



CANADIAN GLOBAL AFFAIRS INSTITUTE
INSTITUT CANADIEN DES AFFAIRES MONDIALES



TRIPLE HELIX

IMPLEMENTING CANADA'S DEFENCE INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY



9 JUNE 2026

PROGRAM

- 8 H 30 ● OPENING REMARKS
 - **David Perry**, Canadian Global Affairs Institute

- 8 H 40 ● OPENING BRIEF - WHAT CANADIANS ARE THINKING ABOUT DEFENCE
 - **Frank Graves**, Author, Founder and President of EKOS Research Associates

- 9 H 00 ● INDUSTRY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIS
 - **Victoria Belbin**, President & CEO, Atlantic Canada Aerospace & Defence Association
 - **Elliott Pence** Co-Chair, Alliance Canadian Defence Companies
 - **Philip Baldwin** Vice President, Government & Public Affairs, AIAC
 - **Marc Watters**, Policy Advisor and Cyber Lead, CADSI
 - Moderator: **BGen (ret'd) Chris Ayotte**, Amazon Web Services Canada

- 9 H 55 ● BREAK

- 10 H 25 ● PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS
 - **Joanne Lostracco**, Director General Defence Procurement, Public Services and Procurement Canada
 - **Sylvain Menard**, Country Director Canada, RTX
 - **Dr. Olena Kryzhanivska**, COVE Innovation Defence Fellow, Canadian Global Affairs Institute
 - Moderator: **Dr. David Perry**, President and CEO, Canadian Global Affairs Institute

- 11 H 20 ● DRIVING IMPLEMENTATION AT DEFENCE AND THE DIA
 - **Marc Rogers**, Chief of Programme, Department of National Defence
 - **MGen Richard Schmidt**, Chief of Force Development, Department of National Defence
 - **Vincent Robitaille**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Procurement, Defence Investment Agency
 - **Dr. Craig Stone**, Fellow, Canadian Global Affairs Institute
 - Moderator: **Charlotte Duval-Lantoine**, Vice President, Ottawa Operations, Canadian Global Affairs Institute

- 12 H 15 ● LUNCH

PROGRAM

- 13 H 45 ● CHARTING A NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY
- **Lindsay Smith**, Senior Director of Space, Marine, Defence at Innovation Science and Economic Development
 - **Jean-François Juneau**, Acting Senior Director, Defence Industrial Strategy Team, Department of National Defence
 - **Stephanie Batstone**, Managing Partner, NyRad Inc.
 - **Spencer Fraser**, Founder & CEO, Landing Zones Canada
 - Moderator: **Nicole Butler**, Western Canada Defence Lead, Canadian Global Affairs Institute
- 14 H 45 ● BREAK
- 15 H 25 ● IMPLEMENTING A NEW INNOVATION AGENDA
- **Dr. Kate Kaminska**, Director General, BOREALIS Joint Program Office, Defence Research and Development Canada
 - **Ian Smith**, Director of Business Development, Faculty of Engineering, University of Alberta
 - **Laurent Carbonneau**, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, Council of Canadian Innovation
 - **Dr. Shannon Quinn**, Secretary General, National Research Council.
 - Moderator : **Dr. Alexander Salt**, Senior Researcher, Canadian Global Affairs Institute
- 16 H 30 ● FIRESIDE CHAT
- The Honourable **Stephen Fuhr**, Secretary of State, Defence Procurement
 - Moderator: **Dr. David Perry**, President and CEO, Canadian Global Affairs Institute
- 16 H 55 ● CLOSING REMARKS
- 17 H 00 ● RECEPTION



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."



FRANK GRAVES

Author, Founder and President

EKOS Research Associates

Mr. Graves is one of Canada's leading public opinion, social policy and public policy experts as well as being one of its leading applied social researchers. In 1980, he founded EKOS Research Associates Inc., an applied social and economic research firm. Under the leadership of Mr. Graves, EKOS has earned a reputation for creative and rigorous research in the areas of public policy, social policy, and program evaluation, as well as being a leader in innovative survey techniques and methodology.

During his career, he has directed hundreds of large-scale studies of Canadian attitudes to a vast array of issues. His analysis and advice have been sought by senior decision-makers in both the private and public sectors.

