

New Approach to Maritime Security

On 27 April 2004, the Government of Canada announced a National Security Policy (NSP) for Canada entitled *Securing an Open Society: Canada's National Security Policy*. This document emphasizes that the Government's most important obligation is the protection and safety of its citizens. The NSP sets three core national security interests:

- Protecting Canada and Canadians at home and abroad
- Ensuring Canada is not a base for threats to allies
- Contributing to international security

The NSP recognizes that one of the most effective means of ensuring Canadian security is to deal with potential threats overseas, before they reach Canadian territory. To this end, the NSP emphasizes that overseas intelligence gathering, cooperation with our allies, and being able to contribute capable and credible military forces to international operations will continue to be vital to our national security.

However, for the most part, the NSP is primarily concerned with improving Canada's capacity to provide domestic and continental security against a wide array of threats such as those posed by terrorism, organized crime and health pandemics. Obviously, for a country with the world's longest coastline, securing Canada's maritime approaches is a key element of the national security plan.

The Navy has been concerned with maritime security since its inception in 1910, and has always sought to make Canada's maritime approaches secure. That fact has not changed. What has changed with announcement of the NSP is that maritime security is no longer viewed as solely a naval problem.

Maritime security in the modern context is challenging: our ocean areas are vast and more and more vessels are using them.

The NSP recognizes these facts and its real innovation lies in the recognition that our maritime security demands a 'whole of Government' approach that involves all government departments with responsibilities in Canada's ocean areas. This is a fundamentally new approach to maritime security – one in which the Navy will play a key role.

Implementation of the Marine Security Plan of the National Security Policy, will ensure that the Canadian Navy can assume a strong leadership role in domestic and continental security.

The NSP will invest \$308 million in the implantation of a six-point Marine Security Plan that will:

- Clarify responsibilities between federal departments and strengthen coordination;
- Establish marine security operations centers on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts;
- Increase the government's on-water presence and aerial surveillance of our maritime areas;
- Provide new communications equipment for government vessels;
- Pursue greater marine security co-operations with the United States; and
- Strengthen the security of marine ports and facilities.

Clarifying Responsibilities, Strengthening Coordination

The NSP clarifies who is responsible for the security of our maritime areas. The Minister of Transport will retain responsibility for marine security policy coordination and regulation. The Minister of Public Security and Emergency Preparedness will continue to take the lead on enforcement and policing. And the Minister of Defence will have the lead for coordination of on-water response to a maritime threat or developing crisis.

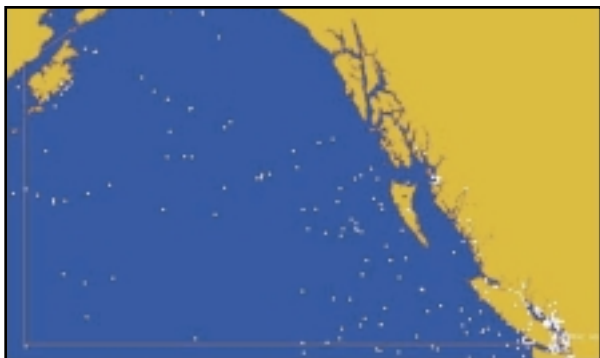
These new protocols for coordinating an on-water response represent a significant advance in thinking. It means that for the first time, the Canadian government will possess the means to rapidly place its fleet of government vessels under the direction of a single department whenever it must respond to a threat or crisis that is beyond the capacity of a single agency. In the past, such a consolidated effort would only have been possible after time-consuming interdepartmental negotiations had taken place to work out appropriate jurisdictions and responsibilities on a case-by-case basis. In the future, the Navy will be able to use its command and control expertise to take "operational control" of RCMP, Coast Guard, and Department of Fisheries & Oceans vessels and aircraft in order to provide a coordinated, whole government response. This will provide Canada with the agility and flexibility it needs to respond to challenges to our maritime security in the future.

These new protocols are being developed, but will likely take the form of a graduated procedure that will see the Navy assume only as much responsibility for coordination as is required and only for as long as is necessary.

