



Canadian
Coast Guard

Garde côtière
canadienne

Canadian Coast Guard **Arctic Strategy**

August 2024



Canada 

Contents

Foreword from Commissioner	3	Pillar 3: Modernization and Northern Adaptation	19
Foreword from Assistant Commissioner, Arctic Region	4	Fleet & Infrastructure	19
Methodology	5	Greening of Operations	19
The Canadian Coast Guard	6	Innovation	19
The Canadian Coast Guard in the Arctic	6	Digitalization of Services	20
The Canadian Coast Guard in the World	7	Pillar 4: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace	21
The Canadian Coast Guard's Arctic Vision	9	Fostering an Inclusive and Interculturally Safe Workplace	21
Prelude to the decade ahead	11	Cost of Living	21
A Renewed Relationship with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples	11	Removing Barriers for Recruitment & Retention	21
Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change	11	Education and Training	22
Emergency Management and Response Capacity	12	The Canadian Coast Guard College	23
Arctic Sovereignty and Maritime Domain Awareness	13	Mentoring, Work Experience, Sponsorship	23
Northern Economies and Marine Protected Areas	13	Conclusion	25
Strategic Pillars	14	Appendix A: Sources Consulted	26
Pillar 1: Reconciliation	15	Appendix B: Land Claim and Self-government Agreements	26
Governance	15		
Maritime Domain Awareness	15		
Arctic Indigenous Businesses	16		
Pillar 2: Cooperation and Collaboration	17		
Collaboration with Indigenous Organizations and Governments	17		
Provincial and Territorial Governments	17		
Commercial Operators	17		
Federal Departments and Agencies	17		
International Collaboration	17		



Foreword from Commissioner



I am pleased to present the Canadian Coast Guard Arctic Strategy.

The creation of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) Arctic Regions in 2018 has given us an opportunity to take stock of our essential role in the Canadian Arctic, and to provide a path forward that will better equip us to continue delivering our mandate across an increasingly dynamic Arctic environment.

Recent investments in the renewal of the fleet call for innovative strategies to also modernize the CCG's services and programs across the Arctic. In alignment with the strategic direction of the CCG's long-term planning, the Arctic Strategy will guide us in delivering our mandate within the Arctic's unique operational context over the next 10 years.

As an organization, we are proud of our role as a key federal presence in the Arctic, supporting the expression of Canada's enduring sovereignty and contributing to Government of Canada initiatives. We are an essential delivery partner for much of Canada's ocean science, as well as the decade long effort to support expeditions to define Canada's extended continental shelf in the Arctic under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Through our programs and services, the CCG supports Northern communities and economies and the protection of the marine environment.

Over the next decade, we will be faced with the challenge of operating in a rapidly shifting Arctic context as Canada renews its relationship with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples in the North, including recognition of self-government agreements, land claim agreements, legislative frameworks, and Indigenous self-determination.

We are also acutely aware that the Arctic environment is undergoing unprecedented changes caused by the impacts of climate change. Declining sea ice and the opening of previously unnavigable sea routes will have significant impacts on our operations and program delivery across the Arctic Region.

With the CCG often being the most visible federal presence in the Canadian Arctic, the organization's international Arctic engagements will take on increased importance. It is clear to the CCG and the Government of Canada that collaboration with like-minded states, allies, and partners is critical as we contend with evolving international relations, and economic and safety considerations in the region.

Looking ahead, we will need to be resilient and agile in our response to the changing landscape. To this end, we envision the CCG providing a year-round presence across the Arctic that is supported by innovative programs, a modernized fleet, an equitable and representative workforce, and policies that are made in the North, by the North, and for the North.

This will only be possible through ongoing collaboration with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis partners, governments, and organizations from across Inuit Nunangat and the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. The CCG upholds the importance of respectfully and meaningfully incorporating Indigenous considerations and perspectives, including Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing, into our decision-making processes in a transparent manner.

The Arctic Strategy aspires to capture the CCG's vision for responding to current and emerging challenges in the North. It is not intended as a document for "how" we will get there – rather it describes our vision and goals for the next decade.

Upheld by the four strategic pillars – Reconciliation; Cooperation and Collaboration; Modernization and Northern Adaptation; and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – the Arctic Strategy will be integral for promoting a safe and prosperous Arctic for generations to come.

Foreword from Assistant Commissioner, Arctic Region



Since the creation of the DFO and CCG Arctic Regions in 2018, we have established our CCG head office in Yellowknife, equipped more communities with emergency response assets, and increased the number of personnel in the region. The creation of the Arctic Regions began as an important deliverable of the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee – a national committee that advances

shared priorities between Inuit and the federal government.

We are now turning our attention to planning for the decade ahead through the development of the Arctic Strategy, in collaboration with Northern partners. The Strategy seeks to modernize and adapt our operations and service delivery to Northern realities, fulfill our mandate, and support safety, security, science, and climate resiliency in the Arctic, all while expressing Canada's enduring sovereignty over our Arctic waters.

Looking to the future, we will need to address the impacts of climate change and increased vessel traffic relating to greater fishing, shipping, marine tourism, resource development and other interests in the Arctic. The federal government is establishing new marine protected areas and the CCG's role to support the implementation of these areas will continue to be defined in the coming years. We will also continue to ensure the safety of mariners operating in the Arctic, including commercial operators, community resupply vessels, and tourists.

Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is a priority of the federal government and for the CCG. The Arctic Strategy has a strong focus on collaboration with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples. Our operating area includes 81 communities, mostly coastal, home to mostly Indigenous Peoples. It makes sense for the Arctic Strategy to further an “in the North, by the North, and for the North” model. Through regional governance tables, collaborative agreements, and community engagement, Indigenous representatives can share their priorities and knowledge, and Inuit partners can share Inuit Qaujimagatqangit,¹ to help guide our decision-making, program planning, and service delivery.

The Arctic Strategy is intended as a guide for the CCG's personnel – setting our operational and corporate goals ambitiously toward a ten-year horizon and to address all the variables that come with a reconciliation mindset, changing climate, evolving technology, and increased demands for services in the Arctic. To achieve these goals, we will evaluate our short, medium, and long-term business plans, results metrics, and Arctic-specific plans to ensure they align with this ten-year Strategy. We will also adjust our approach to achieving this vision based on the dynamic nature of the local, national, and global context.

Throughout the Strategy we refer to our partners who are the people and organizations that we work with every day and with whom we share priorities – these are Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments and organizations, Arctic communities, mariners, commercial operators, academics, provincial and territorial governments, other federal government departments, collaborators in emergency preparedness and response, international allies and like-minded states, and many others with an interest in our programs and services in the North.

On behalf of the CCG Arctic Region, I thank our partners for their contribution to this Strategy and I encourage the CCG's personnel to continue bringing their commitment and expertise to Arctic operations in the decade ahead.

Methodology

The Canadian Coast Guard Arctic Strategy is built on what we heard during numerous engagements on the implementation of the Arctic Region from 2018 to 2021, as well as recent discussions with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments and organizations, Northerners, federal departments and agencies, provincial and territorial governments, commercial operators, and academia.

