



NAC COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

General

The Naval Association of Canada (NAC), recognizing that in Canada there is no central or even distributed maritime knowledge base that focuses on Canada's Navy and Coast Guard, is implementing a NAC Naval Affairs (NA) strategy intended to correct this situation by creating a center of knowledge on maritime affairs in Canada. A key element of this strategy is the development and the implementation of a strategic communications strategy. This document outlines the NAC strategic communications strategy.

Situation

Canada is a nation built on trade, much of which moves north and south to the USA. This has led Canadians to think continentally, and has resulted in what some have called "Maritime Blindness" as Canadians have little awareness or understanding of the critical role that the oceans play in the Canadian economy. Canada exists in a maritime world not in a continental world but there has been little effort, over the years, to nurture a maritime mindset in Canadians or Canadian institutions resulting in little understanding of the critical importance that the oceans and Canada's internal waterways play in the Canadian economy and Canadian defence and security. A case in point is the continued political and ideologic agenda-driven conflict over Canadian oil and gas.

This lack of understanding permeates through Canadian media and influencers. Maritime-blindness coupled with a deficit in strategic defence and security comprehension has resulted in Canada both providing limited capability to defend her sovereignty and a parasitic reliance on the USA for defence, security and trade. Essentially until Canada can diffuse this maritime-blindness Canada will continue to lack strategic vision in defence, security and trade.

NAC Strategic Vision

To be a nationally recognized and valued source of naval and maritime strategic thought and information.

NAC Strategic Communications Mission

To inform and educate Canadians about Canada in a maritime world and to explain the application of sea power in the national interest.

Key Strategic Enabler

NAC has engaged a paid Coordinator of Naval Affairs and NAC Research coordinator. These two individuals will develop a NAC Knowledge Base, re-populate the NAC NA website, coordinate, on a daily basis along with the director NAC Naval Affairs, all NAC NA activities and become a point of contact for the media and other interested parties on maritime affairs. Of note, no other organization in Canada has this ambition.



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Communications Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives of the NAC Communications strategy are:

- a. Inform and educate Canadians about Canada in the maritime world
- b. Become the recognized Canadian center of excellence on maritime affairs

Factors

Time-The implementation of this communication strategy must be continuous over a considerable period of time in order to offset the “maritime blindness” embedded in Canadian culture and institutions. Canada throughout her history has never focused on two of Mahan’s key principles of seapower, namely;

- A society with an aptitude for the sea and commercial enterprise, and
- A government with the influence to dominate the sea.

Thus the education process will take time, perseverance and resources otherwise it will fail. Another factor of time is the speed and the impact of social media and the ability to move information whether or not it is accurate and the need of the media to rapidly report issues.

Media-Canadian media generally do not focus on maritime issues and events except to sensationalize or to criticize the government. That being said the fault does not lie totally with members of the media as there is no single credible source of information in Canada on maritime affairs. Thus when the media needs a comment on an issue they seek out those who have put themselves forward as “experts” whether or not they are experts or just have a personal agenda. A case in point is the ongoing speculation in the media about the utility and the cost of the VICTORIA Class submarines.

Canadians-The majority of Canadians live within 250 miles of the Canada/USA border mostly concentrated out of sight of either of Canada’s three oceans. As a result the sea and all things maritime tend to go unnoticed and are generally not factored as part of the Canadian mosaic. This in turn leads to governments being blind, other than as a conservation agenda, to the oceans and Canada’s reliance on the free use of the oceans for Canada’s economic well being and security. A case in point is the ongoing conflict of moving Canada’s oil to market.

Influencers-Influencers come in many forms stretching from politicians to teachers, consequently the process will need to be multi-faceted and tailored to each influencer’s audience. Additionally NAC NA will need to leverage, where possible, like minded organizations relationships with influencers.

Decision Makers-The focus on decision makers is in reality a focus on decisions that have the potential to move Canada and her people towards a more maritime way of thinking and acting.