Mr. Graves is a Fellow of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and an Honorary Fellow of the Calgary School of Public Policy. He sits on the Advisory Board at the Sprott School of Business. Mr. Graves is an Adjunct Research Professor at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University, Ottawa. Mr. Graves was a member of the Federal Vaccine Confidence Task Force Group and is a Fellow of the Canadian Global Affairs Institute (CGAI). He has also been awarded an Honourary Doctor of Laws by Carleton University.



DR. PHIL BALDWIN

Vice President of Government and Public Affairs

Aerospace Industries Association of Canada

Dr. Phil Baldwin joined the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada as Vice President of Government and Public Affairs in April 2026. He has spent the last ten years first as a political staffer and later as a public affairs consultant to leading manufacturing and supply chain clients. A published researcher and community organizer, Phil holds a PhD from Queen Mary University of London.



VICTORIA BELBIN

President & CEO

Atlantic Canada Aerospace & Defence Association

With a strong, national reputation as an effective and compelling leader, Victoria channels her experience, strategic thinking, and business acumen into her role as CEO for the Atlantic Canada Aerospace and Defence Association (ACADA) and her many board positions. Since joining ACADA in 2021, she has been a driving force in fostering innovation and collaboration within Atlantic Canada's aerospace and defence sectors.

As CEO of ACADA, Victoria leads a team across all Atlantic Provinces with the goal of creating a climate for growth by ensuring ACADA's 200 members are prepared to grow and thrive locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Victoria holds a Master of Marine Studies from Memorial University and stays on top of governance practices through her commitment to continuing education through the Institute for Corporate Directors and ICD.D designation.



ELIOT PENCE

Co-chair

Alliance of Canadian Defence Companies

Founder & CEO

Dominion Dynamics

Eliot Pence is a builder of frontier defence and industrial companies. He is the founder of Dominion Dynamics, a defence product company working to establish sovereign capability in aerospace, autonomy, and command-and-control, and serves as a board director of Xanadu (XNDU), the world's leading quantum company.

From 2018 to 2022, Eliot led global growth at Anduril Industries, joining as one of the company's earliest business development hires and playing a central role in building it into one of America's most consequential defense technology companies. He later served as Chief Business Officer at Osmo and Cambium Biomaterials, where he led government and enterprise go-to-market efforts to translate frontier R&D into deployable platforms. Previously, he was a Senior Director at McLarty Associates, the Washington, DC-based advisory firm.

In 2026, Eliot was appointed to Prime Minister Mark Carney's Advisory Committee on Canada-U.S. Economic Relations. Eliot is a graduate of the University of Victoria and Yale.



MARC WATTERS

Policy Advisor and Cyber Lead

Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries

Marc Watters leads the development of cyber programs and advocacy at the Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries (CADSI).

Over the past 7 years with CADSI he has developed and published 3 research reports, curated a Cyber Council comprising the industry's Top 20 executives, delivered multiple government-industry collaboration programs in cyber defence and offence, and launched CADSI's first new core business line in 10 years – the Cyber and Digital Outlooks.

Previous to his work at CADSI, Marc was a management consultant for 12 years, specialization in change management, innovation programming, and ecosystem mapping. In his free time he plays and coaches hockey, is a proud Nepean Wildcats supporter, and believes everyone should watch the show Ted Lasso at least once.



BGEN (RET'D) CHRIS AYOTTE

Principal Business Development Manager

Amazon Web Services Canada

BGen (ret'd) Chris Ayotte, OMM, CD, was raised in Ottawa and enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces in 1992. He completed his training as a Military Engineer in 1997 and was privileged to serve in many of the Army's engineer regiments.

Throughout his career, BGen Ayotte had opportunities for experiences outside of the military engineer community. He was the Commanding Officer of Canada's Disaster Assistance Response Team, business planner for the Canadian Army, Director of Cadets at the Royal Military College of Canada, Director of Strategic Communications for the Global Counter-ISIS Coalition, and the Director General of Army Force Development. He also initiated and guided the development of the Army's digital transformation strategy and advocated for the adoption of non-conventional approaches to address a rapidly changing security environment to build the digital army for tomorrow through innovation, experimentation, and iterative capability development.