These are the *What We Heard* themes that guide the CCG Arctic Strategy:

- Increase capacity, service delivery, and presence of the CCG's programs and services;
- Include Indigenous Knowledge in decision-making;
- Lead decision-making and policy from the North, by Northerners;
- Remove employment barriers and create job opportunities in Northern communities;
- Develop climate change resilience strategies; and,
- Address infrastructure gaps.

When developing the Arctic Strategy, the CCG considered these themes as well as other reports, policies, and discussions, including the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*; the Inuit Nunangat Policy; Oceans Protection Plan discussions; the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework and partner chapters; Arctic Maritime Security Strategy; *Many Voices One Mind: a Pathway to Reconciliation*; the Clerk of the Privy Council Office's Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service; the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report, as well as materials from other Arctic States. A complete list of sources consulted appears in Appendix A.



The Canadian Coast Guard



The Canadian Coast Guard at a Glance

The CCG is a Special Operating Agency within Fisheries and Oceans Canada. It owns and operates the federal government's civilian fleet and provides key maritime services to mariners in Canadian waters by ensuring safe and accessible waterways, and by supporting the sustainable use and development of our oceans and waterways.

With the creation of the Arctic Region in 2018, the CCG has prioritized collaboration in delivering programs and services to better serve Arctic communities. We are increasing our presence in the Arctic while building and strengthening relationships with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities and organizations, as well as provinces, territories and other government departments, industry, and other Arctic States to advance priorities in the Arctic.

The Arctic Strategy is built on the bedrock principle *"in the North, by the North, and for the North"*.

The CCG's mandate under the *Oceans Act*, the *Canada Shipping Act*, and the *Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act*, gives the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard powers, responsibilities, and obligations concerning:

- Maritime search and rescue;
- Marine pollution response, including response to wrecks and hazardous or dilapidated ships;
- Icebreaking and ice-management services;
- Marine communications and traffic services;
- Aids to navigation;
- Channel maintenance; and,
- Support to departments, boards, and agencies by providing vessels, aircraft, and services.

The Canadian Coast Guard in the Arctic

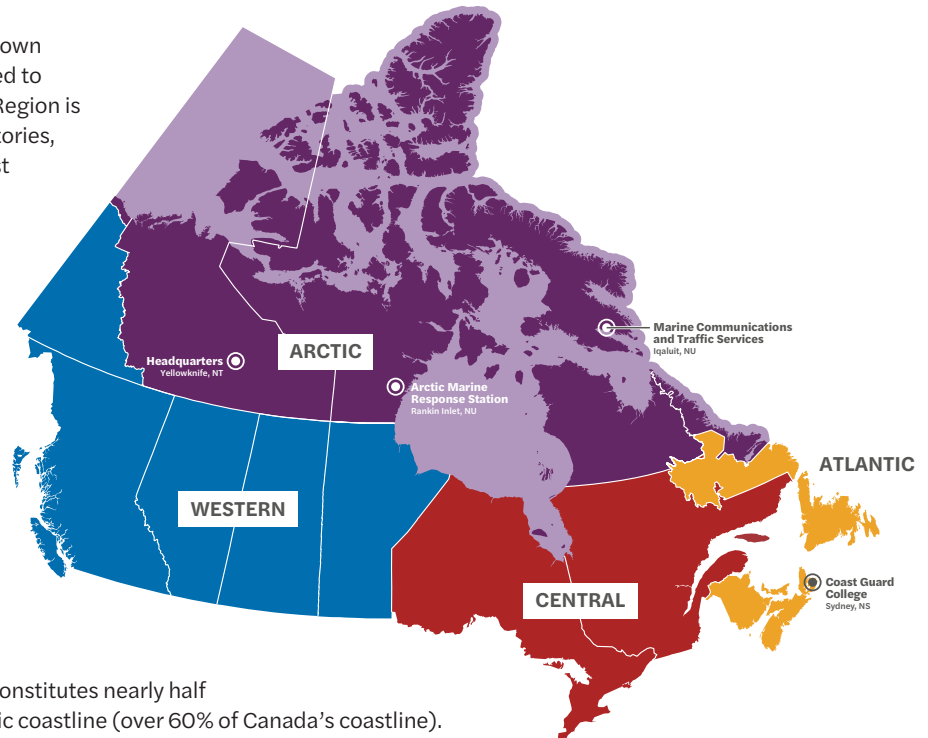
In the Arctic, the CCG delivers programs and services in a dynamic operating environment that includes these realities and assumptions:

- Recognition of rights, self-government agreements, co-management arrangements, legislative frameworks, and Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples' interests in our area of operation;
- Accelerated climate change allowing for increased access to remote areas and impacting migration routes, harvesting patterns, weather, ice, operations, traffic and shipping;
- Increasing demands for the CCG's presence, programs, and services across a vast and challenging geographic area with remote communities and limited response capacity and connectivity;
- Mounting interests in safety and security, marine tourism, and resource development;
- Growing populations in Arctic communities and demand for community resupply, especially for fuels and other cargo; and,
- Limited marine infrastructure.

The CCG is one of the most visible federal departments in the Arctic, supporting Canada's presence in the North and advancing federal priorities such as reconciliation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, science and research, and maritime safety and security. The CCG's history in the Canadian Arctic spans more than 60 years, and includes key activities such as assisting the shipping industry during the annual Arctic resupply missions that deliver food and essential goods to communities with limited or no access by road.

Since its creation, the CCG Arctic Region has grown to more than 100 full-time employees dedicated to program delivery in the Arctic. The CCG Arctic Region is headquartered in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, and includes staff bases in Hay River, Northwest Territories, and Iqaluit, Nunavut, including the Marine Communications and Traffic Services Centre in Iqaluit. While some Arctic regional employees work from various locations throughout Canada, many work in communities in the North, including the Arctic Marine Response Station in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut.

The boundaries of the CCG's Arctic Region are inclusive of Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, Inuvialuit Settlement Region, the Northwest Territories, the Yukon North Slope, and the coastal areas of James and Hudson Bay in Northern Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec. The Region is inclusive of Inuit Nunangat, the home of Inuit, as well as of First Nations and Métis lands. The Canadian Arctic constitutes nearly half of Canada's land mass and 162,000 km of Arctic coastline (over 60% of Canada's coastline).



The Canadian Coast Guard in the World

The CCG's success in adapting and responding to evolving technological, environmental, and economic drivers of change demands collaborative international partnerships and a strong leadership role on the international stage. In alignment with its international engagement objectives, the CCG works with international partners on strategic Arctic priorities in order to:

- Broaden capacity to collect and share information and exchange best practices;
- Enhance knowledge of technologies and scientific methods developed internationally;
- Influence the shared development of internationally accepted rules and standards related to maritime safety and security;
- Position the organization as a leading coast guard service; and,
- Develop global capacity to deliver high-quality coast guard-related services.

Bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the CCG, Arctic states, and non-Arctic states, such as the United Kingdom and Germany help to address shared challenges in Arctic waters. Many of the CCG's main partners have their own strategic approach to Arctic policy that is implemented within their respective coast guard branches.