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Resources-A key factor in the execution of a credible communications strategy is to raise the required financial and human resources to execute the strategy.

RCN-To be an effective advocate for Canada’s navy and coast guard the NAC needs to be seen to be at arms length with an independent voice. That said there will be a close relationship due to membership and professional affiliation.

Target Audience

Audience	Audience Sub-set	Comment	Objective
Media	Print	Engage editorial boards on an ongoing basis. Contribute to trade and industry journals. Journalists value available and accurate commentary to complement their reporting .	Establish ongoing relationships with major print editorial boards Develop and maintain contact and relationships with interested journalists
	TV	Difficult to engage due to short news cycles. Need to engage TV journalists and maintain relationships. Be willing to put forward “experts” for on camera interviews and comment often at short notice to meet media windows.	Establish enduring relationships with video journalists Establish quick response capability within NAC and related organizations
	Social Media	Presence critical to attract youth and journalists. Needs to be up to date and accurate. Need also to have a rapid reaction capability. Need to understand the use of	Develop an understanding of what motivates Canadian youth Tailor NAC NA social media to focus on youth Establish quick response capability within NAC and



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Audience	Audience Sub-set	Comment	Objective
		the tool by youth.	related organizations
	Trade Journals	Always looking for articles. Good place to bring arguments into the public arena.	Develop the capability to create topical articles to be published in trade journals
	CNR	Once CNR has stabilized develop a relationship with the new editorial board.	Develop a capability to create topical articles to be published in CNR
Schools		Laying a foundation of maritime knowledge in academic institutions will be key to creating an enduring understanding of Canada in a maritime world.	Branches through Outreach programs engage with Provincial curriculum development staffs and local school boards to provide material and lessons relating to Canada in a maritime world. (Note this has been a continuing challenge for NAC Branches.)
		Develop essay contestf	Develop a common NAC NA Branch Outreach package.
Higher Academic Institutions	Undergraduate programs	Laying a foundation of maritime knowledge in Canada's academic post graduate programs will be key to creating an enduring understanding of Canada in a maritime world.	Branches and NAC NA to establish relationships with Canadian academic institutions to develop maritime focused courses.
		Establish essay contest	
	Graduate programs	Laying a foundation of maritime knowledge	Branches and NAC NA to establish relationships with



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Audience	Audience Sub-set	Comment	Objective
Influencers		with Canada's youth will be key to creating an enduring understanding of Canada in a maritime world. Develop essay contest	Canadian academic institutions to develop maritime focused courses as part of international studies programs. NAC to establish a graduate scholarship in international studies.
	Journalists	Few Canadian journalist focus on defence and security let alone maritime issues. Moreover their understanding of maritime issues and their impact on Canada is somewhat lacking.	Develop professional relationships with defence and security journalists Provide journalists with appropriate background material on maritime issues facing Canada.
	Editorial Boards	Editorial Boards set the tenor of the media they serve. They are key to broadening the knowledge of maritime affairs in the Canadian media.	Establish enduring professional relationships with Canadian editorial boards.
	Academics	Academics are often sought after to comment on topical issues in the media. Moreover, academics are key to developing programs and courses that address maritime issues.	Develop, possibly with the aid of academics, suitable material that provide maritime related material for academics Develop with interested academics maritime related courses and programs
	Parliamentarians	All members of Parliament have	Develop a political Riding based data base that



