

Royal Canadian Navy



Marine royale canadienne

National Defence  
Headquarters  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2H 8G1

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la Défense nationale  
Ottawa (Ontario)  
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Date in e-signature.

Distribution List

**LETTER OF INTENT BETWEEN THE  
ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY AND THE  
CANADIAN NAVAL MEMORIAL TRUST**

**1. Introduction**

- a. This Letter of Intent is intended to recognize the shared interest the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust (CNMT) have with respect to His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Sackville*;
- b. This Letter of Intent seeks to articulate and recognize HMCS *Sackville*'s importance to Canada's national character and the RCN; and
- c. Through this Letter of Intent, the RCN and the CNMT ("the Participants") recognize their past and the present relationship through their connection with HMCS *Sackville*, and the Participants express their willingness to continue that relationship into the future.

**2. Background and Rationale to the Participants' Relationship**

- a. In 1983, after Canadian Forces Auxiliary Vessel (CFAV) *Sackville* was declared surplus to the needs of the RCN, the asset was transferred to the Canadian Naval Corvette Trust (CNCT), founded through the initiative of a group of Second World War Veterans supported by the Navel Officers Association of Canada (NOAC) and the Chiefs' and Petty Officers' Association. At the time, a commitment was made by the RCN to provide ongoing maintenance support HMCS *Sackville*. The intention of the Participants was to ensure that HMCS *Sackville* would remain available in perpetuity as a living artifact of the Battle of the Atlantic period. On April 26<sup>th</sup>, 1985, The Honourable George Hees, relayed in writing the following message: "As Minister of Veteran's Affairs, and on behalf of the Government of Canada I have the honour to extend

greetings to those in attendance at this dedication ceremony of HMCS *Sackville*. I have been aware over some time of the great deal of time and effort on this most excellent project, which will be recognized throughout Canada as a symbol of our country's naval heritage. HMCS *Sackville* is a representation of the dedication and sacrifice of those who served in a very important era in Canadian maritime history. In view of the fact that all major organizations representing former and present Canadian Naval personnel have requested it, HMCS *Sackville* is hereby accorded official recognition by the Government of Canada as the Canadian Naval Memorial." Subsequently, the name of the CNCT was changed to the CNMT;

- b. The Battle of the Atlantic, the longest single campaign of the Second World War, started with a vengeance on the first day of the war with a U-Boat sinking of the liner *Athenia* and lasted beyond the end of Victory in Europe Day. The RCN entered the battle with very few ships and trained personnel. Over the course of the war, the RCN expanded dramatically, including 123 corvettes built in Canadian shipyards located across the country. The corvettes became the heart of the working RCN and were primarily used for convoy escort. Canadians from all regions of the nation crewed these ships, rapidly growing experience, and professionalism at sea in combat. Later in the war, Canada held command of the Canadian Northwest Atlantic area, the only Allied Theatre Command held by Canada in the Second World War. Convoys were the principal manifestation of the Battle of the Atlantic as naval ships fought against U-Boats while escorting the Merchant Navy, which was carrying goods, raw materials, equipment, and personnel from North America to contribute to the war effort in Europe;
- c. HMCS *Sackville* is one of these corvettes, built in Canada for Canadians and the RCN. As an asset, it is the physical manifestation of a nation's will and it represents far more than an artifact from the Second World War. In fact, it represents the industrial, political, economic, military, and naval coming of age of Canada; setting the course for future development, how Canadians would see themselves post the Second World War, and how the RCN would factor into that vision;
- d. The Battle of Atlantic was a major component of the Second World War and a formidable event that spurred on the development of a unique Canadian naval culture. It started the transformation of the fledging RCN into becoming a globally deployed, internationally sustained, maritime force that engaged as an equal in this global struggle; a struggle that transformed the economic, industrial and political will of the nation into a country with its own international agenda and aspirations;
- e. The physical manifestation of this collective will focus, within the maritime domain, upon the creation of useful, maneuverable ships that could be mass-produced and provide rapid and meaningful support to the allied effort. These corvettes played a defensive role in protecting the convoys while spurring the need to create

larger, faster, and more heavily armed ships like the destroyer HMCS *Haida* to play a complementary but more offensive role—whether leading convoys, hunting enemy ships and subs, or clearing the way for the D-Day landings. HMCS *Haida* continued in service through the Korean War. This development of new ship classes has continued apace with Canada's participation in global affairs and commitment to a rules-based world order;

