



# Annual Report

## 2024

Annual General Meeting of Members  
APRIL 2, 2025 | VIRTUAL

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Canadian Association of Defence and Security Industries  
[defenceandsecurity.ca](https://defenceandsecurity.ca)

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

This report is all about 2024, but to view those 12 months in isolation would – I think – ignore a broader storyline that stretches back a full three years. In 2022, CADSI saw a return to regular operations, but COVID still loomed large. Then 2023 brought unrestricted but still-stable programming. To me, 2024 was truly our turning point, when we shed all vestiges of post-pandemic inertia and launched fully into growth mode.

That growth took many forms – some planned and some more opportunistic – and this report will outline it in detail. But briefly, it included the revitalization of certain elements of CANSEC, new sustainable programming in cyber, a rounded-out international portfolio with a focus on SMBs, and investment in both fixed resources and new staff to support our work on your behalf.

The first half of 2024 was largely devoted to delivering our signature domestic events, which became a challenge as protests ramped up in response to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Like many of our members, CADSI was targeted by protest actions, and we invested a great deal of time and energy into ensuring our events could proceed unincumbered and our staff could come in to work in a secure environment.

Those efforts were rewarded, as the WiDS breakfast, the CAF Outlooks, and CANSEC all broke their previous attendance records. CANSEC in particular has become an unmissable event for Canada's defence and security community, the national media, and dozens of international partners. In 2024, CADSI was proud to co-host

a special operators forum with the Ukrainian delegation in the lead-up to the show. To me, that meeting exemplified what CANSEC can deliver in support of a shared, broader purpose. The defence of democracy has never been more crucial.

Our advocacy in 2024 remained hard-hitting in that rapidly changing political environment. CADSI pushed for Canada to meet its NATO commitments, calling for a costed plan and not more press releases. We simultaneously continued to chip away at policy roadblocks and regulatory challenges that make it harder for Canadian companies to succeed.

As we turned a corner into the second half of the year, CADSI was excited to add its first new live event in many years: our Cyber and Digital Outlooks. We also prioritized member outreach, with one-on-one visits and meetings supplemented by organized roundtables, and we undertook a special project to 'map' and improve the member experience. We heard loud and clear that you want to reduce points of friction, and that clearer pathways are needed to access the services, tools and products that your membership dollars afford you.

This feedback is invaluable, and I want to thank every member that engaged with us.

Growth is never linear, and it often means accepting risk, so my gratitude also goes out to CADSI's Board of Directors for their flexibility in 2024. The Board allowed us to seize opportunities when they presented themselves, trusting me and my team to execute on planned growth but also to 'grow in the moment.'

And finally, to CADSI's staff: Thank you for enthusiasm, your fearlessness, and for being excited along with me. That brave mindset saw us through what I believe was our strongest year to date.

In 2025, members will see us push even further and enter the next phase of our evolution as an organization. I can't wait for you to see what's next.



Christyn Cianfarani  
President and CEO





## MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICES

CADSI's membership base continued to evolve in 2024, and the association hired a Director of Membership Care to better connect with and understand the people and businesses that we represent. Throughout the year, we worked to improve our tools and resources, undertook outreach initiatives, and hosted events that continue to act as the benchmark for activities within the defence and security industry in Canada.

### Journey Mapping

To deepen our understanding of our members' experiences and to better understand what added value means to them, CADSI initiated a comprehensive "Journey Mapping" project in early 2024. This initiative involved one-on-one interviews with members and front-line CADSI staff, as well as group discussions with our operating committees, as we worked to map out the member experience from initial engagement through ongoing interactions and beyond. This allowed CADSI to identify what was working well for members, along with key points of friction and areas for improvement, moving into 2025.

### Tools and Resources

CADSI made significant investments throughout 2024 to deliver greater value and support to members. We started by updating Gateway Intel to include detailed profiles of 40 countries. These profiles provide critical market intelligence and direct contact information for Trade Commissioners, supported by insights from Janes. Building on this, CADSI delivered six in-depth webinars focused on key global markets. Those webinars were made available through our myResources platform, allowing members to access this content on their own schedules.

Throughout 2024, CADSI continued to expand its content library via myResources, with online primers, slide decks, and dozens of video recordings. Finally, we launched CANSEC Connect, a new tool providing show participants with enhanced flexibility to connect with one another on-site. Updates to CADSI's Capabilities Database allowed exhibitors to effectively showcase their expertise and prepare for CANSEC.

## Outreach

CADSI's outreach activities vary widely and take place throughout the calendar year. In 2024, we represented our members at receptions, before Parliamentary committees, on panels or roundtables, at conferences, on external committees, and at engagements hosted by embassies or high commissions. Our staff also gave presentations to small groups within academic or government institutions, and co-hosted events with the Royal Canadian Navy and the Canadian Global Affairs Institute. On the margins of CANSEC, we co-hosted an event focused on the provision of drones and armour to Ukraine.

CADSI made member visits a top priority in 2024, engaging one-on-one with businesses in regions across the country. These visits help us establish personal connections with members and better understand their individual business challenges and successes.