In addition to multiple domestic deployments in response to natural disasters, BGen Ayotte has international deployments to the Balkans, Afghanistan, and the Middle East.

Upon retirement in July 2022, BGen Ayotte started a consulting business with a focus on national security issues. In addition to being a fellow with CGAI, he is on the Board of Directors of Reticle Ventures Canada and the Board of Governors at the Robert Land Academy.



JOANNE LOSTRACCO

Director General of Defence Procurement

Public Services and Procurement Canada

Joanne Lostracco is a seasoned Canadian diplomat and defence expert with a distinguished career spanning over two decades. She serves as Minister at the Embassy of Canada to the United States and Director General of Defence Procurement for Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) in Washington, D.C. In this capacity, she also serves as Canada's ICE Pact Coordinator and Chair of the Foreign Procurement Group, advancing strategic defence industrial cooperation and procurement coordination with key allies. She brings extensive expertise in Canada–U.S. trade relations and defence materiel governance.

In her current role, Ms. Lostracco oversees the management of all Foreign Military Sales (FMS) acquisitions for Canada, valued at over \$20 billion USD. She works closely with the U.S. Departments of War, State, and Commerce to execute this program, delivering critical capabilities in support of the Canadian Armed Forces and key policy frameworks, including Our North, Strong and Free and the National Shipbuilding Strategy. Prior to her diplomatic appointment, Ms. Lostracco served as Corporate Secretary at the Department of National Defence, where she led defence governance, ministerial liaison, and access to information and privacy functions. She also served as Director General of International and Industry Programs within the Materiel Group at the Department of National Defence, where she advanced international acquisition strategies and industry engagement.

Ms. Lostracco's career includes significant international experience. She taught at the graduate and undergraduate levels at Johnson and Wales University and the University of Gothenburg in Sweden. She has represented Canada on multiple Five Eyes and NATO Boards of Oversight, negotiated international acquisition agreements, and provided strategic advice on Canada–U.S. defence industrial cooperation, including the Defence Production Sharing Agreement (DPSA).



DR. OLENA KRYZHANIVSKA

COVE Innovation Defence Fellow

Canadian Global Affairs Institute

Olena Kryzhanivska is a COVE Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, where she focuses on defence innovations in Canada. She holds a PhD in Political Science from Gazi University (Türkiye). Olena has provided expert analysis to the Norwegian Embassy in Türkiye, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, and the NATO Association of Canada.

As an independent researcher for more than two years, she authors the weekly newsletter Ukraine's Arms Monitor, which covers weapons transfers, defence production, and drone warfare in the context of the Russia–Ukraine war.



SYLVAIN MENARD

Country Director Canada

RTX

Sylvain Menard is responsible for communicating the positions and concerns of RTX to policy and decision makers in Canada. He also monitors and advises the three businesses of RTX (Collins Aerospace, Pratt & Whitney, and Raytheon) on Canadian policy decisions and business opportunities.

Sylvain retired from the Canadian Armed Forces in June 2024 at the rank of Major- General. His last tenure in uniform was as the Chief Fighter and NORAD Capability, Royal Canadian Air Force in the National Capital Region, where he was responsible for the management of all projects related to the current and future fighter aircraft and NORAD capability, a portfolio of over \$60B CAD.

In 1996, he was posted to 439 Squadron, Bagotville, Quebec, where he flew the CT-133 Silverstar in a combat-support role. In 1998, he completed the Fighter Pilot Lead in Training and the Fighter Pilot Course on the CF-188 Hornet at the 410 Operational Training Unit in Cold Lake, Alberta. He then flew the CF-188 operationally with 425 Tactical Fighter Squadron from 1999 to 2003, and completed the Fighter Weapons Instructor Course (FWIC) and the Tactical Leadership Program (TLP). He was the 3 Wing Evaluations, Exercise and Plans Officer, held the positions of Flight Commander, Operations Officer, and deputy Squadron Commander at 425 Squadron. He worked at the 1 Canadian Air Division Headquarter as A3 Fighters, principal adviser to the operational commander for all fighter matters.