- f. It should be recognized in maritime affairs, and specifically in the history of the RCN, that this development started with the building of corvettes. HMCS *Sackville* is the last of these smaller-sized ships that did so much; the last tangible piece that remains of the physical manifestation of the nation's collective will. In essence, HMCS *Sackville* represents the start of the coming of age of the RCN as a capable naval force and of the independent arrival of the nation on the international stage; and
- g. The relationship between the Participants, not only reflects their past but represents the promise of their future. Through the Participants' relationship, HMCS *Sackville* will embody the essence of the RCN, simultaneously reminding Canadians of humble roots and of the ambition to maintain constant vigilance in a dangerous world still highly dependent on the peaceful use of the oceans.

### 3. Basis for the Participants' Relationship

- a. The Participants recognize that HMCS *Sackville* has loyally and faithfully discharged its duties since its commissioning in 1941;
- b. The Participants recognize that HMCS *Sackville* is identified throughout Canada as a symbol of Canada's naval heritage and accorded officially; recognition by the Government of Canada as the Canadian Naval Memorial and a National Historic Site;
- c. The Participants recognize that the history of HMCS *Sackville* and its story serve as a pivotal means to educate the public and members of the RCN about Canadian naval history; and
- d. The Participants recognize that HMCS *Sackville* embodies the amazing achievements of the totality of a nation's will within the maritime domain.

### 4. Intent of the Participants

- a. The Participants confirm that they have a shared interest in the HMCS *Sackville*, and the Participants express their intent in maintaining and developing their relationship to achieve that shared interest;

- b. The Participants recognize the relationship that currently exists between them as a result of the *Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust*, signed 01 November 1988, and bearing DND identification #1988110994 (1988 MOU);
- c. The Participants intend to maintain and strengthen their relationship by exploring ways to enhance their shared interest in conserving HMCS *Sackville* and promoting the ship's place in Canada's history, including through the following potential endeavours:
  - i. The RCN providing annual engineering support to CNMT for CNMT's use to maintain and improve the HMCS *Sackville's* material fitness in accordance with the *Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of National Defence and the Department of Canadian Heritage concerning the Conservation of the HMCS Sackville*, signed on 03 August 2018, and bearing DND Identification #2018050002 (2018 MOU);
  - ii. The RCN providing non-monetary support as identified by the CNMT to maintain the educational and visitor experience on HMCS *Sackville*;
  - iii. The CNMT developing a strategic plan to educate the public and RCN on the proud and rich heritage of the RCN and its future, and the RCN including HMCS *Sackville* and its story in heritage education within the RCN
  - iv. The RCN ceremonially commissioning HMCS *Sackville* to raise awareness of its connection to the RCN and encourage support of its preservation;
  - v. Develop the connection between the RCN and HMCS *Sackville* through Commander Maritime Forces Atlantic, and administered by the Commanding Officer Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Scott;
  - vi. The Kings's Harbour Master (KHM) providing services for the movement of HMCS *Sackville* within harbour limits;
  - vii. The RCN providing access to the syncrolift for the purpose of inspecting and maintaining the integrity of HMCS *Sackville's* hull; and,
  - viii. The RCN providing winter berthing support to HMCS *Sackville*.

d. The Participants recognize that nothing in this Letter of Intent is legally binding and places no legal obligation on the Participants.

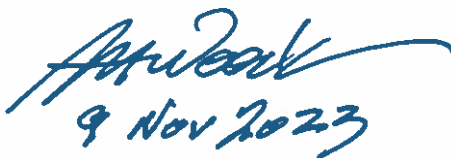
5. Signatures

Signed and dated by:

TOPSHEE,  
ANGUS 406

Digitally signed by  
TOPSHEE, ANGUS 406  
Date: 2023.11.06  
14:46:47 -05'00'

Angus Topshee  
Vice-Admiral  
Commander Royal Canadian Navy



W.A. Woodburn  
9 Nov 2023

W.A. Woodburn  
Captain(N) (ret'd)  
Chair Canadian Naval Memorial Trust

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