitment to maritime cooperation.

The group comprised BNS Leopold I (Belgium), His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Ville de Québec* (Canada), FGS Sachsen (Germany) and HNoMS Fridtjof Nansen (Norway).

The port visit marked an important milestone for SNMG1, as flagship responsibilities transferred from FGS Sachsen to the Royal Canadian Navy frigate HMCS *Ville de Québec*, as the German frigate began her return passage to Germany.

Before sailing, Commodore Ingham and her staff hosted a Force Reception welcoming military leaders, civic representatives and distinguished guests on board to celebrate the strong partnership between Allied nations and NATO's enduring commitment to maritime security. They then bid a final farewell to the

ship's company, thanking them for their professionalism, dedication and unwavering support throughout their time as the SNMG1 flagship.

During a formal ceremony alongside in Halifax, the SNMG1 Commander's flag was raised aboard HMCS *Ville de Québec*, signifying the official transfer of flagship duties. The UK-led battle staff, commanded by Royal Navy Commodore Maryla Ingham, subsequently embarked aboard the Canadian frigate, ensuring a seamless transition and continued operational effectiveness for the Task Group.

Commander Ingham said:

"We are delighted to strengthen our integration with the Canadians, with whom we share many bonds, both historically and through our membership of NATO. The seamless transition into a new Flagship is a testament to the interoperability of NATO Navies and the strength of the transatlantic relationship upon which NATO was founded."

The ships of Standing NATO Maritime Group One (SNMG1) are operating under CTF Atlantic, a NATO command structure responsible for coordinating Allied maritime forces across the Atlantic area.

Vice Admiral Juan Bautista Pérez Puig, Commander of the Spanish Maritime Forces Headquarters (SP-MARFOR), has assumed command of Task Force Atlantic from July 2026 to 30 June 2027. As part of this responsibility,

CTF Atlantic oversees NATO maritime forces operating in the North Atlantic, including Standing NATO Maritime Group One (SNMG1) and Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group One (SNMCMG1).

The task force reflects NATO's continued focus on maintaining maritime security, strengthening Allied presence, and ensuring the readiness of forces operating across the Alliance's northern flank.



CAF Social League heads to the beach

Military members are invited to enjoy a day at Martinique Beach during the CAF Social League's next outing on August 16.

Hosted by PSP Halifax, the event includes round-trip transportation from Tribute Tower, with the bus departing by 9 a.m. and returning by 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$5 (tax included). The event is open to military members only, and alcoholic beverages are not permitted.

Led by PSP Community Recreation, the Social League organizes a wide range of social and sport-focused activities throughout the year. For more information, contact halifax-recreation@cfmws.com or register online.

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HMCS Ville de Québec departs, joins SNMG1

His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) Ville de Québec sailed from Halifax on July 15 for a five-month deployment alongside NATO Allied naval forces in the North Atlantic, the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. The ship has joined NATO's Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1) and will be serving as the flagship of the task group throughout its deployment. The mission falls under Operation REASSURANCE, Canada's ongoing contribution to NATO's deterrence and collective defence efforts in European waters.

As part of SNMG1, HMCS Ville de Québec will also support the maritime component of the NATO Allied Reaction Force, enabling readiness to respond rapidly to emerging security challenges.

"His Majesty's Canadian Ship Ville de Québec's deployment is a demonstration of Canada's continuing leadership and commitment to collective defence alongside NATO Allies. At a time of evolving global security challenges, the Royal Canadian Navy remains ready to contribute meaningfully to stability and security at sea as part of Operation REASSURANCE," says Rear-Admiral Josée Kurtz, Commander, Maritime Forces Atlantic and Joint Task Force Atlantic.

CPL ANTONIO GARCIA ALVAREZ



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A Maritime Tactical Operator with ANC using the Orion H10 Counter-UAS during a learning exercise at CFB Halifax.

CPL MORGAN LEBLANC

Exploring Counter UAS with the Advanced Naval Capabilities Unit

By RCN

Counter-Uncrewed Aerial Systems (C-UAS) technology helps our sailors detect, track, identify, and defeat unauthorized drones before they pose a threat to personnel or critical infrastructure. The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) is exploring practical ways to detect and mitigate these threats in maritime environments.

Playing a key role in this effort is the [Advanced Naval Capabilities Unit](#) (ANC), which delivers the RCN's core capabilities across several operational areas, including:

- Uncrewed systems
- Maritime Interdiction Operations
- Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR)
- and Tactical Boat Operations

Beyond delivering these capabilities, ANC also focuses on operational experi-

mentation. Rather than testing systems in isolation, ANC evaluates how new tools interact with real people, environments, and operational constraints. The goal is not just to see whether a system works, but to understand what it can and cannot deliver once it is placed in sailors' hands. ANC's work in testing and evaluating systems directly contributes to the development of training, tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) for sailors.