He deployed to Afghanistan in 2008 during Op ATHENA to work within the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) Combined Joint Operations Centre. As the Commanding Officer of 425 Squadron from 2010 to 2012, he led the expeditious deployment of the Canadian fighters and air-to-air refuellers detachment to Italy during the Arab Spring of 2011 in support of Op MOBILE, the country's contribution to NATO Op UNIFIED PROTECTOR.

In 2008, Sylvain completed the Joint Command and Staff College (JCSP) in Toronto, and in 2015 the USAF Air War College (AWC) in Montgomery, Alabama. He assumed command of 3 Wing/Canadian Forces Base Bagotville (2013-2015) and filled the role of Director Defense Program Coordination in Ottawa (2015-2017).



VINCENT ROBITAILLE

Assistant Deputy Minister Procurement

Defence Investment Agency

Since February 2026, Vincent Robitaille serves as Assistant Deputy Minister, Procurement, at the Defence Investment Agency. He provides strategic leadership for defence procurements valued over \$100 million, ensuring major capability investments are delivered to the Canadian Armed Forces with greater speed and efficiency. In advancing Canada's Defence Industrial Strategy, he drives reforms that simplify procurement processes, accelerate acquisition timelines, and strengthen collaboration with Canadian industry—supporting the timely delivery of critical military capabilities while building long-term industrial capacity and economic benefits for Canada.

From 2021 to 2026, he served as Assistant Deputy Minister, Major Projects at Transport Canada, where he led the initiation and procurement of the Alto High-Speed Rail project and, starting in 2025 the delivery of the Lac-Mégantic Bypass project. From 2018 to 2021, Mr. Robitaille served as Director General, Centre of Excellence on Strategic Investments at Transport Canada, leading a team responsible for the commercial and policy aspects of major transportation investments, alternative financing arrangements, and COVID-19 support measures for the air sector.

From 2016 to 2019, Vincent volunteered as President of the Canadian Institute for Procurement and Materiel Management.



MARC RODGERS

Chief of Programme

Department of National Defence

Marc Rodgers served in the Canadian Armed Forces as an Aerospace Engineer for 33 years, retiring in May 2023 as a Brigadier General.

Throughout his military career, he has supported the Canadian Armed Forces in numerous capacities, supporting a broad range of fleets and equipment. He first gained valuable experience and knowledge in the fields of engineering, project management, and acquisition of major aerospace equipment as the Weapon System Manager for the CH146 Griffon, CH149 Cormorant, CC115 Buffalo and CC138 Twin Otter fleets.

He has held command at the Unit and Formation level, served as Executive Assistant to the Chief of the Defence Staff, Military Assistant to the National Security and Intelligence Advisor to the Prime Minister and also held the position of Director of Defence Program Coordination within Chief of Programme.

In June 2021, Marc was promoted to Brigadier General and appointed Director General Aerospace Equipment Program Management. Marc retired from the military in May 2023, and assumed the responsibilities of the Director General Major Project Delivery (Air and Land). In March 2025, Marc was placed on assignment to examine and validate the management and execution of the Defence Services Programme to improve performance, increase coordination, and collaboration to improve performance, effectiveness and efficiency. In June 2025, he was appointed Chief of Programme within the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff organization.



MGEN RICHARD SCHMIDT

Chief of Force Development

Department of National Defence

MGen Richard (Dick) Schmidt enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces in 1998. He finished his Primary Reserve Infantryman Course with the Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada and subsequently transferred to the Regular Force where he attended the Royal Military College of Canada (RMCC). After commissioning in 2002, he joined the Second Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

In 2006, MGen Schmidt completed the Special Operations Assaulter Course. Since, he's held several command and staff appointments within Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM), the Canadian Army Headquarters and National Defence Headquarters. Notably, he has been employed as CANSOFCOM's Liaison Officer to the Strategic Joint Staff, a Special Operations Task Force Commander for several deployed elms in different theatres and had the privilege of commanding JTF 2 from 2016-2019. In 2020, he became the Director of Special Operations and subsequently was employed as the Special Advisor to the Vice Chief of Defence Staff.