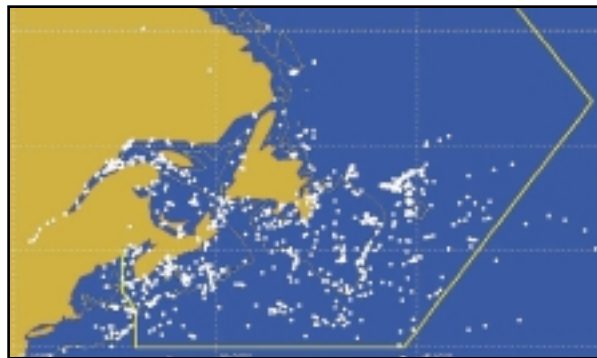
Establishing Marine Security Operations Centres

Another innovative feature of the NSP is the establishment of interdepartmental 'marine security operations centres'. This initiative capitalizes on the Navy's existing expertise with its ocean surveillance & information centres located in Halifax and Victoria. These centres are operated twenty-four hours a day, seven-days a week, and are equipped with state of the art communications and data processing equipment to collate intelligence informa-

Vessel Traffic over a 24 hour period



Vessel Traffic in Canada's Pacific Approaches.
CREDIT: NAVY, MARITIME PACIFIC (MARPAQ)



Vessel Traffic in Canada's Atlantic Approaches.
CREDIT: NAVY, MARITIME ATLANTIC (MARLANT)

tion and surveillance data so that we understand who is operating in our waters.

The government has seen the potential of these centres and will invest \$95 million to transform the Navy's existing centres into Marine Security Operations Centres (MSOC). The new MSOC will reflect the 'whole government' approach to maritime security and will be jointly staffed by Canadian Forces, Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), Coast Guard, RCMP, and Customs and Borders personnel. These new MOSCs will be linked to the Coast Guard's vessel traffic and communications systems, and to the new Government Operations Centre in Ottawa, which is being developed under a separate initiative of the NSP. They will be operated under the direction of the Navy and will be linked to the regional headquarters of the other government departments.

Co-locating personnel from different government departments and expanding the flow of information to a centralized operations centre is a new concept. It will increase awareness of what is happening in Canada's waters across government departments, and provide a much greater level of responsiveness when government must harness the whole of its resources in response to an arising threat or crisis.

In situations where a 'whole of government' response may not be required, the focus of the MSOCs would be on supporting the appropriate department's operation. In such cases the DND/Navy would provide assistance to the responding department to achieve the desired outcome.

In addition, a further \$72 million over five years has been allocated to a variety of government departments and agencies to support Personnel, Operations and Maintenance costs.

Enhancing Secure Fleet Communications

To work together effectively, government vessels must be able to communicate securely with one other and with the new MSOCs. The government will invest \$38 million to acquire the necessary equipment and dedicated satellite access.

Larger, offshore government vessels will also be fitted with equipment to exchange data with one another while at sea, through a secure computer network similar to that already in use by the Navy's major warships. Such a system allows vessels to share information in real time, and is necessary in order to coordinate an appropriate response to a maritime security threat.

On-the-water Presence and DFO Surveillance

On-the-water presence by the CF, RCMP and Coast Guard is important. The Marine Security Plan provides \$15 million to increase the amount of time that government fleets are at sea. The navy will use its portion of this funding to provide an additional 125 seas days per year for routine presence and surveillance operations. And in the future, government departments will work closely with one another to ensure that scheduling is coordinated in order to avoid duplication of effort and maximize the presence of Canadian government vessels throughout our maritime areas. Additionally, \$25 million will be provided to DFO to expand the number of surveillance flights it conducts annually.

Pursuing Greater Marine Security Co-operation with the United States

The new MSOCs are expected to work closely with the US Coast Guard Operations Centers to provide a comprehensive picture of activities in our contiguous waters. It is envisioned that this will develop to include the systematic sharing of information on vessels, crews, and cargo that could pose a threat to our collective security. In developing this international cooperation between operations centres, the Navy's previous experience of working closely with the United States Navy in a variety of exercises and operations, in which the US Coast Guard is often a participant, will be particularly beneficial.

With the implementation of the Marine Security Plan of the National Security Policy, the Canadian Navy will assume a strong leadership role in domestic and continental security, increasing its already substantial role in the provision of safety and security for Canada and Canadians at home and abroad. It is a demanding and important task that the Navy is eager to fulfill. **FL**

Lieutenant-Commander George Kearney has served as a member of the Directorate of Maritime Strategy since 1999. He recently served as J5 Maritime on the staff of the Commander Canadian Joint Task Force SouthWest Asia. Prior to joining D Mar Strat he completed an MA in War Studies at RMC, served as the Underwater Warfare Officer on the staff of the Naval Operations School in Halifax, and in a variety of ships and shore establishments on the both the East and West Coasts.