When it comes to operational experimentation, Lt(N) Daniel Song, a Maritime Tactical Operator with ANC said it best.

"Think of us as the unit that takes new technologies and marries them with proven tactics. We look at how systems actually perform in an operational context and provide feedback on their suitability."

We saw this earlier in the year, at

Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax, where ANC conducted a [learning exercise using the Orion H10](#), a portable, directional counter UAS system designed to disrupt the operation of small drones. During the activity, Marine Tactical Operators flew commercially available drones while counter UAS teams employed detection and jamming equipment to observe how the systems interacted in real time.

This demonstration was conducted as part of a broader base security activity, providing senior leaders and Marine Tactical Operators with a firsthand look at how counter UAS systems function outside of a controlled environment.

"The goal wasn't to prove we had a perfect solution," said Song. "It was about seeing what actually happens when you put these systems into use – what works, where there are limitations, and what assumptions need to be tested."

Counter UAS systems are rarely foolproof. Environmental conditions, operator actions, and drone design all influence effectiveness, and exercises and demonstrations are often where gaps become visible.

"No system works all the time," Song

explained. "Even very capable counter UAS solutions are only effective some of the time. That's why hands on experimentation is so important."

This approach allows counter UAS capabilities to be integrated organically into ship operations, while still benefiting from specialist oversight and expertise when required.

While systems like the Orion continue to be employed across the fleet, Lt(N) Song explains that the broader counter UAS challenge remains dynamic. Both drone technology and the techniques used to employ and defeat it continue to evolve rapidly.

"It's a constant cat and mouse game," he said. "You develop a method to counter one approach, and something new emerges in response."

For that reason, systems such as the Orion H10 are viewed as starting points rather than end state solutions.

Drone technology is evolving at the pace of days and weeks, not years and Counter UAS efforts evolve in response, often working to keep pace with those rapid advancements. The solution today will be obsolete tomorrow, which is why units like ANC exist – to test, learn, adapt, and push forward continuously.

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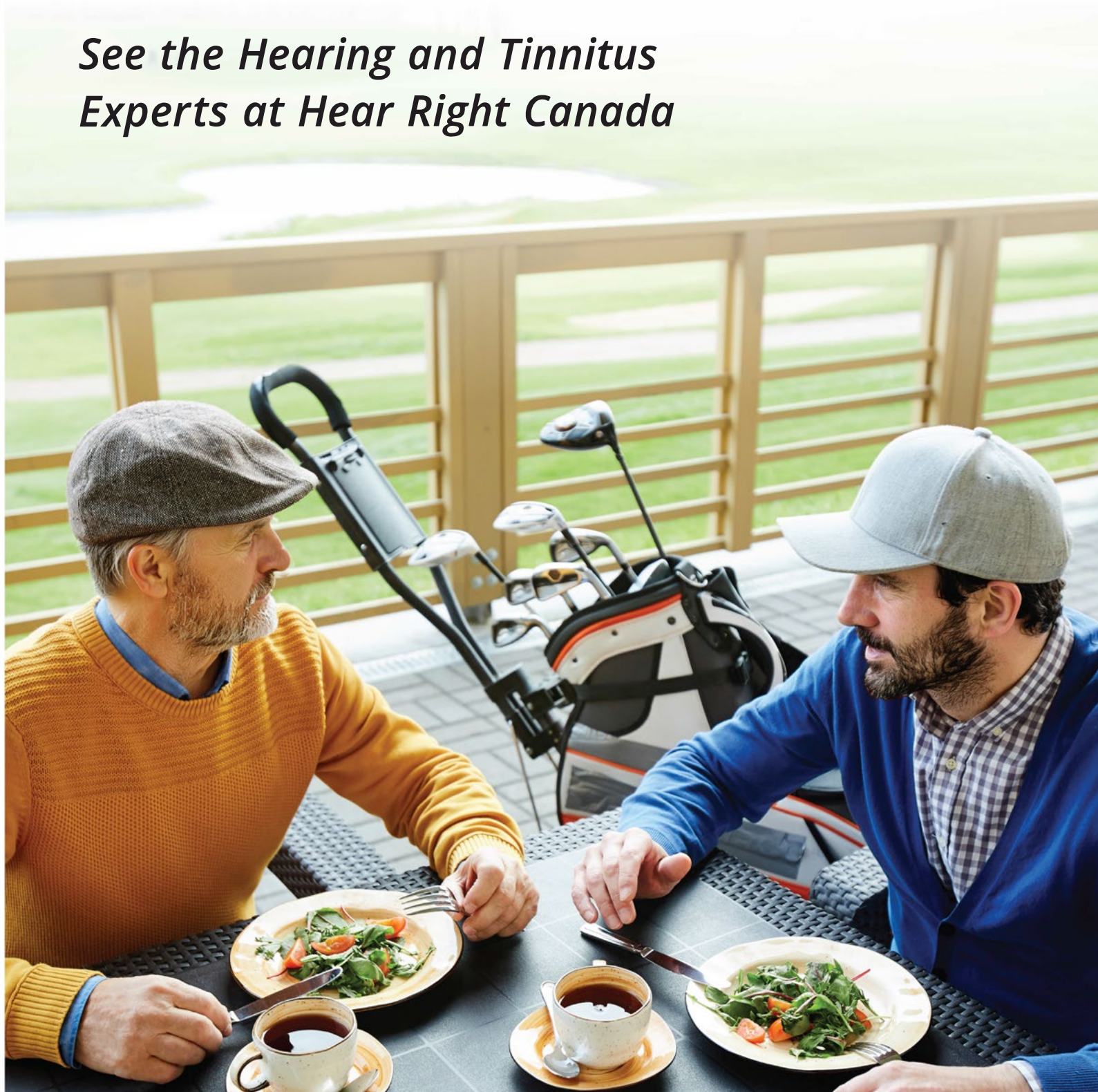
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■  ■ PROUDLY CANADIAN



