AI in Defence Conference

9-10 February 2026

PROGRAM - DAY ONE

9h00 — **OPENING REMARKS**
- Dr. David Perry
- MGen Dave Abboud

9h30 — **KEYNOTE: THE ADVERSARY'S ADVANTAGE—AND HOW WE KEEP OURS**
- MGen Timothy Arsenault

10h00 — **FIRESIDE CHAT: CANADA'S PATH FORWARD: LESSONS IN COOPERATION AND INNOVATION**
Moderator: Riley White
- Lidia Korczynska
- Dr. Sara Schlemm
- Desmond Stewart

10h40 — **HEALTH BREAK**

11h10 — **DISCUSSION AREA ONE: ACCELERATING AI INTEGRATION ACROSS DEFENCE**
Moderator: Dr. Alex Wilner
- Chris Allison
- Katherine Morely
- Julia Scouten
- James Scott

12h00 — **LUNCH**

13h00 — **SPOTLIGHT TALK – ALIGNING INNOVATION AND OPERATIONAL NEED**
Moderator: Dr. Alexander Salt
- Trevor Grosse
- Dan McKinney
- Samuel Witherspoon
- Maj Paul Owens

13h35 — **DISCUSSION AREA 2: BUILDING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & CULTURE OF RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION**
Moderator: Charlotte Duval-Lantoine
- Candice Ross
- MGen Travis Morehen
- Deepak Dutt
- Allen Dillon

14h35 — **HEALTH BREAK**

15h05 — **FIRESIDE CHAT: INSIDE THE ECOSYSTEM**
Moderator: Dr. David Perry
- Blaine Matton, Bell
- Sohail Manoussi, Cohere

15h50 — **CLOSING REMARKS**
- CWO Jason Pickard

PROGRAM - DAY TWO

9h00 — **OPENING REMARKS**
- Capt Jeremy Banks

9h40 — **BREAKOUT INSTRUCTIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS**
- Dr. Alex Wilner

10h00 — **HEALTH BREAK**

10h30 — **BREAKOUT SOLOUTION GROUPS**

12h00 — **LUNCH**

13h05 — **KEYNOTE: WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES?**
- LGen Darcy Molstad

13h30 — **REPORT-BACK PLENARY**
- Dr. Alex WIlner
- Doug Berenson
- Dr. Alexander Salt

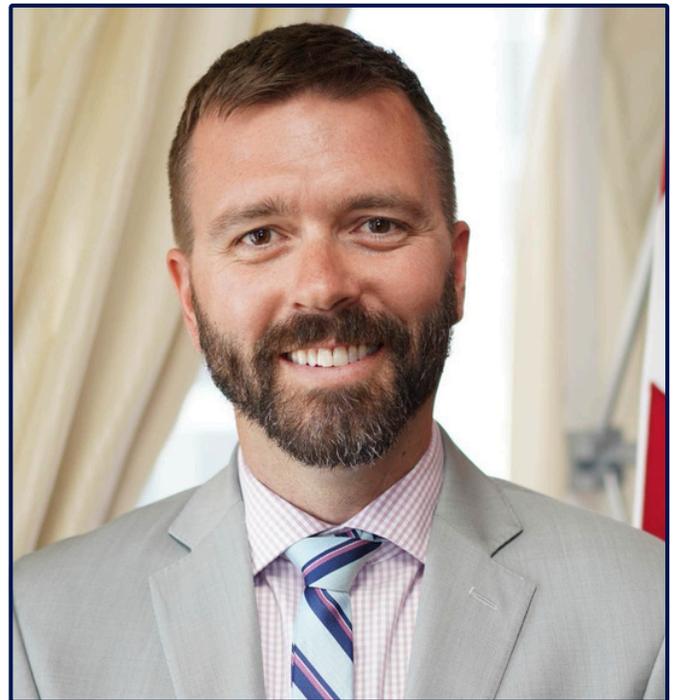**15h00** — **CLOSING REMARKS**
- MGen Jeff Smyth

DR. DAVID PERRY

President and CEO

Canadian Global Affairs Institute

Dr. David Perry is the President of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, host of the institute's Defence Deconstructed Podcast, and a co-director of the Triple Helix MINDs Collaborate Network. He is the author of multiple publications related to defence budgeting, transformation and procurement and a columnist for the Canadian Naval Review.

He received his PhD in political science from Carleton University where his dissertation examined the link between defence budgeting and defence procurement. He is an adjunct professor at the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary and a research fellow of the Centre for the Study of Security and Development at Dalhousie University.

He was previously the Senior Security and Defence Analyst of the Conference of Defence Associations Institute and Deputy Director of Dalhousie University's Centre for Foreign Policy Studies. Embassy Magazine and The Hill Times has named him one of the "Top 100 Influencing Canadian Foreign Policy."
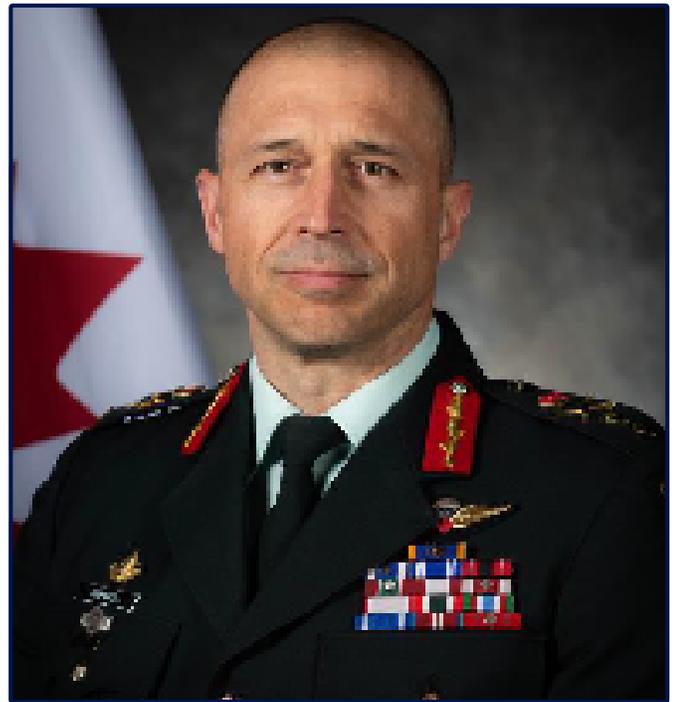
MGEN TIMOTHY ARSENAULT

Deputy Commander

Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC)

MGen Arsenault enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces in 1992 as a reservist, joining the 2nd Battalion, Irish Regiment of Canada in Sudbury, Ontario. He transferred to the regular force in 1993 and was first posted to the Royal 22e Régiment in 1998. Over the course of his career, he has commanded at platoon, company, battalion, brigade and task force levels.

