



## Mess and RUSI Vancouver Members News , 2011

### Wednesday Lunches.

Next week (**Dec 21<sup>st</sup>**) is the last lunch of 2011 and will be a 'Ladies' lunch so bring your significant other and other guests for a pre-Christmas treat. Lunches will resume on **Jan 4, 2012**. On the last lunch we usually present Mrs Lum with a card and a 'purse' to thank her for her hard work on the lunches. I will be collecting for this from now to the last lunch and the card is available at the lunches for those wishing to sign it.

### Upcoming Events at the Mess

#### **The Commanding Officers Tea – This Sunday - December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1330 - 1700HRS**

The cost is \$15.00 per person, which includes sherry, Mrs Lum's delicious hors d'oeuvres, as well as coffee and tea served by Regimental Ladies. The Regimental Band is sending one of its combos to entertain us as we mingle. The bar will be open for those of you who want more than sherry. Dress is semi-formal – suit and tie (or Regimental blazer and tie) and Cocktail dresses for the Ladies.

A sign up list will be posted in the bar area for those attending other Mess events to indicate attendance. RSVPs to me would be appreciated, if you can't get to the Mess to sign up on the list.

#### **New Year's Levée – Jan 1, 2012**

The Regimental Messes will be open as usual on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Officially, the Messes open at 1100hrs but the Regimental members of the Officers Mess and the WO & Sgts Mess exchange New Years' greetings around 1030hrs. The usual light lunch will be served starting around noon. Everyone welcome. This is considered a 'formal' event for the Regimental members so others should wear blazer and tie (equivalent for ladies) at least.

#### **Regimental Society Annual Burns Dinner (See invitation) Saturday January 28, 2012**

#### **Featured Performers**

The Pipes and Drums of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada  
The Band of the 15th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA  
The Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir.

**For tickets call Grant Smith 604-271-5530**

#### **Military Ball - 2012**

The Vancouver Garrison Officers' Society has announced that the 2012 Military Ball is confirmed for **24 March 2012** at the Vancouver Hyatt Regency. Ticket prices this year will be

the same as 2011- \$110 per person, but, as an added incentive, the price for 'early birds', who **purchase their tickets by cheque or money order prior to 31 December 2011** will be at a discounted price of \$100.00 each. A ticket order form can be found on the Ball website ([www.militaryball.ca](http://www.militaryball.ca)) on the 'ticket' page. Print, fill in and forward, with cheque or money order, to our mailing address: Military Ball, 2025 West 11th Avenue, Vancouver, V6J 2C7

## **Group wants to lay wreaths at every military grave**

*CTVNews*

*Wreaths are seen on military headstones  
in Ottawa Sunday, Nov. 4, 2011*



A Canadian non-profit organization is devoted to honouring Canada's soldiers by ensuring a wreath is laid at every military headstone in Canada. Wreaths Across Canada has pledged to place a wreath at the headstone of every veteran buried at

Beechwood National Cemetery in Ottawa on the first Sunday of every December. The inaugural event took place today, with wreath-laying beginning at 1:30 p.m. local time.

Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Walt Natynczyk was on hand to lay one of the first wreaths at Sunday's ceremony. There are about 2,700 soldiers buried at Beechwood. They served in missions dating back to the Boer War and right up to Afghanistan.

"Today is a day to offer respect, dignity and appreciation to all those brave men and women who have served our great country," Natynczyk told the hundreds of volunteers and veterans who helped lay wreaths on Sunday.

The organization was started in 2007 by veteran Craig McPhee, who was inspired by the 'Wreaths Across America' program that began at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia in the early 1990s. Organizers hope the wreath-laying movement will spread across the country, with Canadians laying wreaths at military headstones in their communities the first week of every December.

"This simple but effective 'thank you' is central to the entire program. The wreaths symbolize our thanks to those who have served their country in the military and now lie at rest," the group says on its website.

"Whether they died in battle, training accidents or years after retiring from the military, all who lie buried in these hallowed grounds deserve the thanks of a grateful nation for defending the freedoms and lifestyle we enjoy today."

The organization has received funding from Veterans Affairs, the True Patriot Love Foundation, an agency that helps military families, as well as from private donations.

More than 225,000 soldiers are buried at cemeteries across the country, while 118,000 Canadian soldiers are buried overseas.