## Committees

CADSI renewed our three operating committees over the summer, welcoming several new members to the Policy Committee, Small and Medium-Sized Business Committee, and Cyber Council. These groups bring a diverse set of views from top industry professionals, meeting regularly throughout the year to provide the association with critical feedback, or to flag new or ongoing challenges that should be brought to the attention of government.



“*Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.*”

– Victoria Doak, Senior Graphic Designer

**747**  
MEMBERS

**75%**  
RETENTION



## ADVOCACY



This was an active, challenging and unpredictable year for CADSI's advocacy team, with political change on the immediate horizon in both Canada and the United States.

Discussions surrounding defence spending began making their way into the public discourse in early 2024, and by year's end were taking up significant bandwidth in the mainstream media and beyond. Pressure on Canada to meet its NATO commitment to spend a minimum of 2% of annual GDP on defence increased exponentially, coming from allies, influential business organizations, editorial boards, and military leadership. CADSI seized upon this rare mainstream interest, advocating loudly in favour of the target and coordinating with likeminded individuals and organizations to amplify their messages whenever appropriate. Late in 2024, we rolled out a series of our own member resources tied to the 2% target.

Meanwhile, the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia passed its 1,000th day. Recognizing that the sense of urgency around the conflict was beginning to wane, CADSI chose to make supporting Ukraine and Canada's NATO partners – in actions and not just words – the central advocacy message at CANSEC.

Our efforts in 2024 led to several policy wins. These included gaining government buy-in and laying the groundwork for a new forum that would bring together top industrial and political leadership for sustained and much-needed dialogue. The details of a new Canadian cybersecurity standard mirroring the U.S. CMMC program also solidified, and PSPC Minister Jean-Yves Duclos agreed to a review of unilateral changes his department made to the Contract Security Program in 2019. Following a series of CADSI-led interventions, Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development Mary Ng also indicated that she was reviewing a policy within Export Development Canada that unfairly discriminates against defence companies.

Other policy files we tracked and engaged on in 2024 included – but were not limited to – the rollout of the new U.S. cybersecurity standard (CMMC) and its Canadian counterpart, a review of the defence procurement system led by PSPC, export permitting to Israel, legislated

procurement targets for SMBs and innovative firms, fallout from the ArriveCAN scandal for professional services contracts, Indigenous procurement targets, and new guidance on controlled goods in the Cloud. Regular, one-on-one meetings at the ADM level across multiple departments allowed us to continuously monitor and update public service leadership on the issues of greatest concern.

In spring 2024, CADSI updated its public-facing advertising campaign ("Every Bit Canadian") with support from members across the country who agreed to be featured in the ads throughout 2024. Individual ads were produced to highlight defence manufacturing, professional services, and emerging technologies.

Throughout the year, members were kept informed through our monthly Industry Dispatch newsletter, as well as webinars and primers linked to events like the federal budget and December Cabinet shuffle.

*CADSI has helped us open doors and forge new relationships with groups in government we were never able to reach on our own.*

– CADSI member

**12.5**  
MILLION

AD CAMPAIGN  
IMPRESSIONS



## DOMESTIC PROGRAM



CADSI's signature event had another exceptional year in 2024, breaking previous records linked to registration, attendance, number of B2G/B2B meetings, and number of exhibitors. Registration for CANSEC has doubled since 2010, reflecting the growth and maturity of this critical annual gathering.

We made significant upgrades for 2024's show, including expanding and modernizing security measures and intelligence gathering, expanding parking availability and improving traffic flow, introducing new lunchtime food options, and making the shuttle services more efficient and reliable.

The main stage in the CANSEC meal hall had not undergone a significant upgrade in nearly a decade. We dramatically changed the look of the stage and the room for 2024, incorporating upgraded lighting, sound systems, and three large LCD screens to improve the overall experience for sponsors, audience members and keynote speakers.

CANSEC's communications efforts were unified under the tagline "Move at the Speed of Life" to support a push for urgent, swift action in response to our shared defence and security challenges. This theme was highly visible throughout the venue and present in everything from the opening speech to the show's Media Kit.

CANSEC 2024 attracted high-level delegations from more than 50 countries interested in viewing Canadian products and technologies. Canadian VIPs included four federal cabinet ministers, over a dozen additional Parliamentarians, and top military leadership. VIP tours of the show floor brought these decision-makers into direct contact with our members.

# 12,678

REGISTRANTS

# 42%

REGISTRANTS  
FROM GOVERNMENT

# 50+

INTERNATIONAL  
DELEGATIONS





ARMY DAY REGISTRANTS



AIR FORCE DAY REGISTRANTS



NAVY DAY REGISTRANTS



## CANADIAN ARMED FORCES OUTLOOKS

The CAF Outlooks took place from April 2 to April 4 at the Shaw Centre in Ottawa. The agenda and programming remained tightly focused again this year, delivering sessions from CAF leadership and project managers who presented information on upcoming procurements of interest to industry. The Commanders of the Army, Air Force, and Navy provided the three lunchtime keynote addresses.