Since 1996, the Arctic Council formalized interaction and collaboration between the eight Arctic States: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States. It also established six Permanent Participants representing Arctic Indigenous Peoples, including the Canada-based Inuit Circumpolar Council, Arctic Athabaskan Council, and Gwich'in Council International. While the CCG paused its participation in the Arctic Council during the Russian Chairship following Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, it looks forward to re-engaging with the Emergency Prevention, Preparedness, and Response working group during subsequent chairships. We continue to believe in the enduring value of the Arctic Council and the importance of collaborating with other countries on Arctic maritime search and rescue and environmental response issues.

The CCG is an active participant in the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, formed in 2015 to foster safe, secure, and environmentally responsible maritime activity in the Arctic. It aims to strengthen operational collaboration and coordination of activities between the eight member states. The Arctic Coast Guard Forum allows the CCG to seek best practices from, and share our Canadian experience with, coast guard counterparts on operational issues in the Arctic in alignment with the Government of Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework.

International relations are evolving and we will continue to monitor any implications they may have for our long-term goals in the Arctic and adjust the implementation of this Strategy accordingly.





The Canadian Coast Guard's Arctic Vision

A 10-Year Vision for the Canadian Coast Guard in the Arctic

Our vision is an enhanced Canadian Coast Guard presence in the Arctic delivering programs that meet the unique needs of the North, supported by a modern fleet that provides operational flexibility to the Government of Canada, climate resilient assets and infrastructure, and a diverse workforce that reflects the population it serves. This will ensure the Canadian Coast Guard, in collaboration with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples, can continue to deliver on-water safety, security, science, sovereignty, and environmental protection in an evolving operating context.



Canadian Coast Guard

Garde côtière canadienne

Canada

CANADIAN COAST GUARD GARDE CÔTIÈRE CANADIENNE



Prelude to the decade ahead

The following considerations describe the context of our operations in the Arctic. Over the next decade, the Canadian Coast Guard will pay close attention to emerging opportunities and risks to ensure we are well-placed to build renewed relationships with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples, adapt to climate change, and respond to maritime incidents.

A Renewed Relationship with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples

On June 21, 2021, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA) received Royal Assent in Canada. The UNDA provides a framework for the Government of Canada and Indigenous Peoples to work together to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which sets out the minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of Indigenous Peoples throughout the world. In alignment with the UNDA, the CCG will continue to work with Indigenous governments, organizations, and communities to ensure that our programs and services are designed to meaningfully advance a renewed relationship with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples.

The implementation of the Inuit Nunangat Policy will guide the design, development and delivery of the CCG's policies, programs, services, and operations in Inuit Nunangat. This includes, for example, supporting Inuit self-determination, engaging Inuit in the early stages of program, policy, service and operational development, and also removing barriers and increasing access to employment and procurement opportunities.

Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change

The Arctic is warming four times faster than the global average. In the decade to come, the Arctic will continue to see amplified impacts of climate change, most notably decreasing sea-ice coverage, thawing permafrost, increased frequency of extreme weather events, coastal erosion, and shifts in species distributions. As a result of the changing access to Arctic waters there has been, and will continue to be, an increased interest in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago by domestic and foreign actors.

The CCG is essential to Canada's efforts to mitigate the risks created by climate change and shifting landscape of global affairs. To this end, the CCG is developing a series of climate resiliency measures including vulnerability and risk assessments to prioritize adaptation activities. One of the most significant

steps the CCG is taking to mitigate climate change is through the decarbonization of fleet operations, which will include the adoption of low-carbon fuels, a focus on energy efficiency in fleet procurement, and an investment in net-zero research and innovation to drive green operations.

Climate Change Impacts on Multi-Year Sea Ice

As the Arctic continues to warm, multi-year sea ice will present navigational challenges. As ice shelves "calve" (break off) in large chunks to produce free-floating icebergs, Arctic channels become more hazardous.

Increasingly unpredictable snow and sea-ice patterns make travelling through semi-permanent trails across sea-ice more dangerous. There is a widening 'knowledge gap' between the changing physical Arctic environment and what is mapped.²

As the maritime industry advances decarbonization initiatives, low-carbon fuels and new propulsion systems will become more common, creating new challenges for incident response. Similarly, shipping new types of cargo such as electric vehicles or a wider variety of fuel types, will increase. This underscores the need to prepare for emerging technologies and enhance readiness to respond to all hazards.

By providing icebreaking services and ice escorts, the CCG enables maritime economic activity in the Arctic, which is growing as more of the Arctic becomes accessible. Changing sea ice conditions create opportunities for new marine transportation corridors and increased shipping traffic in Arctic waters. However, unpredictable ice conditions and limited nautical charts create risks to safe navigation, and require the CCG to bolster its incident response capacity. In the future, the CCG's operations in the Arctic will shift from a seasonal icebreaking approach to year-round operations, enabled by investments in the CCG's fleet and personnel.

² ClearSeas. 2022. Climate Change Vulnerability of the Canadian Maritime Environment. [2022-Clear-Seas-Climate-Change-Vulnerability-of-the-Canadian-Environment-English.pdf](#) (clearseas.org)



Fleet Renewal

The Fleet Renewal Plan investment in new vessels will strengthen the CCG's presence and range in the Arctic, and will contribute to a whole-of-government approach to protecting Canada's sovereign interests.

Emergency Management and Response Capacity

The Arctic is a challenging place for environmental response, marine communications, and search and rescue operations. The vastness and remoteness of the Arctic presents challenges to the CCG's operations, including the lack of modern bathymetric charting, critical infrastructure, connectivity, and local response capacity. More vessel traffic arising from tourism, pleasure craft, commercial shipping, natural resource projects, and population growth will inevitably increase risks in Arctic waters, which will also lead to more demand for the CCG's services.

To improve emergency preparedness, the CCG benefits from the use of local caches of equipment as well as training and exercising activities tailored to Arctic conditions. Partnerships with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples as well as Northerners enhance response to maritime search and rescue incidents and overall operational readiness through supporting local capacity. Scaling up the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary model with units across the Arctic has and will continue to create additional community-based capacity to lead and assist in maritime incident response. This is achieved through projects such as the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary (Arctic Chapter) and the Indigenous Community Boat Volunteer Program.

The Arctic Environmental Response program has been evolving since its inception in the Arctic Region in 2021. This program delivers preparedness and response activities, including the expansion of our permanent, year-round presence in the Arctic, as well as Arctic-specific contingency plans, more pre-positioned environmental response equipment caches across the Arctic, and opportunities for communities to participate in preparedness and response efforts, including equipment familiarization training and exercises. The Oceans Protection Plan, initially announced in

2016, set a strong foundation for augmented marine safety in the North through projects like the Enhanced Maritime Situational Awareness System and Proactive Vessel Management. The renewal of the Oceans Protection Plan further expands response capacity with the creation of coastal marine response teams, integrated response planning, investments to assess and remove wrecked and abandoned vessels, and improving our ability to work with partners to respond to marine pollution incidents that involve oil or hazardous and noxious substances.

By continuing to build Northern partnerships and support domestic and international cooperation agreements to supplement environmental response capacity, we will be best positioned to protect sensitive Northern marine ecosystems.

The CCG values its partnership with the Canadian Armed Forces, including the Canadian Rangers, who live and serve in the North. In Arctic communities, Rangers often have roles with the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary. We will continue to invest in joint exercises and training which benefits Search and Rescue, Arctic maritime security, and maritime domain awareness.