Veteran Daniel Drapeau called Sunday's event "an honour."

"Besides Remembrance Day, it's just something extra for all the military men and women who served, who are buried here and throughout Canada."

## **DND plan to buy 1,500 trucks starting over from square one**

BY DAVID PUGLIESE, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN NOVEMBER 30, 2011

*A program to replace rusting 1980s-era military transport trucks for the Canadian Forces, already years behind schedule, is back to square one with the government announcing Friday its intention to re-open bidding. Photograph by: MCpl Danielle Bernier, DGPA/J5PA Combat Camera*



The estimated \$800-million project to replace rusting 1980s-era military transport trucks was announced in 2006 by then defence minister Gordon O'Connor. But the project has now fallen six years behind schedule, raising new questions from industry representatives about why the Defence Department's procurement system can't handle a relatively straightforward purchase of army trucks.

The trucks, known as standard military pattern vehicles, were supposed to be delivered in 2008. The project was considered a priority because the vehicles they were to replace had become a safety hazard, with faulty brakes and excessive rust. But the government has told companies that the process is being restarted and eight types of trucks that had been qualified for the program are now out. The process is being re-opened for competition, stated a message Public Works and Government Services Canada sent to industry on Friday.

Companies were told that there has been "further refinements in the technical specification" that has "prompted the decision to rescind" the original decision to approve the eight trucks for potential bidding. "This refined approach will ensure maximum competition," Public Works added. Public Works officials could not provide comment. DND spokeswoman Kathleen Guillot noted that the plan is to issue a request for proposals to companies sometime this month. However, the program has now fallen at least six years behind schedule with the first truck to be delivered in the spring of 2014, according to information posted on the internet by DND. Around 1,500 standard military pattern vehicles will be bought. This latest problem is just one of several plaguing the project. Earlier this year, the Ottawa Citizen reported the project had been delayed once again, at that time because government officials didn't translate into French the equipment specifications and paperwork to be provided to bidding firms.

In 2008 and 2009, infighting between Army and DND officials over the requirements for the trucks led to further delays. At the time, DND issued an email statement: "The project is not in trouble." Defence Minister Peter MacKay and Public Works Minister Rona Ambrose have continually pointed out that military procurement has significantly improved under the Conservative government. But the NDP has questioned why it is taking so long to replace trucks. "It's been all under Mr. Harper's watch and here we are, fully five years later, and they haven't completed a request for proposals for these vehicles," said NDP MP Jack Harris. "This speaks to gross mismanagement."

In 2004 the Defence Department warned in an internal report that its existing truck fleet could be hit by a "catastrophic" failure at any time because of poor brakes and steering systems. Catastrophic failure is used to signify accidents that could involve serious injuries or death.

Defence department officials noted at the time that it is was not technically feasible to extend the life of the trucks beyond 2010. “New fleet in service by end 2008 or safety and performance compromised,” stated the 2004 briefing.

Army officers say they will continue to use those older trucks, but will be keeping an eye on them in case safety issues arise. The army will also use commercial trucks, modified for military use, that were recently delivered by a U.S. firm.

The purchase of those trucks, however, has also been controversial. The awarding of that \$274-million contract made headlines after protests from Canadian autoworkers that the vehicles would be built in the U.S. The winning firm, Navistar, built the trucks in Texas.

The same firm laid off 700 workers at its assembly line in Chatham, Ont. The Canadian Auto Workers lobbied unsuccessfully to have the truck contract awarded to a Canadian-based company. MacKay, however, defended the awarding of the truck contract to the Texas-based firm, stating that there would be Canadian work done on the vehicles. He said Canadian mechanics would be involved in maintaining the trucks and that gas and tires for the vehicles would come from Canada.

The army later restricted the use of the Navistar trucks after two of the vehicles caught fire in Pembroke and at Canadian Forces Base Petawawa last year. The army says all 1,300 trucks have since been upgraded to deal with electrical problems thought to have caused the fires.

