

President's Report to the NRAC/ARNC Board of Directors

December 11, 2023

General matters

We are meeting today as 2023 draws to a close. The end of a historic and very special year for the Naval Reserve in Canada!

The year of 100th Anniversary celebrations saw many wonderful and colorful events unfurl across our great country as reservists past and present engaged in and with their communities, across Canada and abroad to mark this special occasion. We can take pride in the role played by our Association in advancing the celebrations and promoting events at both the NRD and National levels.

As part of the 100th Anniversary NRAC/ARNC became established as the voice of naval reserve members both active and retired.

We all should be proud of our participation in these events and in creating NRAC/ARNC to serve the members of the Naval Reserve and help preserve and advance recognition of the accomplishments of the Naval Reserve in serving Canada.

One highlight for me was attending the first presentation of the UNTD trophy for the best junior officer in Canada which was won by newly promoted Lieutenant (N) Prichard at HMCS Prevost. It was my first time at HMCS Prevost since it reopened following its closure in 1965. Both Bill Thomas and I attended the presentation of the beautifully refurbished trophy by Commodore Montgomery.

I want to thank Roger Elmes for all his work in making this possible. He negotiated the recovery of the Trophy, had it refurbished, worked with NavRes to define the terms for granting the award and worked closely with Daniel Hache to get everything in order so that it could be awarded for the first time this year.

A little background is in order. The previous Board unanimously agreed that there should be some tangible recognition of the UNTD contribution to the naval reserve in its 25 years. The old UNTD Trophy originally given to the NRD with the best UNTD unit was repurposed in consultation with NavRes to be given annually to the best junior officer in training. This award was consistent with the UNTD as a

reserve officer training program. It was recognized by the Board that NRAC once established, would no doubt also wish to create awards to reserve NCMs but the Board felt that the determination of such other awards should be left to the new NRAC/ARNS Board.

NRAC/ARNC Priorities

The Priorities paper, approved at our last meeting, provides the major guide for the Board to ensure that we are acting as an association to pursue our established goals. In order to ensure we do not lose sight of our priorities, I have altered our meeting agenda to make sure the board can monitor our progress at each meeting.

Restructuring Management

The Board has at various times in the past discussed the issue of obtaining charitable status for the UNTDA but other than considering the merits, no action was authorized in no small part because it was thought wise to await the recommissioning of the UNTDA to NRAC/ARNC as the new Board would through the Transition process determine whether charitable status was appropriate.

The Transition Committee in its deliberations has already underlined the importance of taking steps to enhance our Management structure and this was endorsed as one of our priorities.

In that respect, it is clear that there is a need for some management personnel support, (as yet undefined), the need for the installation of a responsive data management system and the need to professionally manage our systems, either in-house or outsourced, if we are to maximize our ability to efficiently serve our membership.

In the view of the Executive Committee there is no downside to proceeding to make an application forthwith to the Government to acquire a charitable number as we will need it to acquire meaningful financial support from our membership and supporting organizations.

While we need to develop a formal fund-raising strategy to meet our goals there is no advantage in awaiting the outcome of that important work before making

application for Charitable status. The argument to proceed now with the application is purely pragmatic as the processing of an application would take roughly nine months and we don't need a detailed fund-raising plan to provide a credible application.

I will therefore provide a motion at the Board meeting asking your approval to proceed to prepare an application for charitable status for NRAC/ARNC.

Relationship with the Naval Association of Canada (NAC)

One question the arises regularly from members and potential members is: *How does NRAC/ARNC relate to NAC?*

I think it is important that we all be very clear on the relationship so that we do not run the risk of any misunderstanding.

It helps to begin with an overview of our missions.

The current mission of NRAC/ARNC is:

The Association celebrates the naval and civilian contributions of Canadian Naval Reservists and identifies, preserves, and promotes the history and values of the UNTD program and its successors with an emphasis on citizenship, leadership, honesty, commitment, service and personal discipline, by providing opportunities for members to support the Navy and for convivial social interaction.

We are essentially a home for reservists and a champion for the Naval Reserve in Canada.

The current Mission of NAC is:

The Core Mission-Educating Canadians on the need for a capable Navy critical for our economic well-being, security and way of life.

They have the important mission of educating Canadians on the role of the navy and its importance to Canada.

With regard to Membership:

NRAC/ARNC is focused on retired and current naval reservists and those who are supportive of the reserve.

The membership statement for NAC is:

NAC welcomes as members all those interested in ensuring Canada has a strong Navy.

Both our Missions and membership have some overlap, but the emphasis is clearly different while complimentary. The Royal Canadian Navy is the base element in the development of both organizations. Indeed, there is a substantial commitment of both organizations to the NAVY and for that reason it should be no surprise that so many of us belong to both organizations.

Perhaps the fundamental difference is that NAC is the public champion for a strong navy and for solid naval policies while we are a home for reservists, supporters of the contribution of citizen sailors, and a catalyst for social interactions to maintain the camaraderie of reservists across Canada.

I will in the following talking points attempt to define what I believe the relationship is and what it should be.

- Our relationship with NAC, while largely informal, is both friendly and cooperative.
- From the beginning of the process to develop NRAC/ARNC we have kept NAC informed of our activities.
- Many of our members are also members of NAC and hold important positions in the NAC organization and vice versa.
- NAC is the important national advocate for the Navy and Naval policy in Canada.
- With the exception of advocating for the well-being of reservists and the services citizen sailors provide to our communities, we were not established to be a public advocacy organization.
- While we support the importance of the Navy to Canada, we are not in any way a competing voice with NAC in public support of the Navy.

In summary NAC has a very important role in Advocating for the role of the navy in Canada and appropriate policies to support our Navy, a role we support and believe Canada needs, but they are the voice of ex-Navy and other Canadian supporters of the role of the navy whereas we are the home base of Canada's citizen sailors.

Another way of putting it is that if you want to advocate for nuclear submarines or increased defence spending, NAC is the right place and if you wish to support the concept of the citizen sailor and promote the camaraderie of reservists retired and active then NRAC/ARNC is the right place.

For a healthy Naval environment in Canada both have important and complementary roles to play.

I sent out a message earlier asking about the intentions of board members to reoffer their services for the Board at this Spring's Annual meeting. This is just a reminder that if you are thinking of stepping down, please advise as we will be having a Governance and Nominating committee meeting in early January to begin the process of preparing the slate of nominees.

I want to thank all the committee chairs and the members of the committees that have been meeting since our last board meeting. As a volunteer board without permanent support staff, we all have a considerable burden to carry as we grow the Association and effectively serve our members and I very much appreciate everyone's efforts.

I look forward to seeing you all on December 11th.

Graham