Beyond the delivery of our own programs, the CCG supports the mandate of other federal departments by providing platforms that support federal emergency response to major incidents such as floods and wildfires. Depending on the incident, the CCG could be called on to provide humanitarian support, including contributing vessels or air assets, providing incident management expertise, removing debris from the marine environment or facilitating evacuations. As we plan for the decade ahead, we will continue to work in collaboration with Northerners to assess and build capacity and diversity of resources and assets in coastal Arctic communities to expand preparedness and response capacity, and also ensure that we have the necessary capabilities to support our federal partners.

Arctic Sovereignty and Maritime Domain Awareness

In alignment with the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework and the Arctic Maritime Security Strategy, the CCG contributes to the continued expression of Canada's enduring sovereignty through our presence, programs, and services in the Arctic, as well as through our bilateral and multilateral international relationships. For example, the CCG supports the Canadian Hydrographic Service, Natural Resources Canada's Geological Survey of Canada, and Global Affairs Canada to work in collaboration with international partners, like the United States, to determine the extent of Canada's extended continental shelf under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The CCG will increase its assets, exercising, and program delivery as well as its role in supporting monitoring, research, and science in the Arctic. This includes collaborating with the Department of National Defence, the Royal Canadian Navy, and other federal departments and agencies to collect and share maritime domain awareness, and identify, monitor, and assess potential threats and hazards that would undermine safety and security. The CCG also contributes its expertise on maritime vessel traffic to Canada's three multi-agency Marine Security Operations Centres, partnering with other government departments and agencies to share intelligence and advance an organized response to maritime incidents and threats.

The CCG also plays a key role in facilitating connections between partners to aggregate our data with data sourced from industry, regulators, and community monitors. This involves gathering timely and accurate information on the Arctic marine environment, improving data analysis, and supporting joint data-driven decisions with our partners. The CCG will continue to work with partners to strengthen maritime domain awareness in the Arctic which will inform risk assessments, improve preparedness and enable agile responses to incidents.

Federal investments, under the National Shipbuilding Strategy, will allow the CCG to support operations in the Arctic year-round. The approved Fleet Renewal Plan includes new modular classes of vessels for operation in the Arctic. As resources will always be finite, the CCG will continue to explore approaches that use assets for multiple purposes. Ships will be designed for flexibility and modularity and take on mission sets that serve more than one program, allowing vessels to be leveraged for search and rescue, environmental response as well as departmental protection of fisheries and marine protected areas, science, and charting activities.

While global security remains an urgent concern, we also face pressing threats to environmental and human security in the Arctic. The CCG's relationships with like-minded Arctic nations and participation in international Arctic fora enables greater collaborative information sharing, operational cooperation, and reinforces Canada's commitment to Arctic peace and prosperity, through the rules-based international order. The CCG's program delivery in the Arctic and in the Northwest Passage supports Inuit whose land use and occupancy since time immemorial is an essential component of Canadian Arctic sovereignty.

Northern Economies and Marine Protected Areas

Growing Arctic communities, natural resource exploration, and tourism in an increasingly accessible environment will continue to increase the volume of vessel traffic in the Arctic. CCG supports DFO in negotiations for marine protected areas and partners with Inuit stewardship programs to provide training and services under Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreements. As the Government of Canada continues to advance its commitment to protect 30% of sensitive ocean habitats and ecosystems by 2030, the CCG's role will have to be further defined in relation to monitoring and compliance for Marine Protected Areas.

The CCG fosters economic development in the Arctic by enabling the safe transit of essential goods and services, and ensuring marine safety and security in Canada's Arctic waters. In partnership with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments and organizations, the CCG provides Canadian and international commercial marine transportation sectors, local harvesters, community and commercial fishers with ice information, icebreaking, and ice escort services that facilitate the movement of maritime commerce. The CCG's programs and services ensure that Canadian Arctic waters are maintained as a maritime economic artery.

As an employer in the North, the CCG offers economic and employment opportunities across Inuit Nunangat and the Canadian Arctic. As we advance this Strategy, the CCG will remain committed to staffing a diverse, equitable, representative, and inclusive workforce working in the North, for the North.



Strategic Pillars

Four strategic pillars are foundational to delivering operational outcomes, supporting climate adaptation and mitigation, and enhancing a strong Northern presence that serves a rapidly changing Arctic – all leading towards achieving the 10-Year Vision:

Reconciliation –

Advancing reconciliation commitments with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples through an “in the North, by the North, and for the North” model.

Cooperation and Collaboration –

Increasing cooperation and collaboration to enhance preparedness, predictability, science, safety, and security in the Arctic.

Modernization and Northern Adaptation

– Advancing innovative and modernized approaches to keep pace with the rising demand for programs and services in an evolving environment.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace –

Offering a safe and healthy workplace that prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The following sections outline the specific areas of focus under each strategic pillar that will help the Canadian Coast Guard achieve its vision in the Arctic over the next 10 years.

PILLAR 1: Reconciliation

The Canadian Coast Guard is committed to advancing reconciliation with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples to support self-determination and develop and deliver programs and services that meet the needs of Arctic communities.

Focus areas include:

- Implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and its operational outcomes into the appropriate CCG governance mechanisms and operational activities;
- Advancing distinctions-based engagement and governance models in the Arctic, including the implementation of the Inuit Nunangat Policy;
- Supporting Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination, including through the processes and outcomes of devolution, Treaties, and self-government agreements in the Arctic;
- Designing and implementing programs and services in partnership with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities, and organizations;
- Supporting Arctic community-led programs and services, such as the [Indigenous Guardians Program](#) and others;
- Building intercultural competency as we strive for excellence in our program and service delivery, and ensuring safety and security in culturally informed ways; and,
- Addressing barriers experienced by Arctic Indigenous businesses as they navigate procurement processes for the CCG's services.

Canada has unique and distinct relationships with Inuit, First Nation, and Métis Peoples. Indigenous and treaty rights, including ownership rights to land, occupation and use of lands and resources, harvesting, cultural and social practices, and self-governance are constitutionally protected under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Canada's commitments and obligations have been, and are being further defined under Modern Treaties and self-government agreements, as well as under Canada's 2019 Arctic and Northern Policy Framework and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

The CCG will continue to align its programs and services in collaboration with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples, provincial and territorial governments, and in accordance with self-government and land claims agreements across the Arctic. See Appendix B for list of land claim agreements.

The CCG's workplans will reflect the priorities of the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee, implemented consistent with the Inuit Nunangat Policy and the principles of co-development.

As a part of these reconciliation efforts, the CCG is prioritizing Indigenous cultural awareness and providing learning resources for employees operating in the Arctic. These efforts advance relationship-building, awareness, and implementation of treaty obligations, and minimize potential impacts on cultural and harvesting activities. Efforts to support the development of intercultural competence within the CCG help to foster a safe and healthy workplace culture.

Governance

Leveraging existing or new governance models will enable the CCG to work collaboratively to identify opportunities and capacity gaps, and strengthen program and service delivery through information sharing and planning. The CCG will use a distinctions-based approach to ensure the unique interests of Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples across the Arctic are addressed, that we are engaging appropriately, and that we are respecting their rights to or preferences for use of their languages and dialects in our work with them.