## **Army Vehicle Program Spinning its Wheels?**

*by Ken Pole*

“Keep on truckin’” seems to have become the mantra in the federal government’s procurement machinery, as the Department of National Defence considers how to move troops around safely and efficiently at home and abroad. Considering that some new vehicles were supposed to have been in service years ago, “keep on talkin’” might be more appropriate as the government recently announced it will reopen the bidding process for the Standard Military Pattern Vehicles (SMPV), the Canadian Forces’ basic wheeled workhorse. The need for new SMPVs was identified more than a decade ago when the when the Army acknowledged that its 1960s-technologies fleet (which went into service in the 1980s) was dying of terminal rust. They were considered catastrophically dangerous to keep on the road – let alone using them off-road – but the Liberal government of the day, trying to deal with a huge deficit, put off a replacement decision.

While DND and Public Works & Government Services Canada (PWGSC) pressed on behind the scenes, it wasn’t until the Conservatives came to power in 2006 that the project regained momentum. That was in June 2006, when a couple of ministers joined LGen Marc Dumais, then-commander of Canada Command, for a high-profile announcement at CFB Valcartier. They intended to seek bids on a \$1.2-billion buy of 2,300 new trucks and associated equipment. It would include 1,500 SMPVs and up to 300 trailers, 800 commercial vehicles adapted for military use, 300 armour protection systems, and 1,000 vehicles kitted out as medical/dental stations, kitchens and offices. The vehicles themselves would cost an estimated \$1.1 billion with the remaining \$100 million accounted for by a 20-year in-service support contract.

“The requirement for this equipment is urgent,” DND said at the time, expecting deliveries to begin in 2008. But internal disputes about the requirement (such as whether it could be

armoured appropriately for overseas deployment) resulted in continued delays. Fast forward to 2011 when PWGSC told prospective suppliers that “further refinements in the technical specification” mean further delay, possibly with no deliveries until at least 2014. Other than stating that the latest development “will ensure maximum competition,” Public Works is saying nothing publicly and DND will say only that a new Request for Proposals was in the works. “Gross mismanagement” is opposition defence critic Jack Harris’ response. “Here we are, fully five years later, and they haven’t completed a Request for Proposals.”

Meanwhile, at the sharp end of DND operations, the Tactical Armoured Patrol Vehicle (TAPV) and Close Combat Vehicle (CCV) programs are designed to address several critical deficiencies in the Army’s current fleet of soft-skinned and lighter armoured platforms. While there have been “enhancements” over the years since they first entered service, those platforms have reached certified gross weight limits and cannot be upgraded further. There is also the economic reality that older vehicles usually cost more to operate and maintain.

TAPV and CCV testing at the Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) in Maryland is expected to wind up by Christmas and DND told FrontLine that detailed evaluation of the overall bids, including the APG test results, is expected to be completed sometime in January, setting the stage for contract award in the spring. This would be three years after the government announced that it would combine the TAPV and CCV programs with Force Mobility Enhancement (FME) vehicles (mostly augmented Leopard 2 tanks) for a more cohesive combat capability. In addition, there will be significant upgrades to the current Light Armoured Vehicle (LAV) fleet, which had rough-terrain issues during Canada’s extended mission in Afghanistan. The problem was highlighted early in the mission: a 2004 Army briefing note warned that because the LAV-III was prone to tipping at angles of 30° or more, it should be driven in the centre of Afghan highways because the edges tend to crumble under heavy loads.

In late October, the government awarded a \$1.064-billion contract to General Dynamics Land Systems - Canada (GDLS) to extend the operational life of 550 LAV IIIs to 2035. As part of the IRB requirements, GDLS is required to re-invest 100% of the contract value in Canada. Most of the upgrade work will be done at GDLS’s London, Ontario plant, which also makes Stryker variants for the U.S. Army, but some work will also be done in Edmonton.

Improvements include a GDLS-developed blast-deflecting double-V hull, akin to what was already being installed on the Strykers, as well as better upper armour, energy-attenuating seats, larger hatches and a new suspension to cope with a significant jump in all-up weight, to 25 tonnes from 17.2t. “Canadian soldiers ... deserve the best protection we can give them,” GDLS Canada Vice-President Danny Deep said “This contract will enhance ... survivability, operational capability and long-term performance.”

