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SECURING THE LAST FRONTIER – CANADA’S NORTH

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Exercise Solo Flight

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SECURING THE LAST FRONTIER – CANADA’S NORTH

INTRODUCTION

There are those who consider the Arctic as the world's last frontier yet this frozen and isolated area is going through drastic changes. This region which has gone almost forgotten is now attracting quite a lot of attention by numerous world powers. It is therefore understandable to see why the Arctic States now have a heightened renewed interest. Non-Arctic nations have also become very interested in the Arctic due to the unknown opportunities it may offer. This has all come to bear as a result of Global Warming, a phenomenon which continues to affect the world in such drastic measures that even the weather has gone completely unpredictable. This change in our climate has had a great effect in the Arctic and the Arctic ice which is diminishing greatly every year. The melting ice has opened a new Ocean which could allow ships to sail through waters never before accessed. It has also removed the barriers to the vast riches of minerals, oil and natural gas which have been frozen since as far back as history can remember.

“A glance at the map of the northern hemisphere shows that the Arctic Ocean is in effect a huge Mediterranean. It lies between its surrounding continents somewhat as the Mediterranean lies between Europe and Africa. It has, in the past, been looked upon as the impassible Mediterranean. In the near future, it will not only become passable but will become a favorite route ... much shorter than any other air route that lies over the oceans that separate the present-day center of population. - Arctic explorer Vilhjalmur Stefansson”¹

What Vilhjalmur predicted in 1922 is now the reason world powers have an interest in the Arctic.

¹ Ryan Dean, P. Whitney Lackenbauer, and Adam Lajeunesse, “Canadian Arctic Defence Policy: A Synthesis of Key Documents, 1970-2013” Centre for Military and Strategic Studies University of Calgary, (2014) p.69

Geologists have predicted that by 2030 the Arctic will be mostly ice-free, not just in the summer, therefore as these new opportunities emerge so do the challenges and security concerns for countries with claims in the region. The geo-political significance of the Arctic along with today's global security environment puts Canada, the second largest Arctic nation after Russia, in a very difficult position. The accessibility to the northern waterways along with the potential riches in oil, natural-gas, minerals and other resources could make the region a contested militarized area. This Global Warming phenomenon is now posing great challenges to the sovereignty and security of both countries. The Government of Canada (GoC) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) face a great test as Canada's North is a very vast and desolate region which *"...encompasses 75 percent of the country's national coastline and 40 percent of its total land mass and is home to more than 100,000 people representing Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities"*.² Protecting its people and its sovereignty is the foremost task of the CAF, however, this is a daunting task when you consider that *"there is no place on earth as poorly defended as the Canadian Arctic"*.³

Many Arctic experts agree that there is no conventional military threat to the Arctic at this time, however, Canada and the CAF must be ready to defend against any future sovereign or security threat. In executing its own responsibilities within a whole-of-government (WoG) approach in the defence of Canada's North, the CAF has two viable options; either a "show the flag" or a "show of force (boots on the ground)" approach. Boots on the ground is a military term which would require the CAF to physically have troops and installations on a permanent basis in Canada's northern region. Showing the flag is more of an appearance to assert a claim

² Department of National Defence. *Strong Secure Engages: Canada's Defence Policy*. ISBN 978-0-660-08443-5 (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2017), p.79

³ Scott Gilmore, "The Canadian North is the least defended territory on earth" MacLean's article updated 17 March 2017.

of a territory. This paper will argue that “showing the flag” is the more viable option due to the GoC’s political will on this issue and the CAF’s limited capabilities. Since the 1990’s the CAF have demonstrated very little effort in maintaining their Arctic capabilities, understandable as most of the attention and resources were engaged in peacekeeping missions and after 9/11 on operations in Afghanistan. The attention has shifted and the CAF has been strengthening both their abilities and capabilities (infrastructure & equipment) to conduct operations in the Arctic. Deployments and yearly exercises in the Canadian North have renewed the CAF’s skill-sets, although be it a slow and deliberate process.

This short essay will identify the key players and their military capabilities. It will briefly outline the GoC’s Northern Policy, the role the CAF has been assigned and finally it will review both current and future CAF capabilities and how they affect both options.