The CCG is currently developing regional governance frameworks with self-government and land claims organizations located throughout the Arctic Region to reflect the diverse interests of Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities, and organizations. This governance will support the identification of priorities and collaborative planning to meet the needs of communities across the Arctic.

Maritime Domain Awareness

The Government of Canada and Arctic communities have shared interests in maritime domain awareness. The growing accessibility of the Arctic has a significant impact on coastal communities that rely on local waterways for their livelihood and food security. Building up the CCG's presence and partnerships in service delivery with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities and organizations, and cooperation with like-minded allies and other states will be integral to support efforts that reinforce regional governance, enhance stability and predictability, and improve the marine security system.



Many maritime domain awareness efforts led by Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities and organizations across the Arctic already combine modern technology, Indigenous Knowledge, and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit,³ locally collected data from harvesters, and vessel data collected by the Automated Identification System. The CCG will continue to support community-led marine monitoring initiatives and encourage integration and sharing of data and knowledge sources where appropriate and with explicit permission. We will work with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities and organizations to identify the most appropriate ways to collect and share mutually beneficial information and knowledge.

Arctic Indigenous Businesses

The CCG will continue to support the participation of Northern businesses in program and service delivery in the North. The CCG will prioritize procurement from Inuit, First Nations, and Métis businesses, including maintenance of remote sites and the provision of supplies and services for Arctic operations.

The CCG will increase access to economic opportunities by addressing the barriers faced by Inuit, First Nations, and Métis-owned businesses as they navigate procurement processes in alignment with objectives under the Government of Canada Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Businesses. This strategy sets a target for a minimum of 5% of the total value of contracts to be held by Indigenous businesses⁴ as well as the Government of Canada's obligations under land claims agreements to provide support to Inuit firms in competing for government contracts.

Summary: To advance reconciliation, the CCG will engage in collaborative, distinctions-based governance models featuring policy-making led in the North, by the North, and for the North. Activities will prioritize the meaningful consideration and accounting of Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing in decision-making, support community-led monitoring initiatives for shared maritime domain awareness, address economic barriers, and create job opportunities in Northern communities.

³ The term Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit refers to Inuit "Traditional Knowledge", inclusive of all the extensive knowledge and experience passed from generation to generation, provides perspectives on relating to human and non-human kin, as well as to the Land.

⁴ Indigenous business and federal procurement (sac-isc.gc.ca)

PILLAR 2:

Cooperation and Collaboration

Strengthening the Canadian Coast Guard's domestic, regional, and international collaboration mechanisms will promote sustainable opportunities in the rapidly changing Arctic environment.

The CCG will draw on the expertise and capabilities of domestic and international partners to further build operational readiness, services, and infrastructure. Rapid response in the Arctic can only be achieved through collaboration, coordination, and information-sharing to expand the network of capacity on-land, on-ice, and at-sea.

Collaboration with Indigenous Organizations and Governments

The CCG will continue to collaborate, through formal governance mechanisms, with Inuit (such as the Inuit Nunangat-DFO and CCG Arctic Region Committee), First Nations, and Métis governments and organizations to support: marine safety and security; maritime search and rescue, environmental response planning and operational activities; economic activities; scientific research in Canadian waters; and emerging areas of interest – while recognizing the various land claim agreements and ongoing negotiations with the Crown in the Arctic.

Provincial and Territorial Governments

Operational readiness to respond to climate change impacts, major incidents, and evolving international relations will continue to require coordination across federal, provincial, and territorial jurisdictions. The CCG will continue to strengthen communication and coordination of programs, services, assets, and infrastructure, on land, on ice and at sea, with provinces and territories.

Commercial Operators

Sustainable economic growth, including shipping, trade, resource development, and tourism, supports long-term Arctic prosperity. The CCG's longstanding partnership with commercial operators and mariners has enabled swift response to challenging operational conditions in the Arctic.

The CCG engages and collaborates on a regular basis with commercial operators, mariners, and other parties with an interest in shipping and navigation to provide opportunities for dialogue where mutual priorities and concerns can be shared, and planning can occur.

This level of collaboration enabled continued essential service delivery in the Arctic throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Joint exercises, for example with the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators, enhance our mutual pan-Arctic response preparedness. The CCG works with industry partners to educate and prepare them for search and rescue and environmental response, using their own resources, if necessary. Commercial operators are also an important asset for the CCG as they can be called on as Vessels of Opportunity to respond to maritime emergencies in the remote Arctic when no other ship is close to an incident.

Resupplying Arctic communities

The CCG's icebreaking services in the Arctic allow for the safe and efficient movement of vessels and goods in Northern waters, which is key to community resupply. The CCG's skilled crews are ready to assist the shipping industry during their annual Arctic resupply missions, known as sealift. In addition to ice escorts, the CCG provides daily updates on ice conditions and icebreaker operations to industry and partners throughout the shipping season.

The CCG will continue to foster communication, cooperation, and sharing best practices on icebreaking and incident response to ensure safe and open commercial shipping lanes, tourism infrastructure planning, climate change resilience, and safe and secure economic arteries in the Arctic.

Federal Departments and Agencies

The CCG contributes to whole-of-government approaches that protect the interests of Canada and serve the needs of Canadians. Partnerships across federal departments leverage federal assets, expertise, and local capabilities, to improve interoperability, information-sharing, and joint efforts to extend capacity across the Canadian Arctic.

Arctic Marine Advisory Board

Industry and the CCG's Arctic Region co-host the Arctic Marine Advisory Board (AMAB) meetings. AMAB provides opportunities for industry representatives, territorial governments, Indigenous governments and organizations, and other federal government departments to share experiences, lessons learned, and provides valuable insights as the CCG undertakes annual operational planning. Participation by Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities, and organizations aligns with reconciliation efforts and respects the principles of the UNDA.

International Collaboration

In alignment with our international engagement objectives, we will shape our international partnerships towards activities that promote a shared vision for a stable and peaceful Arctic region. Over several decades, the Arctic States, including Canada, have

collaborated to overcome challenges posed to operations by a vast circumpolar Arctic with limited infrastructure.

Active participation of Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities, and organizations, as well as Northerners, in decisions regarding the safety, security, and prosperity of the Arctic is integral to balancing marine conservation and sustainability priorities. We will advocate for increased representation of the CCG and Indigenous partners at international tables, as well as for Northern priorities to support the needs of users of Canadian waters.

The CCG will continue to reaffirm Canada's commitment to Arctic governance and cooperation through participation in international fora, while adapting engagement with international partners based on the evolving global context. This will build on the leadership and expertise developed through participation in the Arctic Council, where we have recently served as a working group chair and continue to contribute to projects that enhance regional cooperation. This includes Head of Canadian delegation at the Arctic Council's Emergency Prevention, Preparedness, and Response working group which guides Canada's policy approach relating to response measures to address natural or human-induced disasters in Arctic waters.⁵

Cooperation on Search and Rescue

The CCG participates in international, inter-agency rescue simulations such as Operation Nanook-Tatigiit in August 2021, in Frobisher Bay, Nunavut. This exercise simulated a major maritime incident requiring a mass rescue operation of a stricken cruise vessel. Through this exercise we evaluated our readiness and response postures for large-scale passenger evacuation.