In the meantime, only weeks after the government’s mid-summer TAPV Request for Proposals deadline, most of the prospective contenders had shipped vehicles to Aberdeen. DND declined to identify which four had actually sent vehicles to the APG for testing, but rumours are flying that one may have failed the ballistics section of the trials. FrontLine has been unable to confirm either way. The 25-46 tonne gross weight range originally considered by DND would have encompassed every Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV) available, which was reflected in the variety of pre-qualified vehicles. The existing fleets are deemed no longer capable of meeting current and future requirements for protection, mobility, ergonomics, information and intelligence-sharing. While they have been upgraded to mitigate various threats – notably those

posed by improved explosive devices – those enhancements have pushed gross weights to the limit, restricting not only the potential for further life-extending modifications but also the all-important air deployability.

The TAPV program, apparently further along than the CCV despite questions about weapons systems and other key components, calls for an initial 500 vehicles with the option of 100 more. It will replace the Coyote reconnaissance variant in the LAV fleet and the RG-31 Nyala personnel carrier, which are at opposite ends of the operations-and-protection spectrum. Requirements call for 200 reconnaissance platforms for crews of four and either a manned turret or a remote weapon station (RWS), while the remaining 300 would function as command and control vehicles and RWS-armed armoured personnel carriers with crews of three and the capacity to carry four troops. The procurement is ostensibly “off the shelf”, but the prospective primes are taking different approaches to the program.

Textron Systems Canada calls its TAPV candidate “a newly-engineered” evolution of its proven Armoured Security Vehicle, which was deployed by the U.S. Army in Iraq. The base ASV is a wheeled 4x4 with advanced lightweight ceramic armour that makes it C-130 deployable and its stance enables it to deal with five feet of water and climb obstacles two feet high. By applying “new technologies and features,” the Textron team – which includes Rheinmetall Canada (systems integration and final assembly), Kongsberg Protech Systems Canada (remote weapons system), and Engineering Office Deisenroth Canada (modular nano-ceramic and steel armour) – is offering what it describes as “an unmatched blend of survivability, protection, power, mobility and versatility” with “best-in-class speed, acceleration, ground clearance and gradient.”

Oshkosh Defense has teamed with both GDLS (in-country support and systems integration) and London Machinery Incorporated (manufacturing and final assembly) to offer a fully-integrated TAPV suitable for any CF mission. It says that its vehicle, available in general utility and reconnaissance variants and based on its combat-proven 4x4, the Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicle, is engineered for optimal manoeuvrability and survivability. “High commonalities of chassis, crew capsule and cargo body ... minimize support costs.” Its defensive and protective capabilities would be augmented by a dual remote weapon station. “In independent testing ... the Oshkosh TAPV has undergone on- and off-road durability validation, successfully met ballistic and other survivability threat requirements ... and completed extensive live-fire demonstrations,” the company says.

Meanwhile, BAE Systems, teamed with Thales Canada, is offering the RG35, which it describes as “purpose built to meet the Canadian Army’s emphasis on survivability with increased tactical mobility” and which is essentially a shortened version of its 6x6 RG31 that was deployed by the CF in Afghanistan, but with a lowered hull and a narrower, more centred front cab. The RG35 would be available in reconnaissance, patrol and utility variants.

Force Protection’s entry into the TAPV competition is through a Team Timberwolf alliance with CAE of Montreal, Elbit Systems of Israel and Lockheed Martin Canada. Working with its combat-proven Cougar 6x6, the South Carolina-based company has offered a compete vehicle system and in-service support, the latter provided by CAE. Elbit, one of the world’s largest defence electronics manufacturers and integrators, would provide its Dual Remote Weapons System, and Lockheed Martin Canada its C4ISR integrated intelligence, surveillance and

reconnaissance system. (Force Protection confirmed in early November that it is being acquired by General Dynamics in a deal which will see it become part of GDLS.)

Navistar Defence Canada, which lodged a successfully complaint with the Canadian International Trade Tribunal over PWGSC's definitions of TAPV levels of protection in 2010, has put up its MaxxPro, which is designed by the U.S. company in collaboration with the Israeli armour specialist, Plasan Sasa. Most of the vehicles sold to the U.S. military to date have been the larger MaxxPro Plus, which has dual rear wheels for added load capacity. The MaxxPro Dash is lighter and smaller, but either model could compete to fulfill Canada's vehicle requirements. As for the CCVs, they would bridge an operational gap between the LAV III and Leopard C2 tanks. Initial plans call for 108 CCVs, with an option for up to 30 more, and the target is a "competitive military off-the-shelf approach." Only three companies sent vehicles for blast and other torture tests at Aberdeen: the tracked CV90 Mk-III developed by BAE Systems' Hägglunds division in Sweden; the GDLS 8x8 wheeled Piranha V, developed by its MOWAG division in Germany; and Nexter (formerly Giat Industries) has put up its 8x8 véhicule blindé de combat d'infanterie (VBCI). There was early interest in the Multi-Role Armoured Vehicle built by German partnership of Krauss-Maffei Wegmann and Rheinmetall for the British Army, but the companies opted out. However, Rheinmetall Canada re-emerged as part of GDLS's team.