KEY PLAYERS

Understanding who the key players are, and their military capabilities, facing the GoC and the CAF will allow for a better understanding of the current tensions in the Arctic. Besides Canada and Russia, the other Arctic States are; the United States of America (US), Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Iceland. NATO is also a key organization in this issue and I would even include China onto the list, although not an Arctic State, China is a World Power who has shown extreme interest in the Arctic region.

The Arctic States of significant interest to the GoC and CAF are;

US – The American strategy laid out for the Arctic is one of cooperation rather than confrontation. The end state of the US Department of Defense (DoD) is “*a secure and stable region where US national interests are safeguarded, the US homeland is defended, and nations work cooperatively to address challenges.*”⁴ In order to implement this strategy they intend to use bilateral military relations by combining capabilities and conducting collaborative extreme cold weather training with the other NATO Arctic States. The DoD plans to maintain their military footprint in Alaska but are looking to add additional bases and deep-water ports. The DoD, also uses a WoG approach with various US departments, tribal groups, and the Alaska National Guard. Political ambition is key and sets policy, “*The US Geological Survey estimates that 90 billion barrels of oil, or 13 percent of the world’s undiscovered reserves, are within the Arctic.*”⁵ therefore, this will affect the attention given to their northern policy.

Russia – They are currently the biggest threat to military escalation in the Arctic. Since 2007 Russia has been improving its Arctic military capabilities and is considered to have the largest Arctic military force. Based on current events (Crimea, Ukraine and Syria) Canada and NATO have reasons to take a more aggressive stance against Russia. With numerous bases and ports located near their Arctic borders, a navel force which by far is the most equipped and effective Arctic fleet, and a large fleet of icebreakers (including nuclear icebreakers) they can quickly and effectively project both surface and air power into the region. Russia has shown its willingness to use military force to get what it wants and I have no reason to believe this pattern will be any different if challenged in the Arctic. President Putin has stated the importance for Arctic States

⁴ Department of Defense. Report to Congress on Strategy to Protect United States National Security Interests in the Arctic Region. (Washington, DC: U.S. December 2016) p.2

⁵ Andrew Holland, “America’s Role in the Arctic: Opportunity and Security in the High North” American Security Project (ASP) December 2014, p.3

cooperation yet this does not line up with Russia's Arctic policy "...assert Russian sovereignty in the region; to protect Russia's economic interests in the High North; and to demonstrate that Russia remains a great power with world-class military capabilities"⁶

Norway – Both the Norwegian Forces and the Norwegian Army have moved their HQ's to the North of the country as their main focus is centred on Russian activities. They are in the process of building up their navel Arctic capability, which works closely with their Coast Guard in patrolling the Arctic seas.

Denmark –With over a third of their defence spending concentrated on Arctic capabilities they have militarized Greenland by stationing an Air Force detachment and an Arctic Joint Military Command HQ. They however maintain good working relationships and coordinate military strategies with both the US and Canada.

NATO is also a key player as seven of the eight Arctic states are a member of this Alliance. The Alliance's main concern is Russia and their ability to quickly deploy a force into the region and into the North Atlantic. NATO intends to also use cooperation rather than confrontation yet stand ready to act should it be required. "*Canada and its NATO Allies have been clear that the Alliance will be ready to deter and defend against any potential threats, including against sea lines of communication and maritime approaches to Allied territory in the North Atlantic.*"⁷

An organization of great significance and critical to maintaining stability in the Arctic is the Arctic Council (AC). Created as a forum for both dialogue and collaboration, the Main

⁶ Lassi Heininen, Alexander Sergunin and Gleb Yarovoy. "Russian Strategies in the Arctic: Avoiding a new Cold War." Valdai Discussion Club Report, Moscow - September 2014 p.79

⁷ Department of National Defence. Strong Secure Engages: Canada's Defence Policy. (Ottawa: DND Canada 2017), p.79-80

Members are the eight Arctic States. At the insistence of the US a provision was included in the Declaration that issues concerning military matters should not be handled by the AC. As the Arctic gains more attention and importance, thirteen non-arctic nations have taken an interest and have become observers in the AC.