Operationally, MGen Arsenault has served on a range of domestic and expeditionary missions. Domestically, he contributed to the CAF's support to provincial authorities in Montreal during the COVID-19 pandemic. Abroad, he deployed to Bosnia, Afghanistan, Ukraine and to the Middle East.

His key staff experiences include service in the Minister of National Defence's Office, in the Strategic Joint Staff, in the Canadian Joint Operations Command and in the Vice Chief of Defence Staff's Office.

MGen Arsenault is a graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada, of the Joint Command and Staff Program, and of the National Security Program. He holds a Bachelor of Military and Strategic Studies and a Master's degree in Defence Studies. MGen Arsenault is currently serving as Deputy Commander of the Canadian Joint Operations Command.

LIDIA KORCZYNSKA

Director of Data Policy and Digital Innovation

Department of National Defence

Lidia Korczynska is the Director of Data Policy and Digital Innovation for the Department of National Defence, where she is responsible for leading the data, AI and information management activities for the Defence Team.

Lidia was previously the Director of Policy, Priorities and Planning at the Canada Border Services Agency, where she led initiatives related to stakeholder engagement, Gender-Based Analysis Plus and corporate services. Lidia began her career in government in 2007, and quickly identified policy and strategy as her passion.

She has worked in a variety of fields, including at Employment and Social Development Canada/Service Canada; Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, and the Canada Border Services Agency, where she worked as the manager of Regulatory Affairs, Parliamentary Affairs and, later, as an executive.

Lidia holds a Bachelor and Master's degree in Spanish, from the University of Ottawa, as well as a Masters of Public Policy and Public Administration (MPPA) from Carleton University. Lidia has three children and in her free time likes to read, garden and travel.

DR. SARA SCHLEMM

Defence Policy Officer, Defence Industrial Strategy

Department of National Defence

Dr. Sara Schlemm is a Defence Policy Officer on the Defence Industrial Strategy Team at the Department of National Defence.

Sara is her team's AI lead and works on policy initiatives that address Canada's security, alliances, and prosperity. She joined the public service with experience in industry, such as managing projects at an AI company and advising banks on their relationships with institutional investors.

Sara holds a B.A. in History from Yale University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in English Language and Literature from Cornell University.
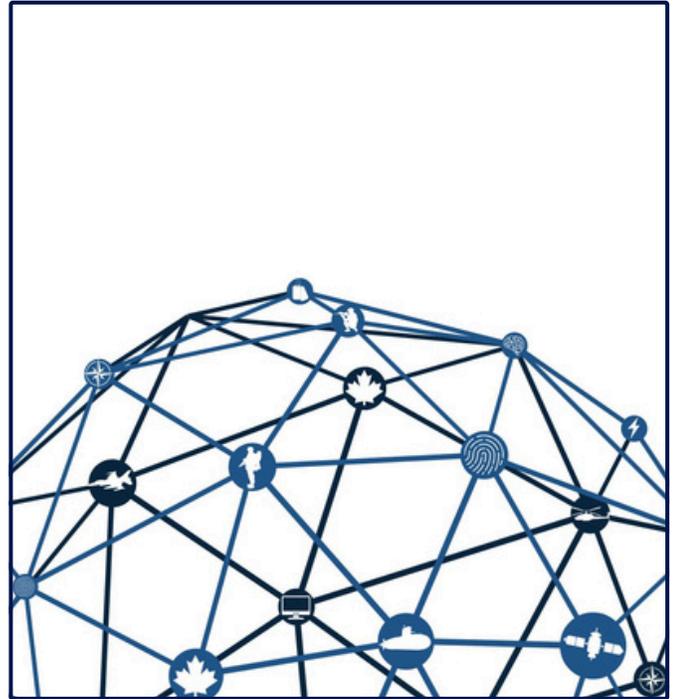
DESMOND STEWART

Project Manager, Information Technology Infrastructure in Support of Command and Control (ITISC2)

Department of National Defence

Desmond Stewart is a senior project and program leader with over 20 years of experience delivering complex digital and IT-enabled initiatives within the Canadian Armed Forces and the Government of Canada.

Most recently, he served as Project Manager for the ITISC2 project, where he led multidisciplinary teams to coordinate stakeholders, manage risk, and advance secure, mission-critical IT capabilities in a highly governed environment. In this role, Desmond focused on aligning technical delivery with strategic outcomes, balancing operational requirements, security considerations, and organizational change.

Desmond is now moving into the role of Joint Cloud Program Office Manager, where he will oversee cross-departmental efforts to mature cloud governance, enable scalable digital platforms, and support enterprise digital transformation.

Recognized for his collaborative and transformational leadership approach, he brings deep experience in stakeholder engagement, agile delivery, and strategic alignment to help modernize IT services and enable sustainable, cloud-first capabilities across the Defence enterprise.

RILEY WHITE

Co-Director

Triple Helix

Riley White is an Engagement Manager within Oliver Wyman's Aerospace, Defense, and Government (ADG) and Digital practices. Riley has supported over 55 engagements across defense and government-driven industries. He has deep work experience in defense platforms & systems with emphasis on emerging technology areas across the US and international markets. Riley provides leading private-sector and government clients with a variety of advisory services on core strategic issues including market assessments, business case analysis, industrial base analysis, and mergers & acquisitions.

He has particular expertise in digital transformation and emerging dual-use technology areas such as unmanned systems, cyber resilience, space systems, and artificial intelligence.

Mr. White is a graduate of Western University, where he earned a B.E.Sc. in Civil Engineering and a B.A. in Honours Business Administration from the Ivey Business School.