Similarly, the CCG has historically taken a leadership role in the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, which was established in 2015, with the goal of strengthening cooperation and coordination of coast guard activities between the eight member states. This includes collaborative work to develop safe, secure, and environmentally responsible maritime activities in the Arctic. While not created by a treaty, the Arctic Coast Guard Forum assists in strengthening multilateral cooperation and coordination in the Arctic maritime domain. It also contributes to Arctic States responding effectively and quickly to incidents beyond national jurisdictions.

The CCG supports Canada's cooperation with the International Maritime Organization, which sets international standards for marine safety and pollution regulations. This includes supporting partners like Transport Canada and the Inuit Circumpolar Council on a coordinated Canada-Inuit approach to international shipping matters at the International Maritime Organization table.

The CCG sees great value in collaborating with other countries on Arctic maritime search and rescue and environmental response issues. We play an important role in delivering on the obligations contained in the *Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic* to strengthen emergency cooperation and coordination of Arctic oil spill response operations amongst Arctic States. We are also signatory to international agreements to provide search and rescue response in the Arctic, including the *Agreement on Cooperation on Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue in the Arctic*. We will continue to participate in interagency exercises with Denmark and the United States on maritime incidents requiring international cooperation.

Cooperation on Environmental Response

Canada and the United States have a Joint Marine Pollution Contingency Plan which provides a coordinated system for planning, preparing, and responding to harmful substance spill incidents in the adjacent waters of the United States and Canada. In 2022, the United States Coast Guard and the CCG signed an updated Annex to the Joint Marine Pollution Contingency Plan which coordinates marine environmental response and protection in the Arctic. This is an example of the strong bilateral relationship between our two countries.

Cooperation plans and agreements ensure interoperability and operational readiness in responding to incidents in the Arctic. This includes bilateral cooperation plans that are already in place with the United States Coast Guard, Danish Defence Forces Joint Arctic Command (Greenland), the Norwegian Coastal Administration, and the Norwegian Coast Guard.

The CCG will further strengthen partnerships with like-minded states, through comprehensive engagement with Arctic and non-Arctic States to reinforce regional peace and stability. Collaboration and coordination will become ever more important to address issues such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

Summary: The CCG will increase cooperation across jurisdictions to enhance preparedness, predictability, science and safety in and around Arctic waters. Activities will prioritize engagement with Indigenous organizations and governments, domestic and international partners, as well as states and organizations with shared interests to develop standards and agreements to support stability and prosperity across the Canadian North.

⁵ Arctic Council has paused all official meetings of the Council and its subsidiary bodies until further notice.

PILLAR 3:

Modernization and Northern Adaptation

The Canadian Coast Guard will work with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities and organizations to understand the context of Northern realities as we modernize programs and services to keep pace with a dynamic Arctic operational context and respond to the impacts of climate change.

More inclusive and representative governance is already changing how the CCG is delivering programs and services in the Arctic, specifically with regards to building partnerships, use of data, sharing of information, use of assets, and training of personnel. Transformative investments in state-of-the-art ships, facilities, and technologies will position the fleet of the future to provide the operational flexibility and solutions to protect Canadian interests and enable a strong economy. These enhancements will enable innovations with partners to explore pathways to decarbonization, optimize marine trade, modernize the CCG's posture in the North, strengthen the marine safety system, support maritime security across Canadian waters, and build international expertise in winter ice operations.

Fleet & Infrastructure

The CCG has planned capital investments to substantially increase shore-based and sea-going capacity with the building of a larger multipurpose fleet with the capacity for year-round operations in the Arctic. The planned fleet renewal will support an additional presence in the Arctic that includes Program Icebreakers, Multi-Purpose Vessels, and Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships. Innovations in shipbuilding, ship design, fuel sources, and operations will contribute to Canada's net-zero emissions targets by 2050.

Polar Icebreakers will augment the CCG's capabilities throughout the Canadian Arctic Archipelago and beyond. These icebreakers will also enhance capacity for humanitarian assistance and will contribute to a year-round presence in the Canadian Arctic. The new vessel classes will be designed to "plug and play," so modular mission packages with emerging technologies and science equipment can easily be fitted onto any Arctic-capable CCG vessel. This approach will provide multiple platforms to support Arctic operations and capabilities, including Arctic science partners, such as ArcticNet, demonstrating the Department's ongoing commitment to Arctic research.

The CCG has identified the infrastructure, crewing, training, climate resilience, and financial requirements for its expanded future fleet and is currently making plans for new vessels that will be delivered within the next 10 years. Installation and upgrades to wharves, docks, and towers will also be included in regular assessments of the Arctic operating landscape. We will continue to modernize shore-based infrastructure to support local capacity building for maritime search and rescue and pollution response across the Arctic, and improve the ability to mitigate risks associated with increased vessel traffic and resource development.

As we develop a skilled and more representative workforce able to realize the full potential of current and future fleet capabilities, the needs of this workforce will be incorporated into fleet designs.

Greening of Operations

As part of ongoing efforts to assess the impacts of climate change on critical assets and infrastructure, the CCG will strengthen relationships with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples, as well as Northerners to seek novel approaches to climate adaptation. We will work with partners to integrate robust risk assessments to optimize the location and resilience of infrastructure in the North. In addition, as our presence in the Arctic grows, we will: assess options for applying innovative technologies to the fleet, such as on-board wastewater collection and treatment systems; and, implement an environmentally responsible lifecycle management plan for our assets, which is an ongoing challenge due to the infrastructure gaps to manage waste in the North.

Building variety into the fleet with smaller vessels and vessels that run on alternative sources of energy, such as low carbon fuels, are a large part of the CCG's decarbonization efforts, which seek to mitigate its contribution to climate change in line with federal decarbonization targets established by the Greening Government Strategy.

Innovation

The CCG seeks to foster a culture of innovation, in partnership with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples as well as Northerners to advance Northern priorities and be a leader in the delivery of maritime services. This is critical to successfully adapt to a changing operational landscape, meet future operational requirements, and ensure continuity of service. Because the region is rapidly changing, innovation in the North needs to be prioritized. This process will include surveying challenges, developing solution prototypes, and testing them in suitable Northern locations and conditions alongside relevant domestic and international partners. In addition to supporting models driven by the North to innovate Northern service delivery, we will promote opportunities to learn from experimentation across Canada and the world.

In the innovation space, the CCG is exploring remotely piloted aircraft systems (drones), which have significant potential to extend the CCG's reach into remote areas of the Arctic. Data collected by autonomous systems, coupled with artificial intelligence, are uncovering new pathways to improve maritime domain awareness. Parallel efforts are being made to meaningfully consider Indigenous knowledge systems and ways

of knowing with data acquired from satellites, aircraft, and ships to support decision-making related to daily service delivery, climate-change resilience, and other CCG operations.

The future of communications in the Arctic means looking at new and emerging technologies in conjunction with how we traditionally communicate with mariners on the water. We will test new communications tools to aid both mariners as well as our Marine Communication and Traffic Services Centre on situation awareness, reducing search areas, and linking to vessels of opportunity when requests for assistance are received. We will leverage existing or future federal communication infrastructure and explore new and innovative ways to respond to the needs of hunters, trappers, and harvesters to ensure they can connect with us and receive the CCG's services.