MGen Schmidt was appointed Deputy Commander of CANSOFCOM in June 2022 and Chief of Force Development in May 2026. His deployments include Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Iraq, multiple Domestic Operations as well as various Small Missions in the Middle East and Africa.



DR. CRAIG STONE

Fellow

Canadian Global Affairs Institute

Dr. Craig Stone is an Emeritus Associate Professor of Defence Studies, Department of Defence Studies, at the Canadian Forces College (CFC). Dr. Stone joined the academic staff at CFC in the summer of 2005 after 29 years in the Canadian Armed Forces. While at CFC he was the Director of Academics from December 2008 until June 2015, was the Head of the Department from December 2008 until June 2013 and was the Associate Dean of Arts of the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC) from July 2013 to June 2015. He holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of Manitoba, and an M.A. and PhD in War Studies (Defence Economics) from RMC. He retired from full time employment in September 2021.

More generally, he has taught graduate-level courses in defence economics, defence decision-making, strategy formulation, strategic resource management, and institutional policy development. He served as a member of the DND Defence Industrial Advisory Committee; was appointed to the Interim Board of Directors for the new Defence Analysis Institute in February 2014; served on the College of Management and Economics Leadership Advisory Board, University of Guelph; served as a member of the Canadian International Council Strategic Studies Working Group; served as a member of the Research and Professional Practices Committee, The Institute of Public Administration of Canada; and continues to be a member of the Editorial Board for the Canadian Army Journal.



CHARLOTTE DUVAL-LANTOINE

Vice President, Ottawa Operations

Canadian Global Affairs Institute

Charlotte is the Vice President, Ottawa Operations and a Fellow at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute. She is also a PhD Candidate at Deakin University, researching Canadian army culture during the 1990s and its influence on operations.

She published her MA research on toxic leadership and gender integration in the Canadian military in 2022. The resulting book, *The Ones We Let Down*, was named among The Hill Times' Best Books of 2022. Her research interests include questions of military leadership, culture change, and personnel policy, topics on which she regularly comments in the media and writes about on her Substack, *DND/CAF 101*. She participates in consultation 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.

Charlotte was born in France and grew up in Marseille. She has called Canada her home since 2014.



LINDSAY SMITH

Senior Director of Space, Marine, Defence

Innovation, Science and Economic Development

Lindsay Smith is the Senior Director of Space, Marine, Defence at Innovation Science and Economic Development (ISED) where she leads a team responsible for the implementation of Canada's first Defence Industrial Strategy as well as industry intelligence and the development of policy advice on Canada's space, marine and defence industries. She was previously the Deputy Director for Space and Marine within the same directorate.

With over fifteen years in the federal public service, Ms. Smith also held various positions at Transport Canada. She holds a Masters of Business Administration from Griffith University (Australia) and a Bachelor of Arts Honors with a specialization in Environmental Studies from Carleton University (Canada).

In her spare time, Lindsay likes to spend time with her family at the cottage as well as mountain bike, run and travel.



JEAN-FRANCOIS JUNEAU

Acting Senior Director Defence Industrial Strategy Team,
Department of National Defence

Jean-François Juneau has been Acting Senior Director in the Defence Industrial Strategy team since February 2025. Before joining this team, he served as Director of Operations for the Office of the Independent Review Panel for Defence Acquisition from 2022 to 2025.

Between 2011 and 2022, Jean-François held several positions within the Policy Group at National Defence, including serving as Director of Cabinet Affairs for four years. Prior to that, he contributed to the finalization and implementation of Canada's defence policy, Strong, Secure, Engaged, as the Deputy Director of Policy Development.

Jean-François has also worked in parliamentary affairs, strategic analysis, and speechwriting.



STEPHANIE BATSTONE

Managing Partner

NyRad Inc.

Stephanie Batstone has spent more than 25 years at the intersection of defence procurement, industrial policy, and economic development. As one of the architects of Canada's Industrial and Technological Benefits (ITB) and Value Proposition (VP) framework, she helped design the policies intended to transform defence spending into long-term industrial and innovation outcomes for Canada.