CHRIS ALLISON

Director General, Data, Analytics, and Information Management

Department of National Defence

Chris has over 24 years of experience in the Government of Canada, spanning defence, public health, operations, policing, immigration, national security, major projects, and air travel.

His professional interests include network analytics, systems thinking, and the intersection of people, technology, and organizations—focusing on understanding and strengthening connections within complex environments. Chris has taught web design, network analytics, and machine learning through Python and security meetups, as well as at conferences.

Chris launched the Digital Academy within the Government of Canada, was a core contributor to teaching Public Service in a Digital Age and has served as a member of the Privacy Analytics Executive Advisory Board.
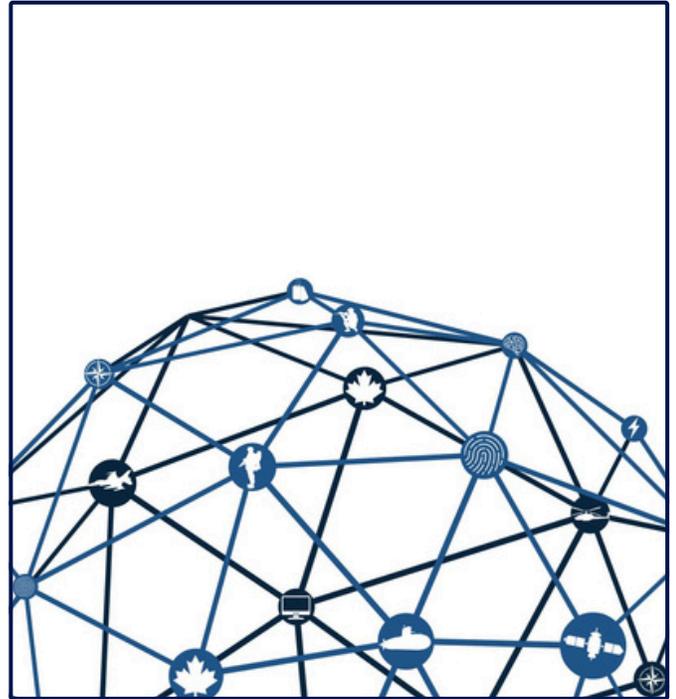
KATHERINE MORLEY

Director of Digital Procurement and Investment within the Digital Transformation Program

Department of National Defence

Katherine Morley is the Director of Digital Procurement and Investment within the Digital Transformation Program at the Department of National Defence (DND).

She is responsible for advancing modernized digital procurement pathways and partnerships that enable enterprise-wide transformation and mission outcomes.

Ms. Morley began her career at DND in 2003, supporting logistics contracting for naval, airlift, and rail movements during early Canadian Armed Forces deployments to Afghanistan. Over the course of her career, she has held a wide range of senior roles across procurement, finance, and materiel management, including more than a decade overseeing complex contracting and fleet-related projects for the Royal Canadian Air Force. She was appointed Director Aerospace Procurement in 2021 and has since held executive leadership positions supporting organizational transformation, before joining Digital Services to lead procurement modernization initiatives.

She brings an inclusive and collaborative approach to transformation, recognizing and integrating the perspectives of diverse stakeholders in delivering complex public-sector outcomes in support of Canadians and the Canadian Armed Forces.

JULIA SCOUTEN

Director of the Joint Defence Cloud Program

Department of National Defence

Julia Scouten is the Director of the Joint Defence Cloud Program at the Department of National Defence, a position she has held for the past three and a half years.

She leads the department's public cloud team, delivering secure and reliable cloud services from unclassified up to Protected B to support the needs of the Military.

JAMES SCOTT

Canadian Field Chief Technology Officer

Dell Technologies

James Scott is the Canadian Field Chief Technology Officer for Dell Technologies.

His expertise encompasses cloud architecture, modern application design, artificial intelligence, and IT security. James has been instrumental in assisting clients worldwide with the design, security, and maintenance of multi-cloud environments, and he plays a pivotal role in how organizations are looking to deploy and leverage artificial intelligence to drive productivity and simplify business operations.

DR. ALEX WILNER

Co-Director

Triple Helix

Dr. Alex Wilner is an Associate Professor at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs and the Director of the Infrastructure Protection and International Security graduate program at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.

He is a leading scholar of contemporary deterrence theory. His research explores the nexus between coercion and emerging security considerations, domains, technologies, and environments. He is the author of over three dozen articles published in top-ranked journals including International Security, Journal of Strategic Studies, Security Studies, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, and International Journal. His books include *Deterrence by Denial: Theory and Practice*, *Deterring Rational Fanatics*, and *Deterring Terrorism: Theory and Practice*

His broader scholarship has been awarded over $1.2M (CAD) in research funding: he was awarded a Government of Canada SSHRC Insight Development Grant (2016-2017), a prestigious SSHRC Insight Grant (2020-2025), nd a Government of Ontario Early Researcher Award (2021-2026) to study state and non-state cyber deterrence; two major IDEaS grants (2018-2021)

(and several MINDS grant (2019, 2020) from the Department of National Defence to explore Artificial Intelligence and deterrence; several research grants from the Canadian Network on Terrorism, Security, and Society (TSAS); a major Mitacs grant (2020-2022) to explore emerging technology and Canadian defence policy and strategy; and a SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant (2022-2023) in association with Global Affairs Canada to assess the use and utility of strategic foresight in foreign policy.

Prof Wilner teaches classes on terrorism and violent radicalization, intelligence in international affairs, strategic foresight in international affairs, and a capstone course on Canadian security policy.

TREVOR GROSSE

Managing Director

Archean Strategies

During his 14 years in the Canadian Armed Forces, Trevor integrated technology and military operations, oversaw over $100M in services contracts, scaled innovative capabilities in the joint environment, and deployed on military operations throughout the world. After his military service, he transitioned to the private sector, where he now supports the defence ecosystem in developing next-generation capabilities and safeguarding democratic values.

DAN MCKINNEY

Defence Industry Lead

Amazon Web Services (AWS) Canada

Dan McKinney retired from the CAF as the Canadian Army's first Director Digital and Army Combat Systems Integration (DDACSI), after 25 years of service.