We are committed to improving communication on our vessels through enhancements in satellite bandwidth and coverage, with the goal of providing vessel connectivity at all times across the Arctic. These efforts contribute to Arctic program and service delivery, and maritime domain awareness, while also improving crew access to resources like training and external communications.

Digitalization of Services

The CCG must be innovative to meet the increased demand for services in the North. Digitalization and automation can improve traditional approaches to service delivery by leapfrogging investments in lights, buoys, and other navigational aids in the Arctic. Modernization of the Aids to Navigation program infrastructure, systems, and processes will ensure the uninterrupted flow of traffic along waterways by providing current navigational safety information. Technological advancements in e-Navigation models that harmonize data collection and analysis are enabling seamless production of reports on ice and weather, vessel traffic, and other navigation details to support mariners.

The Arctic can serve as a testing ground in support of global efforts to enhance safe navigation and maritime domain awareness in the North given the numerous challenges faced by

the region due to its remoteness and climate conditions. With the improvement of telecommunication infrastructure expected in the region over time, the CCG is well positioned for piloting projects to test innovative technologies such as the use of virtual aids to navigation in places where physical aids to navigation are difficult to maintain and susceptible to the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events. These future-looking technologies are not only expected to improve services in the North, but also produce a blueprint for adoption and long-term efficiencies across Canadian waters.

Similarly, the testing of approaches to modernizing marine communication and traffic services will help examine technologies and assess how best to adapt these to the Arctic region more specifically in order to enable new systems and processes that will improve Canada's adherence to international standards. For example, one such standard is the International Maritime Organization adopted S-100 hydrographic data model which will anchor the next generation of navigation services by improving navigation safety, cost efficiencies and environmental protection. This will also support the establishment of northern low-impact shipping corridors that minimize the potential impacts of shipping on wildlife as well as culturally and ecologically sensitive areas, and guide investments in the North.

These developments will grow the CCG capabilities in the Arctic and beyond to provide advice and information needed for trade, transport, and thriving livelihoods.

Summary: The CCG will modernize programs and services in the Arctic through innovation and experimentation, including climate change resilience strategies, vulnerability assessments of assets, and fleet decarbonization efforts. Activities will prioritize investments in a dedicated and networked fleet that augments Canada's maritime domain awareness, strategically located facilities, and experimentation with technologies that enhance operational capabilities and align with Canada's Greening Government Strategy commitments.



PILLAR 4:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace

At the Canadian Coast Guard, we believe our people are our most valuable asset and we feel a tremendous source of pride in our employees, who deliver essential services to Canadians 24/7/365 across the country. The CCG seeks to be an employer of choice and we are committed to building a diverse and representative Arctic Region workforce living and working in the Arctic.

This endeavour will be enabled by collaboration with Inuit, First Nations, Métis, and Northern Peoples. We will continue to recruit from the communities we serve, enhancing diversity and representation of Canada's public service, and fostering a safe, culturally responsive, and healthy workplace. To do this, DFO and the CCG are developing a Northern Recruitment and Retention Strategy with Inuit, First Nations, Métis, and Northern partners.

Fostering an Inclusive and Interculturally Safe Workplace

An inclusive and interculturally safe workplace is essential to attracting and retaining a diverse and representative workforce, and to support an Arctic-based service delivery model. A healthy workplace culture fosters innovation, equity, accessibility and belonging, and advances the interests and priorities of communities.

To support professional development and encourage all employees to thrive and make valued contributions, the CCG will implement innovative and adaptive strategies, as well as culturally informed recruitment processes. We will also ensure access to training for our personnel to provide the historical context of government relations in the Arctic and build intercultural competencies and operational awareness. We are committed to education in a manner that respects the UNDA and creates a workforce that is ready to engage with people in the North.

Our workplace culture will include flexible work schedules to support the family and cultural commitments of our employees, including caregiving and traditional harvesting. This includes leveraging existing federal governance structures to review policies, including sick leave policies, to examine how they could reflect the need for medical travel for Northern residents.

Additionally, the procurement and design of the future fleet will seek to accommodate an accessible, inclusive, and culturally and gender diverse workforce on new vessels.

Cost of Living

The cost of living is significantly higher in the Canadian Arctic compared to southern Canada, which creates barriers to recruitment in the Arctic. It is challenging for current and potential employees to find affordable housing and available real property, as well as to operate with limited internet bandwidth. The CCG will collaborate with provinces and territories, and Inuit, First Nations, and Métis organizations, communities, and governments to seek opportunities including housing, office space, and tools to build a Northern workforce. We will also collaborate with other federal government departments to advance discussions about the Isolated Post Allowance and associated benefits to ensure federal organizations are adequately resourced and that salaries are competitive to attract and retain new talent in the Canadian Arctic.

Removing Barriers for Recruitment & Retention

Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples face barriers at each stage of the public service employment process. *Many Voices One Mind: a Pathway to Reconciliation* is a whole-of-government strategy that seeks to reduce and remove barriers to public service employment encountered by Indigenous Peoples, and to promote the diversity of experience and ideas that Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples bring to the public service. The CCG will continue to modernize recruitment methods and address existing barriers for Northern employment within the organization, including access to required education and training, and a high cost of living. The CCG will also pursue opportunities to improve recruitment in the North with consideration of local knowledge and expertise, a growing youth population, and community and cultural practices. Similarly, we will increase the representation of Northerners in hiring processes, including on hiring boards.

These actions are of particular importance because the CCG Arctic Region will need to fill positions at all levels, both on-shore and on-board vessels and southern recruitment practices

Employee Wellbeing

The CCG's most valuable resource is our people. Without them, we cannot succeed or deliver our mandate. It is important to create and maintain a safe and healthy workplace where employees are supported and valued.

By building trust, and fostering a culture of respect, we will ensure that our Arctic workforce has the necessary mental and physical health and wellness support required to thrive. This includes health promotion initiatives, supporting access to physicians, and fostering a culture of psychological well-being.

have had limited success in the Arctic. Working with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis partners has helped us further refine our recruitment processes to suit the Arctic context. As part of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard's Northern Recruitment and Retention Strategy, we will continue to use Northern networks for information sharing – radio in local dialects, newspapers, Arctic Hub emails, social media, and word-of-mouth – to promote employment opportunities in Arctic communities. We will respect territorial requirements, such as the Nunavut Official Languages Act. And we will continue to address the specific challenges faced by Northerners whose first language may not be English or French, by developing recruitment tools in the languages of the region.



Community Engagement Coordinators

DFO and CCG Arctic Regions launched a pilot program to create community engagement coordinators who served as the points of contact between the Department and communities in the Arctic Region to enhance relationships and communication. Building on the success of the pilot program, the CCG is looking to expand the model to better identify and address barriers to Northern recruitment and requirements for supports and infrastructure when hiring employees in remote communities – essential information as the CCG continues to expand our presence in the Arctic in the coming years.

