

2018 CANADIAN ARMED FORCES OUTLOOKS

The Air Force Outlook

Welcome Remarks

April 11th, 2018 08:30, Shaw Centre, Ottawa

Check Against Delivery

Welcome to the second day of the Canadian Armed Forces Outlooks. This year's day two honours go to the Royal Canadian Air Force.

But before we get things started, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rich Foster, our Air Force Outlook Chair, and the DND Air Force Liaison, Major Major Eric Eif. Both Mr. Foster and Major Eif have played leading roles in bringing together the Airforce Outlook. For today's successes, we are indebted to this duo's hard work.

It is CADSI's pleasure to be the proud host once again this year.

As I mentioned yesterday, the Outlooks have existed for more than twenty years. They have come to be a clear representation of the importance of a strong partnership and ongoing dialogue between industry, government and our forces.

We had a good dialogue yesterday on the needs and capabilities of Canada's Army. I'm sure that energy will continue today as we turn our attention to the Air Force.

A lot has happened this past year both domestically and internationally to impact defence, and specifically the Air Force.

Government of Canada released its defence policy Strong, Secure, Engaged. The policy included a detailed recapitalization of the CAF that we will soon see in the form of a costed investment plan.

We saw an innovative defence sector held up as one of the government's five domestic defence priorities.

For the Air Force, SSE included commitments to recapitalize and strengthen Canada's fleet, acquire space capabilities, invest in remotely piloted systems, and sustain domestic search and rescue capability - all to assure the agility and flexibility of the Air Force.

Underpinning the Government's policy for economic growth is the concept of innovation. Most of us in the room today know that the biggest tool the government has to drive innovation in the defence sector is through its procurements, and Air Force procurements are a major part of that.

Significant and innovative projects on the horizon that we'll discuss today, like Future Fighter, are our chance to demonstrate what Canada's defence and aerospace industries are capable of, particularly when we work in tandem with our government and our armed forces.

And what about the impact of the changing international landscape?

With an uncertain global political environment afoot and the protection of our North becoming more imperative to the protection of North America, a strong partnership and collaboration between government - the CAF and Canadian industry - and our friends and allies is critical. As the party responsible for the North, it's Canada's time to shine. Whether it be by air, space, by sea (and you know that I'm biased), or by land, we have a responsibility and, I would argue, an innovation angle to protect our northern domain.

For our conversation today, we will discuss future needs of the Air Force including RCAF Force development, simulation and training, space projects and capabilities, and aerospace equipment program management. I'm sure the keynote from Major General Alain Pelletier on Fighter Capability will spark some lively conversation as well.

Before we take off, I'd like to remind everyone that registration for CANSEC is now open. We hope to see you all there, as there will be lots of innovative products and services to check out.

I will also call everyone's attention to an award that I know has a special place in the hearts and minds of the RCAF: the Paddy O'Donnell Mentorship Award. Paddy was truly a giant in the Canadian Armed Forces family, the Royal Canadian Air Force more specifically, and the Canadian defence industry community. CADSI is pleased to once again recognize an industry mentor in his name.

We have a page on the CANSEC website dedicated to the award with all the nomination details. This year's honouree will be announced at CANSEC.

With that, I'll leave you to your jam-packed agenda. Thank you for your attention this morning and please, enjoy the day.