



POLICY  
INSIGHTS

Conference on

# FINANCING CANADA'S DEFENCE READINESS

**Rideau Club**  
99 Bank St, 15th Floor  
Ottawa, ON K1P 6B9

**Tuesday, May 5, 2026**  
7:30 AM - 4:10 PM



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# Program

The Policy Insights Forum's Conference on Financing Canada's Defence Readiness convenes as a full-day conference on Tuesday, May 5, 2026, at the Rideau Club in Ottawa, Canada.

This invitation-only gathering brings together senior leaders from government, the defence industry, financial institutions, pension funds, private equity, export development organizations, and allied missions to examine the capital mobilization, industrial scaling and sovereign capability development required to meet Canada's NATO commitments and strengthen long-term national preparedness.

**7:30 AM - 8:00 AM**

## **Registration and Executive Networking Breakfast**

Arrival and registration of attendees  
Breakfast and informal networking

**8:00 AM - 8:20 AM**

## **Conference Opening**

Welcoming Remarks Speaker:  
**Vice Admiral (Ret'd) Mark Norman**  
Board Advisor, Policy Insights Forum



Master of Ceremonies:  
**Aliénor Peyrefitte**  
Conference Secretariat, Policy Insights Forum



**8:20 AM - 8:40 AM**

## **Opening Keynote**

*Building Canada's Defence Investment Engine and National Readiness Capabilities*

Opening Speaker:  
**The Honourable Peter MacKay**  
Strategic Advisor, Deloitte Canada

**Deloitte.**

**8:40 AM - 9:00 AM**

## **Perspectives from NATO and Canada on Strategic Investments and Industry Engagement**

Virtual Guest Speaker:  
**Ambassador Heidi Hulan**  
Permanent Representative of Canada to NATO



# Program

9:00 AM - 9:45 AM

**Executive Panel I** – Procurement, Governance and Capital  
Alignment: *The creation of the DSRB and what it means for Canadian SMEs*



Session Moderator:

**Heather Hume**

Vice President & Senior Advisor, TD Securities

Participants:

**Alex Ciappara**

Vice President and Head Economist, Canadian Bankers Association (CBA)



**Troy Crosby**

Former Assistant Deputy Minister (Materiel), Department of National Defence



**Jeffrey Reynolds**

Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security, Atlantic Council

9:45 AM - 10:00 AM

**Networking Break**

10:00 AM - 10:30 AM

**Development Finance and Growth Capital**  
**The Role of BDC in Strategic Industrial Scaling**



Featured Speaker:

**Major General (Ret'd) Peter Dawe**

Vice President, Defence Strategy, Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) Capital

# Program

**10:30 AM - 11:15 AM** **Featured Fireside Chat** – Federal Fleet Case Study  
*A Working Model for Capability Delivery*



Moderator:

**The Honourable Jamie Baillie**

Industry Liaison, Policy Insights Forum



Guest Speaker:

**John Schmidt**

President, Federal Fleet Services

**11:15 AM - 11:30 PM** **Special Session** – *European Perspectives on Financing Defence Readiness: Insights from Luxembourg*



Virtual Guest Speaker:

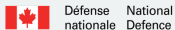
**H el ene Massard**

Deputy Director, Directorate of Defence

Government of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg

**11:30 AM - 12:30 PM** **Executive Buffet Lunch**

**12:30 PM - 12:50 PM** **Spotlight** – *Canada's New Defence Industrial Strategy and Strategic Implications for Industry*



Guest Speaker:

**Wendy Hadwen**

Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy-Industry

Department of National Defence

**12:50 PM - 1:15 PM** **Business Development Session** – *Converting Canadian Capability into Contracts at Home and Abroad*



Guest Speaker:

**Robin Richardson**

Senior Vice President, Marketing & Corporate

Communications, Calian Group

**1:15 PM - 1:30 PM** **Networking Break**

# Program

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

**Executive Panel II** – Financial System and Defence Programs: *Structuring Bankable Defence and Security Projects*



Moderator:

**Niranjan Vivekanandan**  
Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer,  
RBC Commercial Banking



Participants:

**Todd Winterhalt**  
Senior Vice-President, International Markets & Head of  
Communications & Public Affairs  
Export Development Canada (EDC)



Global Affairs  
Canada

**Colin Barker**

Executive Director, Defence Exports Division, Global Affairs  
Canada



Treasury Board of  
Canada Secretariat

**Jen O'Donoghue**

Assistant Secretary, International Affairs, Security & Justice  
Sector, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

2:30 PM - 3:00 PM

**Featured Discussion** – Canada's Ocean Supercluster:  
*Aligning Canada's Innovation Model with Future Defence  
Capability to Support SMEs*



Moderator:

**Vice Admiral (Ret'd) Mark Norman**  
Board Advisor, Policy Insights Forum

Guest Speaker:

**Kendra MacDonald**  
CEO, Canada's Ocean Supercluster



# Program

**3:00 PM - 3:30 PM**

**Overview Presentation** – Canada as a Global Financial Hub for Defence, Security, and Resilience  
*Capital Markets, Institutional Finance, and the System Architecture of Modern Defence Investment*



Moderator:

**Aliénor Peyrefitte**

Conference Secretariat, Policy Insights Forum

Guest Speaker:

**Kevin Reed**

President, Chief Operating Officer, Defence, Security & Resilience Bank (DSRB) Development Group



Defence, Security  
& Resilience Bank  
Development Group

**3:30 PM - 4:00 PM**

**Closing Keynote** – *Private Sector Perspectives on Financing Readiness as National Readiness*

Closing Keynote Speaker:

**Blake Goldring**

Executive Chairman, AGF Management

Chair of the Board of Directors, C.D. Howe Institute



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**4:00 PM - 4:10 PM**

**Conference Thanks and Appreciation** – *Private Sector Perspectives on Financing Readiness as National Readiness*

Closing Keynote Speaker:

**Goran Samuel Pesic**

Chairman, Policy Insights Forum



# Speakers



**The Hon. Jamie Baillie**

Industry Liaison  
Policy Insights Forum



**Colin Barker**

Executive Director  
Defence Exports Division,  
Global Affairs Canada



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Mark Norman**

Board Advisor  
Policy Insights Forum



**Jen O'Donoghue**

Assistant Secretary,  
International Affairs,  
Security and Justice Sector,  
Treasury Board Secretariat



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Bank Development (DSRB)



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Export Development Canada (EDC)

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The Policy Insights Forum (PIF) is a non-partisan Canadian think tank focusing on strategic over-the-horizon public policy issues through independent research, analysis and engagement.

Through high-level conferences, publications, roundtables, and convening sessions, the PIF brings together senior leaders across Canada, the United States, Europe, and allied nations to deliver actionable insights in economic security, national defence, international affairs, sovereignty and emerging technologies.

A cornerstone of this work is the NATO Private Sector Engagement (NPSE) program, an annual transatlantic mission that connects Canadian executives directly with NATO, EU, and allied defence institutions to strengthen industrial cooperation and strategic alignment.

The PIF is equally committed to developing future leaders through flagship initiatives, including the Emerging Young Leaders Program, the Dr. Robert Spencer Internship and the North Star Internship.

The Policy Insights Forum — **Engaging Canada's Best Minds**<sup>®</sup>



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