The Outlooks offered participants a user-friendly, smarter registration and entry process which allowed for more networking time each day. Single day and multi-day registration was offered, inclusive of procurement summary documents (formerly) known as the Quad Charts. CADSI once again produced the CAF Outlooks Digital Replay, a virtual rebroadcast package of all session materials for registrants.





CADSI hosted its inaugural Cyber and Digital Outlooks on November 7, with DND/CAF, the Communications Security Establishment (CSE) and Shared Services Canada all supporting the event's programming. More than 18 months of planning went into this new event, where delegates gained insights into future cyber, digital, and over-the-horizon technology needs and acquisitions.

Attendees were provided with details on procurement projects, emerging requirements, timelines, budgets, and key contacts. In the CSE's case, it was the first time the agency had ever publicly held information sessions to outline its needs, projects and programs to industry in a large forum.

Post-event surveys indicated that delegates were very satisfied with the content, the conference experience, and the opportunity to network with this highly curated group of presenting partners. Building on that success, CADSI is committed to making the Cyber and Digital Outlooks a permanent fixture of our domestic program.



**245**  
DELEGATES

**90%**  
OVERALL  
SATISFACTION





## INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

Global defence production and spending continued to surge in 2024, largely in response to the deteriorating international security environment. Many Canadian companies, particularly SMBs, turned to foreign sales to sustain and grow their businesses. Showcasing our members and their products on the global stage – while preventing new barriers to trade from emerging – therefore remained strategic priorities for CADSI this year.

## World Defense Show

Held in early February in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the second iteration of World Defense Show saw the independent participation of over 30 Canadian firms. While no Canada Pavilion was created, CADSI worked with organizers to explore a business model that aligned with our existing suite of international product offerings. Ahead of WDS, CADSI engaged in discussions with the Canadian Embassy in Saudi Arabia to explore avenues for facilitating the entry of our members into this market, and with GAC on exports. CADSI's President and CEO also participated in the conference program, speaking on panels focused on leadership and cyber security.



## EUROSATORY

Held in June, Eurosatory provided a platform for Canadian companies to engage with key industry stakeholders on the other side of the Atlantic. The Canada Pavilion hosted 47 companies in 2024. Key activities included the opening of the pavilion, Canada Reception, Maple Hour networking event and interactions with influential delegates. While the absence of senior Canadian government representation limited official delegations

to the pavilion, collaborations with the Canadian Embassy in France, Global Affairs Canada, and the Canadian Commercial Corporation ensured the pavilion's success. Moving forward, increased ministerial presence and government support are crucial to strengthening Canada's international standing in the defence and security sectors.

## Halifax International Security Forum

While hosted domestically, the Halifax International Security Forum held in November is without question an international event – welcoming participants from around the world and a large delegation from our closest security partner, the United States. In 2024, CADSI once again sponsored the event, where attention remained squarely focused on Ukraine. Over three days, CADSI listened intently and promoted Canadian industry's views and capabilities in conversations with senior government officials, the media, and international partners.



## AUSA

Held annually in Washington, DC, AUSA is the largest land-power exposition and business development forum in North America. The Canada Pavilion, led by CADSI in collaboration with key government partners, featured 137 walkers and secured a prime location on the show floor. The pavilion showcased Canada's industrial strengths and fostered

critical connections with international military leaders and procurement officials. Bold branding, highly visible sponsorships, and a well-received Canada Lounge for networking all helped show off what Canada has to offer. Value-added elements for 2024 included a pre-show webinar, networking breakfast and briefing session, and a Canada evening reception.



**137**  
WALKERS

**70**  
COMPANIES





## COMMUNITY

CADSI is part of a diverse Canadian defence community that encompasses industry, the Canadian Armed Forces, public safety and security services, and a variety of government departments and agencies. We consider it our responsibility to contribute to this broader ecosystem's growth and long-term health.



Support for Women in Defence and Security (WiDS), an operating committee of CADSI, continues to grow from industry and from the public sector. The organization saw increased participation this year at its flagship awards breakfast, as well as in its National Mentoring Program.

WiDS again opted for a hybrid format to deliver its annual Scholarship Breakfast in Ottawa, which drew a record 1,440 in-person attendees and 457 virtual attendees. Even with a larger venue and longer registration window, demand for this event continued to outstrip ticket supply.

**1,897** SCHOLARSHIP BREAKFAST PARTICIPANTS



In addition to the breakfast, WiDS continued to deliver its highly regarded speed mentoring events, with one hosted in April in Ottawa and a second in October in Halifax. 2024 saw the second iteration of the WiDS National Mentoring Program, extending the length of the program from September to June. The format whereby two mentees meet with a single mentor over the course of nine months remained the same. Additionally, WiDS participated in more community events including the True Patriot Love Tribute Dinner, the Canadian Army Ball, and won a medal at the 2024 Ottawa Dragon Boat festival.

## Other Donations and Activities

CADSI believes in giving back on your behalf. In 2024, we were proud to support Veterans Emergency Transition Services (VETS) Canada to show our ongoing gratitude to those who served, and we continued our annual support of the True Patriot Love Foundation. As we do every year, CADSI laid a wreath on behalf of our industry at the National War Memorial on Remembrance Day.





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