CANADA'S NORTHERN POLICY

Canada's Northern Policy has seen both neglect and heightened attention. The priority given to the North seems to always tied to political electoral issue. Governments change and each will prioritize what has gotten them into power. Harper stated the following in regards to Canada's Northern Sovereignty;

“Canada has a choice when it comes to defending our sovereignty over the Arctic. We either use it or lose it. Make no mistake, this Government intends to use it. Because Canada's Arctic is central to our national identity as a northern nation. It is part of our history and it represents the tremendous potential of our future ... In defending our nation's sovereignty, nothing is as fundamental as protecting Canada's territorial integrity, our borders, our airspace and our waters.”⁸

It is important to note that because this region is unique Canada's Northern Policy walks a fine line between International and National policy's. The three major factors which must be considered in either policy is climate change, the increasing demand for natural resources, such as oil and gas, and finally globalization. More specific factors for Canada is the environment and its people. The GoC therefore must to insure the Northern Policy receives the attention it deserves as Canadians have more than just a public interested in the Arctic.

⁸ Yan Poirier, LCol. “Can Canada Avoid Arctic Militarization?” School of Advanced Military Studies US Army Command and General Staff College Student paper – AY 2013-14. P.1 cited “Prime Minister Harper announces New Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships,” Speech delivered in Esquimalt, British Columbia, July 9, 2007

Arctic policy and strategy, over the last few decades, has been like shifting sands as each governing party adapts it to their needs. The result has caused an imbalance in the CAF's focus and lack of military equipment required to operate in the Arctic. Canada's Defence Policy must not only take into consideration the potential threats Canada faces but how they line up against the CAF capabilities. The CAF cannot go at it alone, it must work in partnership at the federal level, provincial & territorial level, and with local partners in order to leverage their capabilities thus helping to build the (WoG) approach which is critical to deliver the northern mandates and support broader GoC priorities in the Arctic Region. *"The WoG approach, while operationally tricky, is crucial to bringing the necessary resources to bear in an area where Canada has little infrastructure and relatively few assets."*⁹ Because of the CAF's high visibility presence in the North, there may be a public misperception that they are the department responsible for the Arctic, however, the CAF and the other GoC departments are interdependent of one another as each has specific capacity and responsibilities in the GoC's sovereignty and security plan. The GoC organizations working with the CAF are;

- *"The Department of North to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (previously known as the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada).*
- *The Department of Fisheries and Oceans who is responsible for the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG).*
- *The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade who is the main authority on all matters of foreign policy and diplomacy with the Arctic states.*
- *The Department of Natural Resources Canada & Environment Canada."*¹⁰

⁹ Adam Lajeunesse, "What Canada's New Defense Policy means for the Arctic" NewsDeeply June 16, 2017 (accessed March 23 2018) <https://www.newsdeeply.com/arctic/community/2017/06/16/what-canadas-new-defense-policy-means-for-the-arctic>

¹⁰ Ashton B. Cunje, "Canada's Defence and Security in the Maritime Arctic" Graduate School of Public and International Affairs Student Paper. University of Ottawa 26 March 2014. p.32

The new defence policy Strong, Secure, Engage (SSE) shows no new initiatives nor does it identify any new direction, “... *maintain a **robust capacity to respond** to a range of domestic emergencies, including by providing military support to civilian organizations on national security and law enforcement matters when called upon, engaging in rapid disaster response, and contributing to effective search and rescue operations*”.¹¹ The SSE in fact makes very little mention of the Canada’s North and outlines that this will be a long and slow process, “...*we will increase presence in the Arctic over the long-term and work cooperatively with Arctic partners*”¹². Protecting Canada’s North is a very difficult, expensive and complex task which will require an “*agile, multi-purpose, combat-ready military, operated by highly trained, well-equipped women and men, secure in the knowledge that they have the full support of their government and their fellow Canadians*”.¹³ If this is the case then Canada’s defence policy needs to have more “meet on the bone” so that both the CAF and Canadians can see that northern sovereignty and security is taken seriously and is attached to a long-term WoG commitment.

While the Liberals were the opposition they criticized the Conservative Government’s Arctic defence policies. Although the election campaign made mention of surveillance and security particularly in this region, it has not materialized in its defence policy. We may be reaching a point, especially in this Trump era, where our interdependence on the US for defending North America is not misunderstood as a policy for defending Canada’s North, the two are not the same.¹⁴ It is well understood that a Government in power will prioritize their efforts and

¹¹ Department of National Defence. Strong Secure Engages: Canada’s Defence Policy. ISBN 978-0-660-08443-5 (Ottawa: DND Canada 2017), p.60.

¹² Ibid. p.14

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ CDA Institute. The Strategic Outlook for Canada 2017: Strategy and Mission after the Defence Policy Review. Vimy Paper No.34 Ottawa (2017) p.10

resources, in regards to the North the GoC must outline a clear and more robust policy for the future.