Leveraging its extensive automotive and military expertise, BAE is teamed up for the CCV contract with Ottawa-based DEW Engineering (design services, armour, vehicle assembly and field service support) and Thales Canada (combat systems integration). Essentially a medium-sized tank, the CV90 is available in a number of variants. They saw extensive combat in Afghanistan, including Norwegian models with a modification developed during BAE's work on its Canadian proposal: tracks with rubber pads made by Soucy International Incorporated of Drummondville, Quebec. They not only matched the performance of steel tracks but also reduced gross weight, noise and vibration.

The GDLS Piranha V 8x8 would be fitted with Rheinmetall's 2-man Lance 30-millimeter modular turret system (MTS), which also has the potential for development into a remotely-operated system. As contract prime, GDLS would manufacture and assemble chassis at its London facility while Rheinmetall would produce its MTS at the Rheinmetall Canada facility in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec.


Armatec Survivability Canada of Dorchester, Ontario, would contribute a survivability suite of advanced composite materials and energy-absorbing troop and crew seating. The VBCI from Nexter (which abandoned plans to put forward its Aravis 4x4 for the TAPV competition) features an aluminum hull that carries field-replaceable modular steel and titanium armour. Described by Nexter at its 2008 debut as "the most protected vehicle in its category," it is configurable as an armoured personnel carrier with a capacity of up to 14 troopers, an ambulance or a recovery vehicle. Like most of the competition, it has enhanced manoeuvrability for deployment into dense urban areas, but at an empty gross weight of nearly 18 tonnes, it would be air transportable only by Canada's largest fixed-wing transports.

Whichever vehicle wins these corporate shoot-outs, they undoubtedly will be a significant improvement over most of their predecessors in terms of capability, survivability, and crew comfort. Whether they will be put to the test in hostile environments, now that the Canadian combat mission in Afghanistan is over, remains to be seen. It bears repeating that when Prime

Minister Stephen Harper unveiled the Canada First Defence Strategy at the Halifax Armoury two and a half years ago, he called it a “comprehensive, long-term plan to ensure the Canadian Forces have the people, equipment and support they need to do what we ask them to do.” However, the new enemy could be budget cuts as DND, like all other departments and agencies, have been directed to trim spending by at least 5% and possibly twice that.

Ken Pole is a contributing editor at FrontLine Defence magazine.

## **15 Fd Regimental Society – Annual Burns Dinner**



Col. R. Grant Smith  
Honorary Colonel  
15<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment of Artillery, RCA  
and  
President of the Regimental Society

Requests the Pleasure of Your Company  
at a  
**Burns Supper**

**FEATURING**  
The Vancouver Welsh Men's Choir,  
The Pipes and Drums of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada  
The Band of the 15<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, RCA

To be held  
January 28, 2012  
BCIT Aerospace Centre  
3800 Cessna Drive  
Richmond, BC

Dress: Scottish Attire, Black Tie,  
Mess Dress, Business Suit

Cocktails: 1800  
Dinner: 1900  
Tariff: Before Dec 15 \$90 per  
After Dec 15 \$110 per

Cheques Payable to:  
15<sup>th</sup> Field Regimental Society

**RSVP to:**  
Col Grant Smith  
7460 Sunnybank Avenue  
Richmond, BC V6Y 1G5  
Tel: 604-271-5530  
Email: Gradon@telus.net

## **From the ‘Punitary’**

A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.

## **Murphy’s Rules of Combat Operations.**

A clean (and dry) set of combat clothing is a magnet for mud and rain and the worse the weather, the more you are required to be out in it.

## **Quotable Quotes**

*If you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed, if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed.*

-- Mark Twain