Beyond the hiring process, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard's Northern Recruitment and Retention Strategy will reflect life in the North, including a plan to foster cultural safety, for employees who live and work in the Canadian Arctic. We will promote recruitment and retention strategies that support our mandate to establish a culture of health, fitness, and wellness for our operational personnel to increase workplace satisfaction and retention, and enhance performance and overall service delivery.

Education and Training

Research indicates that there is an academic gap between Inuit, First Nations, and Métis Peoples in the Arctic compared to non-Indigenous Canadians.⁶ Gaps in reliable infrastructure and technology pose additional challenges to accessing required education and training, as there are limited programs available in the North. While there is a network of post-secondary institutions across the North with some transitioning into universities, barriers still exist for students to access and complete post-secondary education. Many Northern candidates cannot leave their home communities to pursue education elsewhere and secondary school education is currently required for many CCG jobs.

The CCG will recognize Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing and relevant experience and skills, on-the-job training and development, and sponsorship and mentoring activities to meet qualification requirements. We will explore partnerships with Arctic-based academic and training institutions⁷ to strengthen and increase access to education and training programs for Arctic residents.

The final report of the independent Task Force on Northern Post-Secondary Education, *A Shared Responsibility: Northern Voices, Northern Solutions*, was released on March 31, 2022. The report provides expert advice that will help the Government of Canada—together with Indigenous, territorial and provincial partners, and educational institutions in the North—to discuss barriers and possible solutions to providing Northerners with greater access to local, high-quality education. This includes ongoing learning and skills development opportunities, and culturally relevant higher education, including greater Indigenous-based knowledge and skills. Addressing these barriers will contribute to the education and training component of this Strategy.

The Future of Work

Companies and organizations around the world are rethinking traditional work models which provides an opportunity to shape a new future of work in the Arctic.

Employees seek dynamic and non-linear career paths with opportunities for mobility and advancement, while accommodating personal and professional goals. The CCG will consider and provide flexible work options, where possible, including hybrid work models to attract and retain Northern talent and provide employees with meaningful career development opportunities.

⁶ *A Shared Responsibility: Northern Voices, Northern Solutions*, Task Force on Northern Post-Secondary Education, May 2022

⁷ Examples of Arctic training institutions include: Nunavut Arctic College, Aurora College, the Labrador Institute, Collège Nordique Francophone, and the Nunavut Fisheries and Marine Training Consortium.

The Canadian Coast Guard College

Studying at the Canadian Coast Guard College comes with many benefits, including fully paid tuition and a guaranteed job with the federal government upon graduation from the Officer Training Program or the Marine Communications and Traffic Services training program. To increase enrolment of Northerners, particularly Inuit, First Nations, and Métis students, the College will:

- recruit earlier in the year at Northern high schools;
- provide culturally inclusive support for the application process – seeking to recognize non-formal schooling for equivalency standards;
- provide additional support for Northern students to ensure their continued success; and
- explore alternative delivery platforms alleviating the requirement to attend classes in person in Nova Scotia, when possible.

The College will continue to explore training options for the Arctic. Establishing programming requires assessing prerequisites and learning criteria for specific courses, as well as identifying opportunities to advance alternate methods of learning such as distance learning. The College will ensure it is an interculturally informed and welcoming institution by including Arctic and Indigenous awareness training for faculty and in the core curriculum to all its students.

Mentoring, Work Experience, Sponsorship

Mentoring is a valuable form of education. The CCG will develop programs to mentor Northern and Inuit, First Nations, and Métis youth, with opportunities for mentorship at every level, from entry to executive positions. Emphasizing hands-on training will provide apprenticeship experience – where youth and local community members can shadow the CCG’s technicians to enhance skills development. Mentoring, sponsorship, and job shadowing will facilitate knowledge transfer and capacity-building in the Canadian Arctic. The CCG will also continue to participate in the Inuit Learning and Development Program by providing practical work experience for Nunavut Land Claims beneficiaries.

Summary: The CCG will continue to foster a safe and healthy workplace and ensure that our services in the North are delivered by a diverse, inclusive, and representative workforce hired through a Northern recruitment and retention approach that addresses Northern barriers to employment. Employees will be well trained, and services such as mental health support will continue to be available.

The Canadian Coast Guard College

The College is the centre of excellence for CCG training located in Sydney, Nova Scotia. The College offers a 4-year Officer Training Program for both marine engineers and marine navigation officers. Graduates receive a Bachelor of Technology degree in nautical science, a Canadian Coast Guard College diploma, and commercial certification as a ship’s officer from Transport Canada.

The College also offers a six-month program training Marine Communications and Traffic Services (MCTS) officers. Graduates can work in any of the CCG’s 12 MCTS centres across Canada, including Iqaluit.





Conclusion

The publication of the Canadian Coast Guard Arctic Strategy is a significant milestone following the creation of the DFO and CCG Arctic Regions in 2018. It demonstrates the commitment to issues of national importance in the North, including reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, climate resilience, marine safety and security, a thriving economy, and sovereignty.

The Arctic Strategy articulates the CCG's critical role at the forefront of responding to challenges and opportunities in the Arctic over the next decade. Looking ahead, a strong vision for reconciliation, collaboration and cooperation, a culture of innovation, and a diverse and equitable workforce will position us to advance our priorities, and those of our partners, into a dynamic future.

The CCG is committed to building a culture in which Indigenous considerations and perspectives are integral to our decision-making processes, and to the meaningful reflection of Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing within our programs and services. The Arctic Strategy is a product of engagement, particularly with Inuit, First Nations, and Métis governments, communities and organizations, and Northern priorities are reflected in our shared goals. Engagement has shaped this document along every step of its development and will continue to be a crucial part of our approach to delivering the CCG's mandate in the Arctic over the next decade.

Realizing the Arctic Strategy's vision and keeping it evergreen will require concerted and sustained effort over the coming years. The CCG looks forward to working in collaboration with our partners to achieve this vision in the North, by the North, and for the North.

APPENDIX A: Sources Consulted

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#)

[Arctic and Northern Policy Framework](#)

[Inuit Nunangat Policy](#)

[Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report](#)

[Many Voices One Mind: a Pathway to Reconciliation](#)

[Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service](#)

[Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)

[Oceans Protection Plan: What We Heard \(2020\)](#)

Arctic Maritime Security Strategy

[United States Coast Guard Arctic Strategy](#)

Inuit, First Nations, and Métis organizations and governments

Other Federal departments and agencies

Industry stakeholders

Territorial governments

Academia

International partners

APPENDIX B: Land Claim and Self-government Agreements

Inuvialuit Final Agreement

Nunavut Land Claims Agreement

Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement

Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement

Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement

Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement

Tłı̨chǫ Agreement

Déljı̨ Final Self Government Agreement

Eeyou Marine Region Land Claims Agreement

James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement

Manitoba Métis Federation's Self-Government Recognition and Implementation Agreement

Northwest Territories Métis Nation's Agreement-in-Principle





Canadian Coast Guard Arctic Strategy

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, 2024

Cat. No. Fs154-55/2024E-PDF

ISBN 978-0-660-71348-9

Correct citation for this document:

Canadian Coast Guard. 2024. Canadian Coast Guard Arctic Strategy. 28 p.

For information regarding reproduction rights, please contact:

Publications.XNCR@dfo-mpo.gc.ca and DFO.Library-Bibliotheque.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca.