CAF's ARCTIC CAPABILITES

It is important to understand the CAF's footprint in the North and what are the current and future capabilities in order to better weight the options on the approach to use. Critics have stated that "*Canadian North is essentially the largest military-free zone in the world.*"¹⁵ Canada's Defence Policy, SSE, outlines the CAF's footprint, which is led by Joint Task Force North (JTFN),

"more than 800 buildings at over 60 sites ... a headquarters in Yellowknife with detachments in Whitehorse and Iqaluit ... Rankin Inlet and Goose Bay with NORAD ... a number of shared facilities with federal partners, including a state-of-the-art cold weather training facility at Resolute Bay ... a signals intelligence facility at CF Station Alert".¹⁶

Future installations include a new navel facility in Nanisivik (still in the construction phase).

This installation will provide the GoC with a deep-water port for both the RCN and other government maritime vessels.¹⁷ The SSE also outlines other new capabilities... "*Artic-focused capabilities ...new navel vessels such as the Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships (AOPS) and space-based surveillance assets such as the RADARSAT.*"¹⁸ The GoC is also in the process, through the Joint Uninhabited Surveillance and Target Acquisition System (JUSTAS) of acquiring armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). "*The UAVs are to operate in signals intelligence, maritime*

¹⁵ Scott Gilmore, "The Canadian North is the least defended territory on earth" Maclean's Magazine updated 17 March 2017. <http://www.macleans.ca/politics/the-canadian-north-is-the-least-defended-territory-on-earth/>

¹⁶ Department of National Defence. Strong Secure Engages: Canada's Defence Policy. (Ottawa: DND Canada 2017), p.79

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid p.80

patrol, and armed combat roles.”¹⁹ These new procurements are just the first steps in heading in the right direction.

The CAF has had to manage effectively their Arctic mandates with limited resources and thus narrow their effort and work in close partnership with the other GoC organizations.²⁰ The current capabilities for each component are;

RCN – The RCN’s current fleet’s Arctic operability is limited as they have no ice breaking capability they must therefore depend on close cooperation with the Coast Guard. The closest RCN navel facility to the Arctic is in Halifax making it difficult to respond, unless there are vessels already operating in the Arctic, to any security situation in a timely manner. The AOPS and new facility in Nanisivik will remedy this shortfall, however in my view RCN requires submersible resources to complete the sovereignty and security task.

*“The Canadian Armed Forces must be equipped with the best possible surveillance and detection equipment, not only to track surface but also underwater transits. For in order to protect its legal position, the Canadian government would have to react vis-à-vis any ship or submarine which had entered the archipelago unannounced.”*²¹

Political agendas have but the RCN in the situation it finds its self in today. It has no means to defend itself or “show the flag” under its own oceans. *“Nearly three decades ago, the GoC concluded that it needs ten nuclear-powered submarines if it were to consider enforcing its claim to Arctic sovereignty at all feasible. Today is has none.”*²²

¹⁹ Siemon T. Wezeman, “Military Capabilities in the Arctic: A new cold war in the high north?” Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Background Paper. (October 2016), p.4

²⁰ Adam Lajeunesse, “The Canadian Armed Forces in the Arctic: Purpose, Capabilities, and Requirements” CDFAI – Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute. May 2015 (executive summary)

²¹ Suzanne Lalonde, “Canadian Defence Policy Review Roundtable” Yellowknife 24 May 2016.

²² Scott N. Romaniuk, “Militarizing the Arctic: Is Canada Ready for a Literal Cold War with Russia?” Accessed 3 March 2018. [HTTPS://WWW.GEOPOLITICALMONITOR.COM/MILITARIZING-THE-ARCTIC-IS-CANADA-READY-FOR-A-LITERAL-COLD-WAR-WITH-RUSSIA/](https://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/militarizing-the-arctic-is-canada-ready-for-a-literal-cold-war-with-russia/)

RCAF – The RCN limitations have left the RCAF the critical task of surveillance in the Arctic. “*Situational awareness in the Arctic is essential to exercise effective control.*”²³ The bulk of this task falls onto the RCAF 18 CP-140 ASW’s (anti-submarine warfare aircraft). Their long-range capabilities make them ideal for patrolling the Arctic region, however they require modernization which is expected between by 2030. The “control or secure” tasks can be managed by the ageing CF-18’s, “*Canada will need to maintain a small fighter force stationed in the North, ready to escort Russian planes out of its Air Defence Identification Zone or to intercept if they should violate Canadian airspace.*”²⁴ With less than 100 CF-18’s the GoC needs to quickly move on either the infamous F-35’s or proceed with the expensive upgrades to the existing fleet. Although the RCAF maintains a fleet of helicopters, these are very susceptible to inclement Arctic weather and require refuelling stations due to their limited “time in air”. They are therefore a resource better suited for the Arctic summer months.