In this role, he was the principal author of the Army's Digital Strategy, contributor to the CAF's Digital Campaign Plan, and responsible for the $6B+ Land C4ISR program. His military career highlights include service in the special forces as the C4ISR Program Manager for JTF2, leadership of ADM(Mat)'s ISTAR team, serving as Commanding Officer of two units delivering digital capabilities to land and joint forces, and two tours leading C4ISR delivery teams in Afghanistan.

He holds a bachelor's degree in software engineering and Master's in Defence Studies, both from the Royal Military College of Canada. Since 2023 he has led AWS Canada's Defence Industry practice.

MAJ PAUL OWENS

Policy Officer, Continental Defence Policy

Department of National Defence

SAMUEL WITHERSPOON

Chief Executive Officer

ANVIL

Samuel Witherspoon is the CEO of ANVIL Intelligence Inc., a Canadian defence-technology company focused on delivering data-driven decision advantage to military and national security organizations.

With a background spanning intelligence, engineering, and product leadership, he has built ANVIL to solve real operational problems through practical, deployable software. He is driven by a commitment to building technology that matters—tools that strengthen decision-making, reduce friction, and support those operating in high-stakes environments.

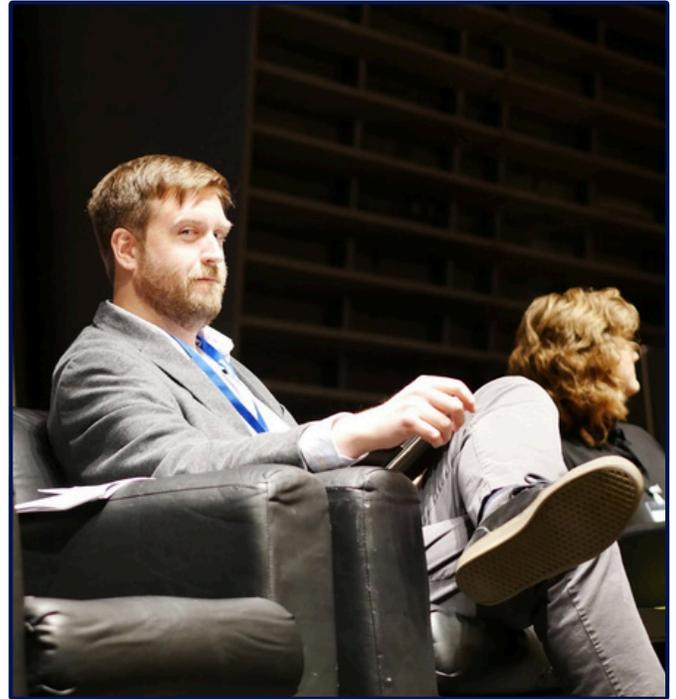ANVIL has been working with Defence and National Security organizations for nearly a decade.

DR. ALEXANDER SALT

Post-Doctoral Fellow

Triple Helix

Dr. Alexander Salt has a PhD from the University of Calgary's Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies and an MA in Political Studies from the University of Manitoba. His dissertation explores to what extent has the battlefield experience of the U.S. military influenced post-war organizational innovation.

His research has been awarded the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's Joseph-Armand Bombardier Doctoral Award, as well as a General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. Memorial Dissertation Fellowship. He has published research relating to international security and defence policy with *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, and *The Canadian*

Network for Research on Terrorism, Security, and Society.

Previously, he was a Visiting Political Science Instructor with Macalester College and has also held positions with the Centre for Defence and Security Studies, as well as the Consulate General of Canada in Dallas, Texas, and the Consulate General of Canada in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
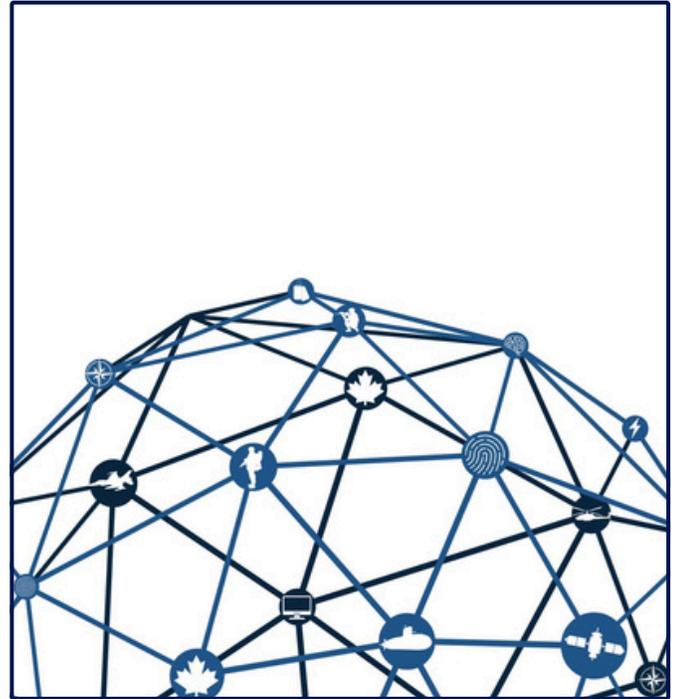
CANDICE ROSS

Director for Stakeholder Engagements and Partnerships

Department of National Defence

Candice Ross is the Director for Stakeholder Engagements and Partnerships within the Assistant Deputy Minister's Office, Policy-Industry at the Department of National Defence.

Since joining the Public Service in 2008, Ms. Ross has worked in a variety of roles, working on diverse files ranging from negotiations under Free Trade Agreements, economic and research security, emerging technology, and support for research and development.

Within her current role, Ms. Ross is responsible for building and managing strategic partnerships across the defence industrial ecosystem, in support of the implementation of the new Defence Industrial Strategy.