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Audience	Audience Sub-set	Comment	Objective
		<p>something in their riding that is impacted by Canada in a maritime world.</p>	<p>identifies maritime related issues in each federal riding</p> <p>Based on the riding data base develop and deliver presentations for MPs.</p>
	Defence related Parliamentary committees	<p>As per MPs.</p> <p>Members of defence and security related committees tend not to have a solid grounding on maritime issues as they relate to defence and security. Without this background Canada's defence and security policy will remain continental in nature.</p>	<p>As per MPs above</p> <p>Engage committee members on defence and security issues from a maritime point of view.</p>
	Senior federal bureaucrats	<p>Most senior federal bureaucrats are continental focused. Their interest and understanding of maritime issues and Canada in the maritime world is limited. Moreover they have little interest in defence and security.</p>	<p>Develop an engagement package for senior bureaucrats pointing out the issues relating to Canada in a maritime world and the impact on defence and security.</p>
	Lobbyists	<p>Lobbyists have some degree of influence on Parliament Hill. Normally they are ex-political staff with well</p>	<p>Develop relationships with all Ottawa based political lobby houses.</p>



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Audience	Audience Sub-set	Comment	Objective
Private Sector		developed networks.	
	Industry Associations Including the Conference Board of Canada	Industry associations engage government on behalf of their members. Their focus is on their particular industry but not necessarily from a maritime viewpoint.	Engage industry associations explaining the impact of Canada in a maritime world on their association members.
	Provincial and municipal politicians	Provincial MPPs tend to focus internally and not externally. Providing MPPs with a view of their Provinces economy from a maritime world point of view may bring pressure to their federal counterparts.	Branches develop relationships with provincial MPPs explaining their Province in Canada in a maritime world.
	Pollsters	Pollsters possess unique view of Canada and Canadians through their DB and analysis capability. Tapping into this knowledge could be useful in focusing NAC NA material.	Develop a working relationship Canada's major pollsters.
	Defence and Security Industry The marine Industry Canadian industry that relies on maritime transportation and	Related industry to be educated on the value of a capable navy and CCG to the success of their commerce.	Raise sustainable funding to support the NAC Strategic Communications Strategy.



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Audience	Audience Sub-set	Comment	Objective
Canadians	services. The people of Canada	Taping ordinary Canadians, individually, as a way to develop maritime and naval awareness and support.	Increase NAC membership.

Table 1

Messages

The following are the key NAC messages:

- a. Canada is a global trading nation that relies on the oceans to trade
- b. Canada possesses a vast, resource-rich ocean estate
- c. Canada’s prosperity and security relies on the rule of law at sea and freedom of navigation at sea
- d. Canada must not rely exclusively on others to protect and further its national interests
- e. Canada faces increased threats at sea and from the sea from conventional and unconventional means
- f. Canada needs a capable maritime defence and security forces to secure the oceans and prevent and deter conflict and war

Communications Channels

Channel	Comments
Television	TV video response needs to be rapid yet accurate. Potential to designate regional and national spokespersons to respond to media enquiries.
Web Site	Web site needs to be dynamic and not just text. Video needs to be included and integrated into social media. Web site will need to be complimentary with social media which will mean constant updates and improvements.



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Social Media	Managing social media on a real time basis will require full time resources which are likely beyond the resources of NAC. A solution may well be delegated and distributed input into NAC NA social media platforms.
Presentations	Presentations need to be dynamic and not rely on pure text. Video has been proven to be more effective than pure text or verbal presentation. There is a requirement for NAC to investigate video production. Central messaging will be critical to maintain all engagements on message.
Trade Shows	Consider developing a booth for trade shows. There will be resource implications that need to be studied.
Printed media	Needs to be focused on the take-away messages.
Rapid reaction issue management	Investigate regional spokespersons for regional issues and a national spokesperson for national issue.
NAC Outreach	NAC Outreach has the ability to engage at the local level across the country. Outreach coordination will be integrated into the communications strategy implementation plan. A specific effort needs to be focused on the retired naval community but not at the expense of widening and deepening membership.
STARSHHELL	Starshell has essentially become the NAC magazine that is evolving into a major magazine. Thus STARSHHELL can be useful to both inform members and Canadians at large. That said, STARSHHELL needs to evolve based on a strategic plan.
NAC News	An in-house electronic weekly update of maritime and naval worldwide news. To be linked to the new NAC Website to capture a broader audience.
	Table 2

Potential Partners/Alliances

Leveraging alliances and partnerships is very important in addressing the maritime cultural deficit in Canada. Some potential alliances/partnerships include:

Navy League of Canada (NLOC)- The NLOC by it’s founding charter is uniquely mandated to lobby the Government of Canada for the Navy. Over the past decade the NLOC has hosted



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the popular Navy/Coast Guard Day on Parliament Hill. NAC NA can leverage the existing relationship with NLOC to assist in the planning and the execution of Navy/CCG Day.