Key air assets for the CA are the C-130J’s (known as a Super Hercules – a four-engine turboprop military transport aircraft made by Lockheed Martin) and the C-17 (know as the Globemaster III – an even larger jet-engined military transport aircraft for cargo and oversized combat equipment), both platforms are capable of operating in Arctic conditions.

CA – The Army is the component best suited for placing “boots on the ground” however nothing is easy in the Arctic and the CA is faced with multiple challenges should it go down that road. MGen Alan Howard then the Assistance CLS, said “*...the Army has lost the ability to operate up north in the Arctic*”²⁵ due to its single-minded focus on combat operations in Afghanistan. There are still significant limitations for the CA to effectively deploy and operate in the Arctic however

²³ Adam Lajeunesse, “The Canadian Armed Forces in the Arctic: Purpose, Capabilities, and Requirements” CDFAI – Canadian Defence & Foreign Affairs Institute May 2015 p.9

²⁴ Ibid. p.11

²⁵ S. DeSilva-Ranasinghe, Interview (with MGen Alan Howard), Jane’s Defence Weekly, 12 Jan. 2011, p. 34.

its operational capabilities have greatly improved in large part due to the Reserve F (Res F) Arctic Response Company Groups (ARCG) and the Canadian Rangers.

The ARCG's are becoming a focus point within the CA's action plan for its northern operations. "... ARCGs are at the heart of the army's new approach to northern security. They offer the CAF the presence needed to meet its practical requirements and respond to a wide variety of (anticipated) unconventional security threats."²⁶ At the outset, the ARCG's were never the response to putting "boots on the ground" nor to take the role as the CA's Arctic force. The intent was always to alleviate and support the Regular Force.

*"... a light and flexible forces suited to an expeditionary type theatre ... uniquely equipped and trained, deployable, scalable, and as self-sufficient as possible in order to be able to provide a presence when and where the CAF needs it most such as: sovereignty operations, humanitarian aid, disaster relief, support to ground based search and rescue, major air and maritime disaster response, and generic support for a wide-range of Other Government Department (OGD) missions."*²⁷

Each of Canada's four Army Divisions are mandated to generate an ARCG and with the CA's "Mission Tasks" for the Res F, this task will be designated to a specific Res F unit who will generate, train and maintain troops should they be called upon to deploy.

The Canadian Rangers are the spear point of Canada's defence in the North. Often described as the "eyes and ears" they are the permanent fixture in that vast and harsh environment. They are not a combat force but their skills are much more valuable than that, they are teachers and guides, who insure the survivability of those deployed, they are also the key link to the northern communities when the GoC deploys resources into the region. They have taken the unofficial role of "Northern Protectors" very seriously as this is their home and any impacts affect them much more directly than other Canadians.

²⁶ Adam Lajeunesse, and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "Canadian Arctic Operations, 1941-2015: Lessons Learned, Lost, and Relearned" The Gregg Centre for the Study of War & Society University of New Brunswick. 2017. p. 332

²⁷ Ibid. p. 334

The CA requires a major overhaul in its Arctic equipment, from snowshoes, toboggans, snowmobiles and winter clothing to replacing the aging BV-206 with new Light and Medium Over the Snow Vehicles (LOSV's). Mobility is only one piece of the expensive procurement puzzle for the CA. Communications and logistics are still shortfalls which need urgent attention regardless if you are “showing the flag” or “putting boots on the ground”.

FLAG vs BOOTS

Much debate has been made over the question of flag vs boots. The CAF's mission in the Arctic is the best starting point in determining which approach is best.