Ms. Ross holds an MA in Political Science and a BA (Honours) in Classics, Religion, and Humanities from Carleton University.
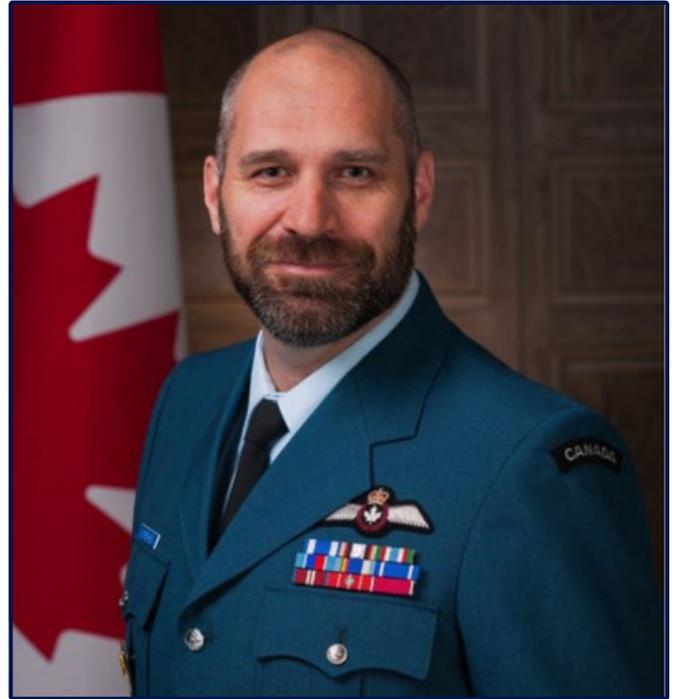
MGEN TRAVIS MOREHEN

Director General - International Security Policy

Department of National Defence

Born in Ajax, Ontario and raised on Vancouver Island, MGen Morehen joined the Canadian Forces in 1990 and graduated from Royal Roads Military College in 1994. A tactical helicopter pilot, he flew the CH135 Twin Huey and CH146 Griffon with 427 Tactical Helicopter Squadron, later returning as Flight Commander and Commanding Officer of 427 Special Operations Aviation Squadron.

His staff and command experience includes postings with CANSOFCOM, NORAD and USNORTHCOM, Commander of 1 Wing HQ, Chief of Staff of 1st Canadian Division, Chief of Staff to the Chief of Defence Staff, and is currently Director General – ational Security Policy at ADM (Pol).

MGen Morehen has deployed to Haiti, Honduras, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, and commanded Task Force Mali in 2019. He holds a Master of Defence Studies and has been awarded the Meritorious Service Cross and US Legion of Merit. He is married with two sons.

DEEPAK DUTT

Founder and Chief Executive Officer

Zighra

Deepak Dutt is a Canadian inventor and defence technology founder focused on building sovereign, explainable AI systems for contested and high-risk operational environments.

Formally trained as a computer engineer and computer scientist, he brings more than two decades of experience inventing and deploying AI and behavioural intelligence systems in highly regulated, mission-critical contexts where trust, explainability, and accountability are operational requirements.

As Founder and CEO of Zighra, a Canadian-owned and controlled defence technology company, Deepak has worked with major financial institutions and Canadian government partners, including the Department of National Defence, on AI-enabled sensing, electronic warfare (EW), counter-UAS (C-UAS), navigation resilience, and spectrum situational awareness.

He holds multiple international patents in adaptive AI and sensor intelligence and contributes actively to defence and policy discussions on how Canada can responsibly invent, scale, and partner to deliver mission-aligned AI capabilities.
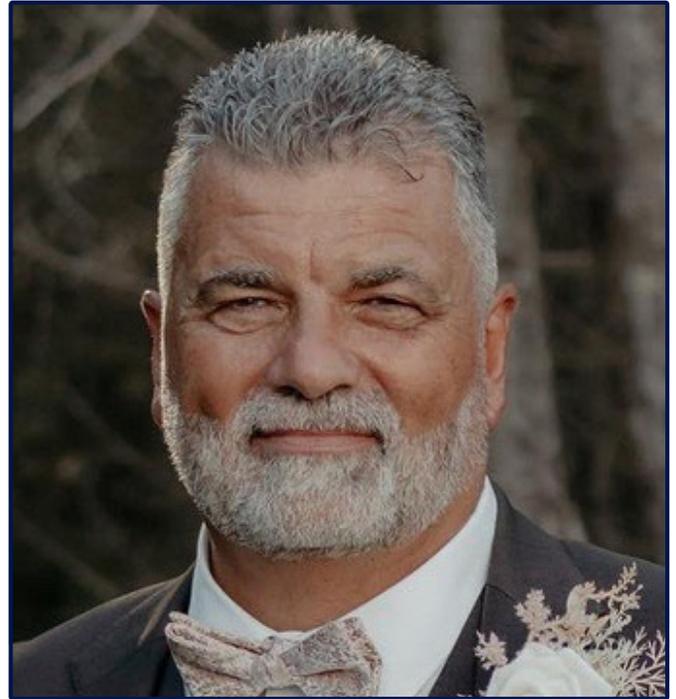
ALLEN DILLON

Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer

Sapper Labs Group

Allen Dillon, (Al) is well known in the security community in Canada/US, as both a decorated military Officer in the Canadian Armed Forces and a seasoned hi-tech innovator in the defence and security industry. Al's many experiences includes the development of advanced electronic warfare assets, intelligence systems and cyberwarfare capabilities for use on the battlefield and in the global security community. Al's roots in technology began in the 90's, creating an Internet Service Provider while serving in the military.

He sold the assets to Bell Canada in 1997 and was a founding member of XWAVE, a successful Canadian Systems Integrator. Over the past two decades Al's experience includes C-level executive and operational leadership of national security, defence, and tech public/private companies in Canada and internationally. Al's many contributions to innovation for defence and security earned him the 2007 Business Person of the Year in Halifax and the 2013 CDR Defence and Security Executive of the Year in Canada. In 2016, Al founded CyberNB, the first Canadian Special Operating Agency dedicated to cybersecurity and critical infrastructure protection in Canada. In 2017, he and his team were the recipient of a Global Amazon Award in Washington DC for cyber education advancement.

Al has deep roots in supporting both US and Canadian security agencies and Defense organizations at the bold face in the fight against NATSEC and economic threats to North America. He is a founding member of the Cyber Committee in the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries (CADSI), an appointed member of Defence Industrial Advisory Group (DIAG) since 2023, and a member of the DIAG Indigenous Procurement Working Group with the Department of National Defence.

