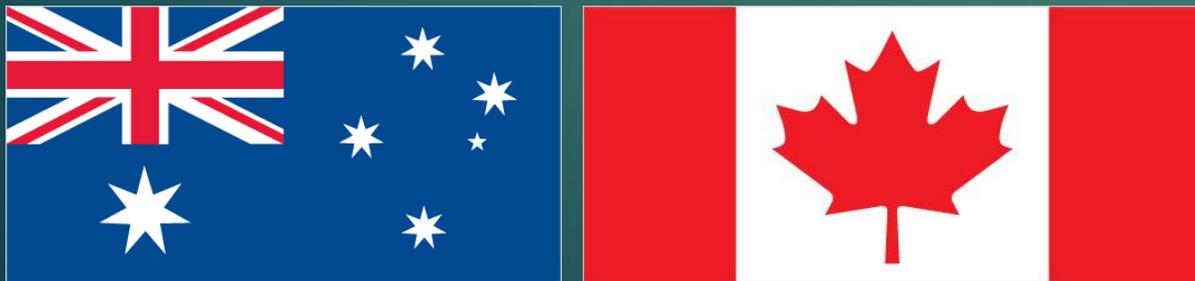


Toward a New Polar Partnership

A Framework for Canadian-
Australian Cooperation



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Topics



1. Background on Australia-Canada Relationship
2. Polar Interests
3. Polar Challenges
4. Recommendations

A Shared Heritage

- ▶ Federal parliamentary systems with common British legal and cultural heritage
- ▶ Participation in UK- and US-led military campaigns: South African War 1899-1902 to current conflict against ISIS in the Middle East
- ▶ Major commodity exporters with relatively small populations distributed across large landmasses
- ▶ Tight multilateral ties today: Commonwealth, WTO, G20, APEC, OECD
- ▶ ...but quasi-informal on security/defence matters: “Five Eyes”, 500 high-level and working-level visits per year between militaries, support for UN Security Council seat

Australia in the Antarctic

- ▶ Australian Antarctic Territory (AAT) consists of all islands and territories south of 60 degrees Latitude and between longitudes 45 degrees and 60 degrees East
- ▶ AAT covers 5.9 million km² (42% of Antarctic landmass)
- ▶ Australian claims recognized by only four countries: UK, NZ, France, Norway
- ▶ 3 year round stations: Mawson, Davis, Casey (~300 personnel)
- ▶ Administered by the Australian Antarctic Division of the federal Dept. of Environment
- ▶ AAD relies upon icebreaker *Aurora Australis* to support operations. A\$1.9B replacement announced in April 2016. Due in operation in mid-2020. To be based in Hobart, Tasmania.



Canada in the Arctic

- ▶ GoC: territory north of 60 degrees N latitude is the Arctic: 3.8 million km²
- ▶ Encompasses 3 territories, portion of northern Quebec and tip of Labrador
- ▶ ~100,000 people reside there
- ▶ No other state recognizes Canada's claim to the waters encompassing the Northwest Passage (internal waters vs international strait)



Security and the Polar Regions

- ▶ Pre-Second World War: polar regions were the site of scientific expeditions and national prestige
- ▶ Arctic: during Second World War: Canada secured the continent in conjunction with U.S., threats from Japan (Aleutian Islands), building Alaskan Highway, German weather station in Labrador
- ▶ Cold War: Soviet ICBMS directed towards North America, NORAD, radar lines (DEW, Pinetree, Mid-Canada Line)
- ▶ Antarctic Treaty (1959): “Antarctica shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord.”
- ▶ Existing claims became ‘frozen’ with the US and USSR/Russia maintaining the right to make claims

Competition in the Polar Regions?

- ▶ Turn to Multilateralism in 1990s: Arctic Council created in 1996 – has 8 Arctic circumpolar states (US, Russia, Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland) + 12 other states as Observers (China, Italy, Japan, Germany, India, ROK, France)
- ▶ 11 foreign governments have appointed Arctic Ambassadors (Singapore, Poland, Spain)
- ▶ 1991: Madrid Protocol signed; entered into force in 1998. Established Antarctica as a “natural reserve devoted to peace and science”; prohibits all activities related to mineral resources until 2048
- ▶ Post-9/11: Divergence between mostly Western nations who favoured scientific and environmental collaboration in polar regions and an alternative group who see the regions as areas for controlling and exploiting
- ▶ Arctic: Russia claiming new outer limits on continental shelf, Chinese commercial interest
- ▶ Antarctica: China, Russia, India, Iran have expressed interest in the mineral and energy riches.

Challenges: Australia

- ▶ Madrid Protocol has deterred efforts at investigating resources – for time being
- ▶ Maintaining pre-eminent position in Antarctica will become more difficult in coming years, as well as ensuring that the continent doesn't become a contested southern flank
- ▶ *2013 Defence White Paper*: “To date, the Antarctic Treaty System has been well respected, but in coming decades it may come under pressure as resources become more scarce elsewhere.” (para 2.77)
- ▶ *2009 Defence White Paper* affirmed that the Australian Defence Force's primary operational environment includes the waters of the Southern Ocean and those adjacent to the AAT (para 6.38)
- ▶ Current concern is illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing (China), and whaling (Japan)
- ▶ Increased cruise ship tourism in the Antarctica



MS Explorer

Challenges: Canada

- ▶ No other state recognizes Canada's longstanding claim to ownership over Arctic waterways comprising the Northwest Passage (internal vs international strait)
- ▶ US: issue of precedent (Gibraltar, Malacca, South China Sea, Hormuz); EU: no barriers to commercial shipping fleets; China: commercial shipping and future resource exploitation; Russia claims Northern Sea Route as internal waters – has not opposed or endorsed Canada's claims
- ▶ Boundary disputes: Hans Island (Denmark); Beaufort Sea (US)
- ▶ Logistical challenges for Canadian Armed Forces: 5x-7x more costly to operate in Arctic than southern Canada
- ▶ Procurement: *DeWolf* Class AOPS operational by 2022; CCGS *John Diefenbaker* not expected until 2022. Delays in aircraft acquisitions: FWSAR, CMMA (~2026-2035)

3 Recommendations

1. Personnel Exchanges

- Canada has over a decade of experience in routine naval, air, ground and coast guard operations in polar environment
- Australia can rotate personnel with Canadian counterparts
- Shared strategic planning expertise between DND and DOD

2. Joint Procurement

- Opposite calendar cycle between two countries allows for Australia to rent out its soon-to-be-built icebreaker to CCG (same as RCN's AOR rental arrangement with Chile and Spain)
- RCAF rent RAAF P-8 Poseidon while awaiting new Multi-Mission Aircraft

3. Mutual Recognition of Territorial Claims

- a joint polar statement that formalizes recognition of each state's respective territorial claims

Questions?

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