Babcock Canada gets extension for Victoria Class in-service support

By Trident Staff

While Canada begins work on its next generation fleet of submarines, the Royal Canadian Navy is locking in the support it needs to keep its current fleet running. Babcock Canada announced on July 20 that it has been awarded a six-year extension to the Victoria In-Service Support Contract (VISSC), keeping the company as the sustainment provider for the Victoria-class fleet through the coming decade.

The extension, which carries the option to run through the fleet's end of life, lands just weeks after Canada named Germany's Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) as the preferred supplier for Canada's next generation of submarines.

"The extension builds on our core position as Canada's submarine sustainment partner delivering world-class support and will drive enhanced outcomes for the existing Victoria-class fleet," said Babcock CEO, Tony March in the press release. "It will also enable Canada's submarine sustainment enterprise to achieve a smooth transition to Canada's future submarine capability."

The company is currently the prime contractor for the in-service support

contract as part of the broader Victoria Class Modernization (VCM), an initiative launched in 2017 to modernize and maintain the Victoria-Class submarines to continue operating through to the arrival of a new submarine fleet in the mid-2030s. The VCM is composed of 12 separate equipment upgrade projects. Nine are currently in the implementation stage.

Until the implementation of the future generation of conventionally-powered submarines, the Victoria class remains Canada's sole underwater surveillance and combat capability. The modernization of sonar, periscope and data processing systems has proven essential as the Victoria class continues to support NATO operations in the North Atlantic and monitor activity in neighbouring regions.

The Victoria class has formed the core of the Canadian Submarine Force for nearly three decades and has excelled on several operations, ranging from involvement in the annual arctic sovereignty exercise, Operation NANOOK to a 197-day deployment as part Operation NEON, which saw the enforcement of United Nations sanctions against North Korea.



The Victoria-class Submarine HMCS Corner Brook

S2 JORDAN SCHILSTRA

Applications are now open for the 2027 Canadian Defence Attaché Programme

By DND

Are you interested in representing Canada abroad while building relationships with military partners around the world? In support of the Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces' Military Diplomacy and Global Engagement efforts, the Canadian Defence Attaché Unit (CDAU) offers Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members a unique opportunity to serve in Canadian embassies and High Commissions around the world.

As announced by the [Directorate of Foreign Liaison](#) (Accessible only on the National Defence network) in [CANFORGEN 116/26](#), applications for the 2027 Active Posting Season are now being accepted for the following positions:

- Canadian Defence Attaché (CDA),
- Deputy Canadian Defence Attaché (DCDA), and
- Canadian Defence Attaché Assistant (CDAA).

Applicant requirements

Applications must be submitted no later than **August 31 2026**.

The selection process is open to eligible Regular Force and Primary Reserve officers from the ranks of Major/Lieutenant-Commander to Colonel/Captain (Navy), as well as eligible non-commissioned members from Sergeant/Petty Officer 2nd Class.

Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in [CANFORGEN 116/26](#), and exercise the confidentiality and discretion expected of CDAU participants.

Canadian Defence Attaché Readiness Program (CDARP) and language training

Opportunities are available through direct postings or language training pathways across 49 Canadian Defence Attaché Offices (CDAOs) worldwide.

Selected members should expect up to three years at post following CDARP, which prepares members and their families for the unique demands of serving at CDAOs overseas.

CDARP may begin as early as February 2027. Members who require language

training will start that training first in July 2027, followed by CDARP in February 2028.