Al is the Co-Founder and CEO of Sapper Labs Group, a Veteran owned, uniquely Canadian SMB dedicated to sovereign intelligence and active cyber defence products and services to the 5VEY's military, security organizations, financial institutions and critical infrastructure operators. He is an active board advisor and community volunteer.

Al and his wife Lisa reside in Fredericton NB, they have three adult children and a new grandson.

CHARLOTTE DUVAL-LANTOINE

Executive Director

Triple Helix

Charlotte Duval-Lantoine is the Vice President, Ottawa Operations and a Fellow at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, as well as Triple Helix's Executive Director and Gender Advisor. She is also a PhD Candidate at Deakin University, researching Canadian army culture during the 1990s and its influence on operations.

Charlotte is the author of The Ones We Let Down, her MA research on toxic leadership and gender integration in the Canadian military, which was named among The Hill Times' Best Books of 2022. Her research interests include questions of military cultures and structures and personnel policy, topics on which she regularly comments in the media and writes about on her Substack, DND/CAF 101. She regularly participates in consultations organized by the Department of National Defence and has given talks to West Point and RMC cadets, to the National Strategic Program at the Canadian Forces College, and to the Australian War College.

Charlotte has had the honour of being awarded a King Charles III Coronation Medal and the CDA Institute's 2024 Captain Nichola Goddard Award for her work as a researcher. She was also listed as one of the 2022 Women in Defence and Security Emerging Leader and amongst the 20 in their 20s by Women in Defence and Security in 2025.

BLAINE MATTON

National Director, Advanced Solutions, Public Sector

Bell Business Markets

Blaine Matton is a bilingual technology and sales executive with more than 20 years of experience helping Canada's public sector modernize critical infrastructure and secure mission-essential operations. As National Director, Advanced Solution Sales for the Canadian Public Sector at Bell, Blaine leads strategic engagements that align network, security, cloud, and managed services to real-world public sector outcomes.

Throughout his career, Blaine has held progressive leadership roles spanning technical architecture, solution strategy, and business development. He brings deep expertise in federal procurement, hosting strategy, and large-scale infrastructure delivery, working closely with government stakeholders and ecosystem partners to design solutions that are scalable, compliant, and resilient.

Today, Blaine is focused on advancing Canada's digital sovereignty, developing secure, sovereign solutions that are managed and hosted within Canada, support data residency and regulatory compliance, and enable public institutions to operate with confidence in an increasingly complex threat landscape.

Known for his clarity, collaborative leadership style, and ability to translate complex technology into business value, Blaine is passionate about helping Canadian public sector organizations deliver better services to Canadians through secure, modern, and locally managed platforms.

SOHAIL MANOUSSI

Canadian Public Sector Lead

Cohere

Sohail Manoussi leads Cohere's Canadian Public Sector practice and brings over a decade of experience supporting federal departments in the design and deployment of mission-critical digital capabilities.

At Cohere, he works with government organizations to translate policy and operational mandates across service delivery, regulatory operations, and internal modernization into secure, deployable AI solutions. His focus is on enabling trusted AI systems that meet Canada's requirements for digital sovereignty, security, and measurable outcomes.

A strong advocate for responsible AI adoption, Sohail partners with public institutions to deliver compliant, auditable solutions that reinforce public trust, uphold strong data governance standards, and support Canada's long-term digital autonomy.
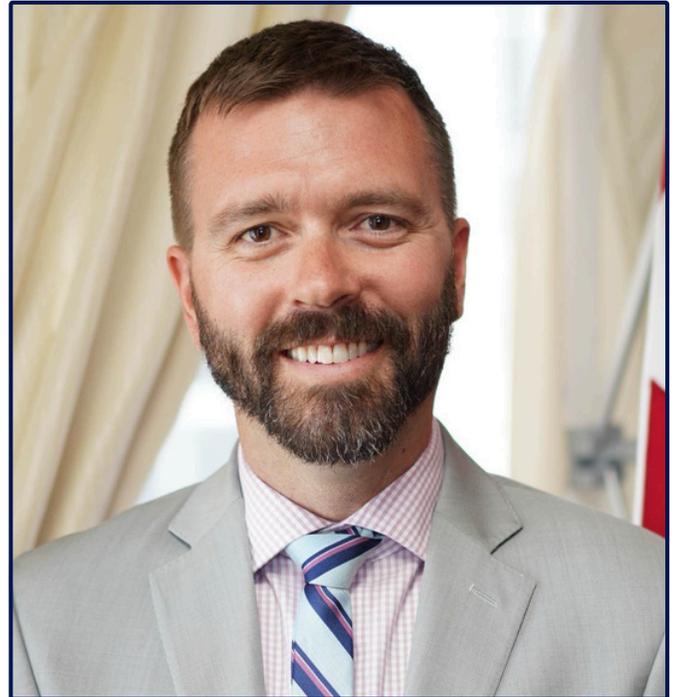
DR. DAVID PERRY

President and CEO

Canadian Global Affairs Institute

Dr. David Perry is the President of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, host of the institute's Defence Deconstructed Podcast, and a co-director of the Triple Helix MINDs Collaborate Network. He is the author of multiple publications related to defence budgeting, transformation and procurement and a columnist for the Canadian Naval Review.

He received his PhD in political science from Carleton University where his dissertation examined the link between defence budgeting and defence procurement. He is an adjunct professor at the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary and a research fellow of the Centre for the Study of Security and Development at Dalhousie University.

He was previously the Senior Security and Defence Analyst of the Conference of Defence Associations Institute and Deputy Director of Dalhousie University's Centre for Foreign Policy Studies. Embassy Magazine and The Hill Times has named him one of the "Top 100 Influencing Canadian Foreign Policy."