“... the CAF's primary missions in the Arctic are: conduct routine sovereignty patrols; work with Other Government Departments (OGDs); conduct regular surveillance and security patrols; monitor Northern airspace under the role of NORAD; Search and Rescue; and maintain signals intelligence from the Alert station.”²⁸

Based on the CAF's mission and its Arctic capabilities should Canada occupy portions of the north with a permanent force or does Canada achieve its goal by demonstrate a presence and working closely with its Allies? The “boots on the ground” resurfaced after PM Harper refocused Canadians to the important issues in the north. *“... ensuring we have the capability and capacity to protect and patrol the land, sea and sky in our sovereign Arctic territory. We are putting more boots on the Arctic tundra, more ships in the icy water and a better eye-in-the-sky.”²⁹* The GoC needs to think twice as CAF, do to its current size and operational tasks, could not take on such a responsibility. The only two reasons to permanently send troops into the north

²⁸ Adam MacDonald, “The Canadian Armed Forces and the Arctic: Maintaining a Suitable and Sustainable Role.” CDA Institute Analysis. May 2016 p.5

²⁹ Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future. Ottawa (2009) p.9

would be political and practical. Practical because a permanent presence provides the troops on the ground achieving “practical objectives” and politically because it’s a demonstration the importance placed in the region.³⁰ The DND’s “*Northern Approaches: Army Arctic Concept*” clearly outlines the CAF can achieve is mission of sovereignty and security by “*providing a visible presence*”.³¹ Although not a CAF capability, NORAD is key to Canada’s security. In the renewed bilateral agreement, it now includes maritime surveillance.

The approach to be taken, if not already clear is further confirmed in one of the three assumptions made by the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence (2006), “...*the Canadian Forces should NOT be the primary tool used by the Government of Canada to protect and defend our country’s Arctic sovereignty.*”³²

CONCLUSION

In relation to Canada’s Northern security his essay has outlined the key players, the GoC policies, the CAF’s limited Arctic capabilities and future acquisitions and explored the Flag vs Boots approach. Yes, the Arctic nations paying attention to the evolving situation and therefore increasing their military Arctic capabilities. This by no means demands that we hit the panic button and militarize the Arctic. Because of global warming and the implications, it brings forward, both Canada and Russia need to position themselves to be able to respond to any incident, military or not, which may occur in their own back yards.

³⁰ Adam Lajeunesse, and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, “Canadian Arctic Operations, 1941-2015: Lessons Learned, Lost, and Relearned” The Gregg Centre for the Study of War & Society University of New Brunswick. 2017 p.331

³¹ Department of National Defence. B-GL-007-000/JP-003 Northern Approaches: Army Arctic Concept 2021. Canadian Army Land Warfare Center, Kingston Ontario (NDID) 2013. P.14

³² Ryan Dean, P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Adam Lajeunesse, “Canadian Arctic Defence Policy: A Synthesis of Key Documents, 1970-2013”. Centre for Military and Strategic Studies University of Calgary. 2014. p.41

With respect to Canada, the position it should take on this issue is quite simple. A “show the flag” approach which implies having a presence within the region is more than enough. The GoC can accomplish this with a WoG approach which allows key government departments and agencies to share the burden with the CAF. The close working relationship between the CCG and the RCN must continue to increase as the RCN is some years away from receiving the capabilities it requires to make a better presence. The RCAF has the adequate resources until such time as the GoC decides and delivers a fighter to replace the CF-18’s. However, the surveillance task will be easier to accomplish with the new UAV’s.

The CA, has greatly improved their deployability and have outstanding assets in the Canadian Rangers and the Res F ARCG’s. The issues of mobility, communications and logistics and not hurdles which cannot be overcome. Canada and the CAF are more than just present in the Arctic, they have making a statement which still needs further political refinement and commitment, but a statement non the less. Exercises such as OP NUNALIVUT and OP NANOOK demonstrate to the Arctic States that Canada has not abandoned the North nor that it needs a permanent force in the Arctic since they have a capacity and a skill-set (still improving) to take on any situation. Two other factors which give weight to the flag approach, first is that as long as the US remains the world power and Canada’s partner in NORAD no country will threaten Canada north military. The second factor is NATO, with Russia’s capacity to project their forces along with its recent actions on the world stage, NATO will assist Canada should there be a requirement to deter any provocations.

As a final point, the current state of the CAF, the enormous investment in funds required to build the CAF’s Arctic capabilities makes “showing the flag the reasonable option for the GoC.

However, the future is unknown and Canada cannot sit and wait and so it should like the other Arctic States, position themselves for that unknown.

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