Important information and resources

CAF members interested in this opportunity are encouraged to consult the following resource before applying:

- [CANFORGEN 116/26, DFL Canadian Defence Attaché Programme Selection 2027](#)

Together, these resources provide important details on the CDAU including eligibility requirements, the selection process, training, and what life is like as part of a Defence Attaché team.

CDAOs work with host nations, Global Affairs Canada, allies, and partners to build defence relationships that deliver real effects for Canada. CDAOs provide reporting, access, and on-the-ground coordination that help inform decision-making and enable CAF activity abroad, from overflight and basing support to ship visits, partner training, and

early support during emerging issues or operational requirements.

As Canada places greater emphasis on defence industrial engagement, CDAOs will be increasingly important in advancing broader Government of Canada defence priorities abroad. These are not routine OUTCAN positions. They are rewarding, operations-focused roles that require independence, sound judgement, and the ability to build trust with a wide range of partners in demanding and fast-moving environments. Members considering this opportunity should be flexible, adaptable, and prepared for a posting that can be professionally and personally challenging, but highly rewarding.

For additional information or if you have any questions, please visit the [Directorate of Foreign Liaison](#) (Accessible only on the National Defence network) intranet page or contact Director Foreign Liaison Selection at [DFL2SELECTION-SELECTIONDLE2@forces.gc.ca](#).



SPORTS & FITNESS



A Warrior Sailing Canada training camp took place June 16-18 at the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron.

SUBMITTED



Participants sailed in teams of three, plus one coach in each boat, through two days on the Northwest Arm.

SUBMITTED

Sailing into recovery: Warrior Sailing Canada brings camaraderie to injured veterans

By Nathan Stone,
Trident Staff

For three days in June, the waters of The Northwest Arm became a place of healing, teamwork, and new beginnings.

From June 16-18, a dozen Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members and veterans gathered at the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron for the Warrior Sailing Canada training camp.

The program, run in collaboration with the True Patriot Love Foundation, uses sailing as a tool for recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration for active and retired CAF members who have suffered injuries while serving.

The hope is participants learn how to sail while rediscovering a sense of camaraderie.

Co-founder Kari MacKay and her husband Dave launched the first Canadian camp in 2017, after Dave's experience coaching with the original Warrior Sailing Program in the United States convinced them Canada needed one of its own. Since then, the program has expanded to include camps in Ontario,

British Columbia, and now its fourth event in Halifax.

The camp's daily structure balances classroom learning with hands-on practice on the water.

Each boat carries three participants and one coach. The small crew size ensures everyone plays an active role. Participants rotate through the positions of jib, main, and tiller.

The focus on teamwork can resonate deeply with veterans.

Brent Beshara, a retired Petty Officer, 2nd Class who served 24 years in the Royal Canadian Navy, initially thought sailing was "witchcraft," having spent his entire career on powerboats.

He said the team dynamic on the boat brought him right back to his days in uniform.

"That boat's not going to move unless we're working as a unit. It's the same as the military; nothing works if we don't work together."

Grace Shears was a private in the army

before an injury ended her career in 1992.

She traveled from her home in Newfoundland, where she runs a veteran support group, to attend the camp.

For her, socializing with her fellow veterans became a highlight.

"The networking is incredible... We connect with all these different veterans, we gather more resources that we can share in a ripple effect."

She said the shared backgrounds of the participants quickly erase any sense of hierarchy.

The program also accommodates participants with physical injuries, with adaptive equipment provided to ensure everyone can take part.

Aaron Matheson, a former Sailor 3rd Class, hadn't been on the water since an accident led to him using a wheelchair.

He described the experience as a "blast."

He found that manning the "main" position on the sailboat, adjusting the main sail to best capture the wind, offered the stability he needed for his mobility challenges.

He also praised the quality of the instructors, which included world-class sailors and Olympic medalists.

"Everyone's super kind, super knowledgeable and they bring a really cool method of instruction," he said.

For MacKay, the moments of con-

nection between participants are what makes the program effective.

She recalled a story from the program's early days when a veteran left her husband Dave a note on a hotel cocktail napkin.

"It read: 'You've changed my life. I haven't left my basement in three years, and now sailing will be a part of my life.'"

"That's why you do it," she said.

Along with sponsorship from True Patriot Love, Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron lent its boats, coaches, and facilities free of charge.

MacKay said each of the Warrior Sailing Camps takes a maximum of 18 participants per camp, allowing for meaningful connections while keeping things manageable.

Many participants expressed plans to keep sailing after the camp.

Beshara said he looks forward to joining local sailing events back home in Newfoundland, while Shears, who has friends with sailboats, wants to become "more of an asset than a liability" on the water.

For MacKay, inspiring that kind of attitude is the goal.

The purpose, she said, "is to create community and give our veterans an opportunity to connect with a different family, stay in touch, find a new recreation, and a new way to get out."