CWO JASON PICKARD

Chief Warrant Officer (CWO), Digital Services Group (DSG)
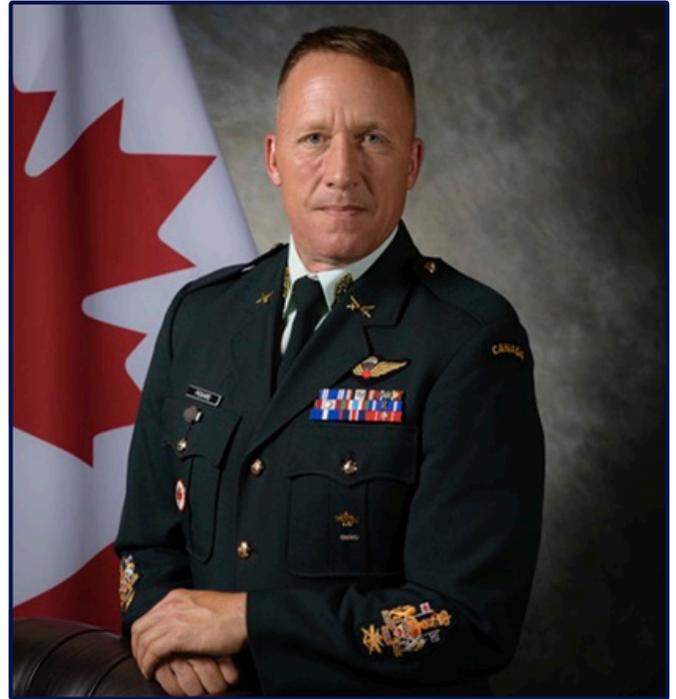
Department of National Defence

Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) Jason Pickard was born in Windsor, Ontario, on 31 December 1969 and joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1994 as an infantry soldier.

After completing all phases of training, he was posted to Winnipeg, Manitoba, with the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (2 PPCLI). During his time at battalion, he completed numerous specialized courses, including Advanced Anti-Armour, Mortars, Parachutist, Psychological Operations, and Mountain Operations. He held key leadership positions such as Platoon (PL) Warrant Officer (WO), Company Sergeant-Major (CSM), and Regimental Sergeant-Major (RSM).

Throughout his career, CWO Pickard has served in a variety of leadership roles across multiple postings, including instructor at CFB Gagetown, Assistant for CWO of NDHQ in Ottawa, instructor at the U.S. Army NCO Leadership Center of Excellence in Fort Bliss, Texas, and RSM of 3 PPCLI, NDHQ CFSG (O-G) CWO. He has completed all advanced leadership courses required for his rank and has extensive experience in professional development and institutional leadership.

CWO Pickard has been deployed on numerous operations, beginning in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1997 as a Private, returning in 2001, and 2003 in progressively senior roles. He deployed to Afghanistan in 2006 as a Section Commander, again in 2008 as a Pl WO, and in 2013 as a CSM following his promotion to Master Warrant Officer (MWO). After completing NEPDP and being promoted to his current rank, he was posted to Fort Bliss, Texas, and later appointed RSM of 3 PPCLI, immediately deploying to Iraq in 2019 as the Senior Enlisted Advisor for Canadian Armed Forces in the region. Upon his return, he continued as RSM, followed by his appointment as NDHQ CFSG (O-G) CWO and subsequently in his current appointment as DSG CWO.

His service has been recognized with numerous honors and decorations, including the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM), the Commander-in-Chief Commendation, a Mention in Dispatches, and a Command Commendation.

CWO Pickard is passionate about physical fitness and enjoys playing hockey. He enjoys spending time with his spouse and he has a daughter, of whom he is very proud of.

CAPT JEREMY BANKS

AI Team Lead (Gradient Ascent)

Canadian Special Operations Forces Command

Jeremy joined the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) in 2008, beginning his career as a Non-Commissioned Member before later commissioning as an officer. Early in his service, he became a strong advocate for digitization, streamlining business processes and developing automations while serving as a private at 8 Wing. These skills led to his selection for a position with CANELEMNORAD, where he continued advancing the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)' transition away from fax based and manual workflows, helping reduce human error and improving efficiency.

Recognizing his contributions, the CAF selected Jeremy for employment as an Officer and supported his academic development, including a bachelor's degree in computer science at the Royal Military College of Canada and subsequent studies in AI and Cybersecurity at Queen's University.

Jeremy is currently employed as the AI Team Lead within Gradient Ascent, helping to drive the adoption of AI in air-gapped environments.

LGEN DARCY MOLSTAD

Commander

Canadian Joint Forces Command (CJFC)

Lieutenant-General Darcy Molstad joined the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in 1996 and earned his wings in 1999. An accomplished CF-18 pilot and Fighter Weapons Instructor, he has logged more than 2200 flying hours. He completed operational tours in Bagotville, Cold Lake, and Beaufort, South Carolina, and has commanded at the Squadron, Air Task Force, and Wing levels. He conducted extensive post 9/11 alert duties across Canada and has deployed on operations in Asia, Iceland, Romania, and the Middle East.

Lieutenant-General Molstad has served in several senior executive roles including Special Advisor to the Minister of National Defence, Director General in the Strategic Joint Staff, and Chief of Force Development. He was promoted to his current rank and appointed the inaugural Commander of the Canadian Joint Forces Command in December 2025.

He holds master's degrees from the Royal Military College of Canada and the U.S. Air Force Air University and is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate Senior International Defense Management Course and the Institute of Corporate Directors Rotman School of Management Directors Education Program. A former national-level pole vaulter, he remains active in sport as the CAF Triathlon Patron and as an Honourary Coach with the Montréal Alouettes Football Club. He is married to an exceptional health professional and is the father to two extraordinary adult children.

DR. ALEX WILNER

Co-Director

Triple Helix

Dr. Alex Wilner is an Associate Professor at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs and the Director of the Infrastructure Protection and International Security graduate program at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.

He is a leading scholar of contemporary deterrence theory. His research explores the nexus between coercion and emerging security considerations, domains, technologies, and environments. He is the author of over three dozen articles published in top-ranked journals including International Security, Journal of Strategic Studies, Security Studies, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, and International Journal. His books include *Deterrence by Denial: Theory and Practice*, *Deterring Rational Fanatics*, and *Deterring Terrorism: Theory and Practice*

His broader scholarship has been awarded over $1.2M (CAD) in research funding: he was awarded a Government of Canada SSHRC Insight Development Grant (2016-2017), a prestigious SSHRC Insight Grant (2020-2025), nd a Government of Ontario Early Researcher Award (2021-2026) to study state and non-state cyber deterrence; two major IDEaS grants (2018-2021)

(and several MINDS grant (2019, 2020) from the Department of National Defence to explore Artificial Intelligence and deterrence; several research grants from the Canadian Network on Terrorism, Security, and Society (TSAS); a major Mitacs grant (2020-2022) to explore emerging technology and Canadian defence policy and strategy; and a SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant (2022-2023) in association with Global Affairs Canada to assess the use and utility of strategic foresight in foreign policy.