Today, as Managing Partner at NyRad Inc., Stephanie works with defence companies to translate policy into results. Over the past decade, she and her NyRad colleagues have worked with 80 prime contractors and Tier 1 suppliers on major Canadian defence procurements, helping them build partnerships, strengthen domestic industrial capabilities, develop winning Value Propositions, and deliver on their commitments.

Her unique perspective, from helping design Canada's ITB/VP framework to supporting its implementation across major defence procurements, provides valuable insight into the relationship between defence policy, industrial capability, and economic growth.



SPENCER FRASER

Founder & CEO

Landing Zones Canada

Spencer Fraser is the founder and CEO of Landing Zones Canada Inc. He is an experienced business founder with a proven track record inventing, developing and delivering complex projects; from a variety of relatively small uncrewed vehicle systems (UVS) that have enjoyed worldwide exports to a 26,000-ton naval supply ship for the Royal Canadian Navy. Under his leadership, he has managed multi-disciplinary teams that have pioneered, produced and sold over five thousand UVS to over 20 countries. Coupled with his years in the marine sector, Spencer has won various awards creating over \$8 billion CAD dollars in business activity.

He has worked for over 40 years in the defence, marine, and aerospace sectors, including over 20 years as a naval officer in the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). Since his retirement in 2003 he has founded and been the president/CEO of several of Canada's leading aerospace and defence firms.



JOHN SCHMIDT

President

Federal Fleet

John leads a team of more than 90 officers, crew, and staff responsible for managing, maintaining, and operating the Combat Support Ship Asterix, the Royal Canadian Navy's vital supply vessel that enables Canada to project its naval presence around the world.

As a senior executive during the revitalization of Davie Shipyard in 2013, John played a key role in the company's return to government shipbuilding and major repair programs. He led business development efforts, oversaw proposal submissions, and negotiated contracts that paved the way for the conversion of MV Asterix into Canada's premier naval supply ship, ultimately resulting in the formation of Federal Fleet Services.

John brings over 50 years of experience in the marine industry across both government and private sectors. He spent three decades in leadership roles within the Government of Canada, primarily with Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), serving as Manager of Engineering and Marine Inspection and later as Director of Marine Procurement, where he contributed to the highly successful Halifax-Class Modernization program.

Following his public service career, John joined Irving Shipbuilding, where he led the company's successful bid under the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy. He is also a founding member of the Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association and served as its first Board Chair from 2018 to 2022.



NICOLE BUTLER

Western Defence Lead

Canadian Global Affairs Institute

Nicole Butler is the Western Canada Defence Lead at the Canadian Global Affairs Institute.

Nicole's work has spanned four countries and tapped into a broad range of issues including transnational organized crime, United Nations humanitarian crisis response, international diplomacy, and Arctic security and defence. Prior to joining CGAI, Nicole worked at the Wilson Center's Polar Institute in Washington, DC and she is a current research fellow at the North American and Arctic Defence and Security Network (NAADSN) as a resident Arctic expert.

She holds a Master of Arts in Security Studies from Georgetown University's Walsh School of Foreign Service and a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from Western University.



DR. KATE KAMINSKA

Director General BOREALIS Joint Program Office
Defence Research and Development Canada

Dr. Kate Kaminska is the Director General of the BOREALIS Joint Program Office at Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC), where she is leading the creation of a new cross-government platform to accelerate defence innovation, advanced research, and secure technology development. Prior to assuming this role, she served as DRDC's Chief Scientist and Departmental Science Advisor to the Department of National Defence (DND).

A physicist with a background in materials science, Dr. Kaminska has over 20 years of experience in public sector science and innovation, with expertise in quantum technologies, artificial intelligence, and defence S&T. She has held several senior leadership positions, including:

- Director, Digital Solutions (DND Digital Services Group), where she established a new directorate and led major digital transformation initiatives, including cloud modernization and new product-based delivery models;
- Director, R&D Program (DRDC), overseeing a multi-million-dollar portfolio of research in quantum, autonomy, and electronic warfare;
- Section Head, Joint Targeting (DRDC CORA), where she developed a new capability delivering real-time S&T support to military operations; and
- Portfolio Manager, IDEaS, leading the inaugural competitive project call and pioneering agile procurement processes for defence innovation.