NAC NA should share its evolving maritime data base with the NLOC.

Academic Institutions-Since the demise of the naval and maritime nexus at the Dalhousie University Centre of Foreign Policy Studies there has been no academic institution in Canada that specializes in naval or maritime policy. This, coupled with the end of the Security and Defence Forum (SDF) program in Canada has diffused any previous concentration of naval and maritime knowledge in Canada. Regretably, with the exception of a small residual cadre at Dalhousie University and Calgary, most Canadian defence and security think tanks based in academic institutions focus continentally as they lack maritime influence.

NAC NA has the potential opportunity to assist in the re-creation of an academic center of maritime knowledge within the Canadian academic community.

CDA Institute- CDAI was created in 1987 as a charitable non-partisan research organization whose mandate is to promote informed public debate on national security and defence issues and the vital role played by the CAF in Canadian society. Over the years CDAI has generally been dominated by retired army officers which has imbued the Institute with a continental mindset and a rather unhealthy case of maritime blindness. Regretably not having, in Canada, a centre of maritime studies has, by default, allowed CDA Institute, by default, to fill the void to the detriment of the maritime services in Canada. The evolution of the NAC Knowledge Base and the creation of the CNACNA will open up an opportunity to remove CDA Institute from maritime security discussion and analysis.

Canadian Global Affairs Institute (CGAI)- The Calgary-based Canadian Global Affairs Institute's mission is to be a catalyst for innovative Canadian global engagement. CGAI produces high quality public policy research related to Canadian international relations. The Institute's research is designed to raise the level of knowledge and appreciation about issues of Canadian defence, diplomacy and international aid.

In 2010, it opened an Ottawa office to reach out to parliamentarians, senior policy makers and the diplomatic service.

There is an opportunity for NAC NA to develop a partnership relationship with CGAI leveraging the CGAI reputation and the evolving NAC NA Knowledge Base.



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Implementation

Coordination

The President NAC provides strategic direction

The Director NA coordinates the NAC NA communications strategy implementation

The Executive Director NAC coordinates non NA communications strategy implementation

Branch Outreach Teams participate in the communications implementation plan

Execution

The following key activities are required for the execution of this strategy: (action and OPI)

Activity	Responsible Individual	Remarks
Engage professional fund raiser	President Executive Director	Develop and implement a sponsorship program to develop a sustainable funding model.
Develop graduated membership architecture	President Executive Director Treasurer	Intent is to have a range of membership options for members including a business membership.
Develop a membership Value Package	President Executive Director Board members	Intent is to develop a package that potential members will consider as value.
Develop Social Media	Director NA Executive Director	Finalize website update Rebuild and re-focus Twitter account. Investigate Instagram and Snapchat
Populate NA Knowledge Base	Director NA	
Develop Riding based Data Base	Director NA Executive Director	Build, by riding, a comprehensive DB of industry.
Develop a national essay program	Director NA Board Members	Raise awareness of the NAC, the navy and maritime affairs.



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Develop and engagement plan for Table 2 activities	Director NA Board Members	Key element of the strategy to achieve success.
Develop Budget for NAC Communication Strategy	Director NA Executive Director Treasurer Board	
	Table 3	

Resources to Execute Strategy

The successful execution of this plan will require resources both human and financial. These resources are outlined in the NAC NA Strategy approved by the NAC Board. A detailed budget for the Communications Strategy Implementation Plan will be developed as noted above.