Prof Wilner teaches classes on terrorism and violent radicalization, intelligence in international affairs, strategic foresight in international affairs, and a capstone course on Canadian security policy.

DOUG BERENSON

Partner, Aerospace and Defence

Oliver Wyman

Doug is a partner in the Aerospace and Defense Practice at our Washington DC office, for both corporate and government clients.
He specializes in analyzing defense and aerospace markets, with a focus on the macroeconomic, budgetary, and programmatic forces shaping global security markets, as well as military aviation and C4ISR sectors.

Before joining Oliver Wyman, Doug was a managing director at Avascent, assisting clients worldwide to formulate portfolio and growth strategies, as well as pursue new program opportunities, and evaluate potential mergers and acquisitions.

Doug is a former defense reporter for *Inside The Pentagon,* where he covered the defense budget and acquisition processes and is a regular speaker on defense and national security issues.

Doug has a Bachelor's Degree in Government from Connecticut College, and a Master's Degree in US History from Georgetown University.
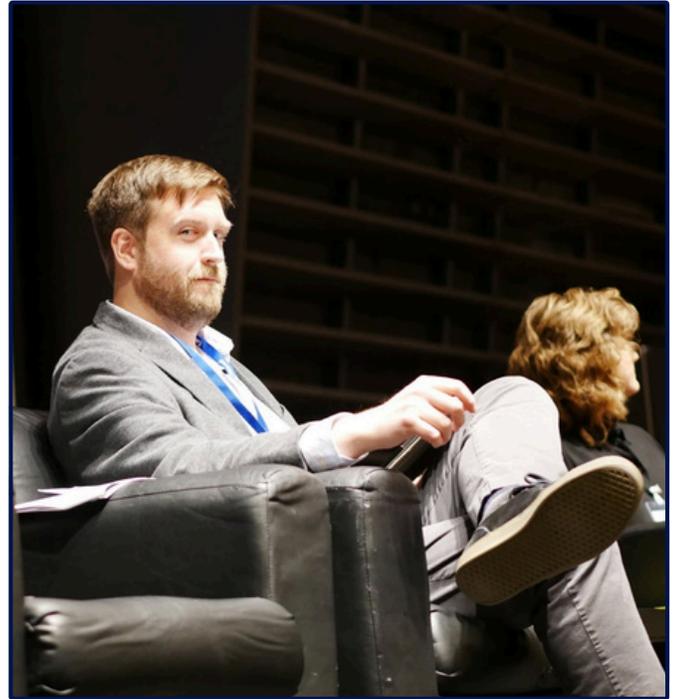
DR. ALEXANDER SALT

Post-Doctoral Fellow

Triple Helix

Dr. Alexander Salt has a PhD from the University of Calgary's Centre for Military, Security and Strategic Studies and an MA in Political Studies from the University of Manitoba. His dissertation explores to what extent has the battlefield experience of the U.S. military influenced post-war organizational innovation.

His research has been awarded the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's Joseph-Armand Bombardier Doctoral Award, as well as a General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. Memorial Dissertation Fellowship. He has published research relating to international security and defence policy with *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, and *The Canadian*

Network for Research on Terrorism, Security, and Society.

Previously, he was a Visiting Political Science Instructor with Macalester College and has also held positions with the Centre for Defence and Security Studies, as well as the Consulate General of Canada in Dallas, Texas, and the Consulate General of Canada in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

MGEN JEFF SMYTH

Chief of Air and Space Force Development

Royal Canadian Air Force

Originally from Chatham, Ontario, MGen Smyth graduated with his pilot wings in 1994 and was posted to 427 Tactical Helicopter Squadron in Petawawa, Ontario. His operational experience includes deployments to Haiti (1995-96) flying the CH135 Twin Huey, Bosnia-Herzegovina (2000-01) and Afghanistan (2009-10) flying the CH146 Griffon. He has conducted numerous domestic operations providing support to forest fires, floods and ice storms. He was Deputy Commanding Officer of 427 Sqn during the transition to 427 Special Operations Aviation Squadron.

He was appointed Commanding Officer of 408 Tactical Helicopter Squadron in Edmonton, Alberta in January 2008. He deployed to Afghanistan from October 2009 to August 2010 as Commanding Officer of the Canadian Helicopter Force (Afghanistan), flying more than 400 hours and 76 combat missions in the CH146 Griffon. He commanded the Canadian Forces Warfare Centre in Ottawa from 2014-2017. From 2018-2020 he held the position of Deputy Chief of the NORAD and US NORTHCOM Command Centre in Colorado Springs. In 2020 he was promoted to Brigadier-General and posted to the position of Director General Operations at Canadian Joint Operations Command in Ottawa.

In October 2021 he assumed the role of Director General Strategies, Effects and Readiness in the Strategic Joint Staff. In July 2024 he was promoted to

his present rank and was assigned the RCAF Chief Fighter and NORAD Capabilities portfolio. April 1, 2025, MGen Smyth was appointed RCAF Chief Air and Space Force Development, a new position focused on synchronizing projects and programs across the RCAF.

MGen Smyth has held staff positions at 1 Wing HQ in Kingston and NDHQ Ottawa. He is a graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada (Bachelor of Engineering in Engineering and Management 1993, Master of Public Administration 2019), The Canadian Forces Land Command and Staff College (1999), the Australian Command and Staff College (2008), and Canadian Forces College National Security Program (2018).

MGen Smyth has over 3500 flying hours, mainly in the CH135 Twin Huey and CH146 Griffon helicopters. He is married with three children and is an avid cyclist.

SPONSORS

LOCKHEED MARTIN

GENERAL DYNAMICS

Hanwha

BAE SYSTEMS

amazon

DAVIE200
1825-2025

COVE

Microsoft

CALIAN ™

Confidence. Engineered.

The Canadian Global Affairs Institute thanks our conference sponsors for their support today.