Earlier in her career, she served as Advisor to the Chief of Staff (Science and Technology), as a Defence Scientist specializing in public safety and security, and as a Research Officer at the National Research Council of Canada, working at the forefront of nanotechnology.



IAN SMITH

Director of Business Development, Faculty of Engineering
University of Alberta

Ian Smith is a key contributor to Canada's defence innovation landscape, building meaningful connections between academic research and national security priorities. As the Director of Business Development in the University of Alberta's Faculty of Engineering and a founding member of the Centre for Applied Research in Defence and Dual Use Technologies (CARDD Tech), Ian is helping position the University of Alberta as a national leader in defence and dual-use technology development leading to over \$50M in defence investments.



LAURENT CARBONNEAU

Vice President of Policy and Advocacy
Council of Canadian Innovators

Laurent Carbonneau is the Vice President of Policy and Advocacy at the Council of Canadian Innovators (CCI), where he leads the organization's national policy agenda on behalf of Canada's high-growth, Canadian-headquartered companies. At CCI, Laurent works directly with founders, CEOs, and policymakers to advance reforms that strengthen Canada's innovation economy — including modernizing procurement, improving access to growth capital, strengthening intellectual property and data strategies, and ensuring government policies support the scale and global competitiveness of domestic firms. His work focuses on building the conditions for Canadian companies to grow, anchor their operations at home, and contribute to the country's long-term economic resilience and sovereignty.

Prior to joining CCI, Laurent worked in federal politics in legislative, policy, and issues management roles for a senior Member of Parliament, in the NDP leaders office, and on a national campaign. He later led government relations in the post-secondary sector, advancing national policy priorities related to talent, research, and innovation.

Laurent holds a master's degree in Political Management from Carleton University and a master's degree in History from the University of St Andrews. He earned his BA from Mount Allison University and is based in Ottawa.



DR. SHANNON QUINN

Secretary General

National Research Council

Dr. Shannon Quinn, Secretary General, National Research Council of Canada. Shannon Quinn has served as Secretary General of the National Research Council of Canada (NRC), a federal research organization, since September 2021. In this role, she supports the NRC in advancing Canada's science, research, and innovation agenda, with responsibilities spanning strategy, policy, facilities renewal, governance, stakeholder and Indigenous engagement, communications, and performance. She is an experienced executive with a background in science and technology across both the public and private sectors.

Previously, she was Vice-President, Science, Technology and Commercial Oversight at Atomic Energy of Canada Limited and held senior roles at Natural Resources Canada. She also worked in the steel industry and served as an adjunct professor at McMaster University. She holds a B.Sc. in Biochemistry and a B.A.Sc. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Ottawa, a PhD in Chemical Engineering from Queen's University, and an MBA from the University of Ottawa.



DR. ALEXANDER SALT

Senior Researcher

Canadian Global Affairs Institute

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.



THE HONOURABLE STEPHEN FUHR

Secretary of State - Defence Procurement

Department of National Defence

Secretary Fuhr was born in Edmonton, Alberta, and grew up in Kamloops, British Columbia. He attended Trinity Western University, earning an aviation technology diploma before joining the Canadian Forces.

As a pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), Secretary Fuhr held multiple roles, including A2 flight instructor, standards officer, CF-18 fighter pilot, and fleet manager at 1 Canadian Air Division. He was a qualified NORAD and NATO operations evaluation officer. Following his military retirement, Secretary Fuhr transitioned to the civilian aviation industry. He served as Vice President and Director of Business Development, and later the President and CEO of SkyTrac Systems, an aerospace and satellite communications company, from 2009 to 2012.

From 2013 to 2015, Secretary Fuhr was qualified as an aircraft captain on several different transport category aircraft for a private part 91 operator, and was a Transport Canada pilot examiner, with delegated authority to issue and renew pilot instrument ratings. Secretary Fuhr served as the Member of Parliament for Kelowna in the House of Commons from 2015 to 2019, and as Chair of the House of Commons' Standing Committee on National Defence from 2016 to 2019. Secretary Fuhr was subsequently re-elected in the last federal election, and on May 13, 2025, Secretary Fuhr was appointed Secretary of State for Defence Procurement by Prime Minister Mark Carney.

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