

Maritime Studies

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Canadian Maritime Security: From the Navy on Patrol to the Police on the Beat

Tim Lynch*

When we approach any port authority property on land we are confronted with steel fencing or some other security perimeter until we reach the gates that permit access. These gates are guarded 24/7, either manually or electronically and dock access is controlled. Private firms provide security within strict legal limits on dock premises. These precautions provide security on and around port property. Managing security at dockside and along the rest of the Canadian shoreline in our post 9/11 world is being recognised as equally important in protecting Canadian interests.

The security challenges facing Canada's shoreline and port facilities were discussed at a conference on Maritime Security organised by Canadian Maritime Forces Pacific in Victoria, British Columbia, in September 2006. Close to 200 military and civilian security experts from 18 countries gathered to discuss the security challenges facing the Indo-Pacific region. Canadian government departments participating in the conference included the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Ministry of Transport, Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) and Canadian Coast Guard with Vancouver and Victoria Police Departments representing 'the police on the beat.'

Asian Dynamism and Maritime Security

Rear-Admiral Roger Girouard, Commander Maritime Forces Pacific, in his keynote speech, described a new Asian dynamism arising from globalisation, trade liberalisation, and Asian economic growth. Focusing on the influence of China he noted that the six fastest growing ports in the world are in China making it the world's largest container market. He compared

Shanghai's port handling of 1.78 million standard 20-foot containers (TEUs) in the month of April 2006 with Vancouver, Canada's busiest port, handling 1.7 million TEUs in all of 2005. New shipyards in the Bohai Gulf, Shanghai, and Southern China are scheduled to triple China's capacity, putting China on course to become the world's biggest shipbuilder by 2015. He noted that 10,000 TEU container ships are on the slipways now with proposed building of a 13,440 TEU ship in South Korea. With this industrial development in the Indo-Pacific region the demand for Liquefied Natural Gas is expected to surge by 40 per cent by 2010 and a further 43 per cent to 197 million tons per year by 2015. Rear-Admiral Girouard also stressed that more submarines are in service or are being built in the region than anywhere else on earth.

Against this background Girouard stated 'the region is fraught with problems: piracy, maritime terrorism, trans-national maritime crime, illegal fishing, natural disasters, the potential for and reality of conflict at sea, and offshore disputes. These problems, set within a context of rising nationalism, have made the Indo Pacific maritime environment increasingly brittle.' The role of regional navies in humanitarian rescue operations and the policing of illegal fishing disputes were discussed at workshops. The 'brittle' nature of security in the region became apparent from discussions around the offshore threats to Canadian values and property.

Identifying the Threats

As speakers from throughout the region made clear, maritime security threats in the Indo-Pacific region arise from many sources:

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- ***Human smuggling and trafficking***

In a session on Transnational Maritime Crime John McFarlane, Australian Defence Force Academy, University of New South Wales, reported that human smuggling and trafficking nets between US\$7-12 billion per year in terms of the movement of people across borders. Organised crime profits from people smuggled or trafficked each year, subjected to forced labour to repay the people smugglers, and the annual earnings of women and children forced into sexual servitude is closer to \$32 billion. LCDR Mark Everson, US Navy, talked about challenges of combating illicit trafficking and Lt John Bradford, Director, Indo-Pacific Maritime Security Network, US Navy, discussed trends and challenges associated with piracy and hijacking in Southeast Asian waters.

- ***Energy security***

The increasing demand for energy was identified as a critical contributor towards assuring national security. Exploring the maritime dimensions of global energy competition Arjuna Mahendran, Credit Suisse, Singapore, showed how Asian firms and consumers are reshaping the global economy. Discussing energy security for the Asian region in 2020 and beyond Admiral Rakesh Chopra, Indian Navy, defined energy security as

safeguarding national interests that are influenced, directly or indirectly, by considerations linked with the availability of energy, which in turn influences national development processes to ensure sustainability of economic growth over the long-term.

Dr Guo Shuyong, Shanghai Jiaotong University, China, gave a presentation entitled China's Energy Strategy: Restricting Factors and Possible Choices.

- ***Port Security***

Noting that 80 per cent of world trade passed through the world's approximately 4000 ports Harun Hj. Johari, Port of Tanjung Pelapas, Malaysia cautioned,

as ports become bigger they become targets for terrorists, or of being used by terrorists as an entry or exit point for smuggling arms,

weapons of mass destruction, terrorist operatives and other materials.

Don Krusel, Prince Rupert Port Authority BC, described how, from a national security perspective, Prince Rupert offers the potential for 100 per cent screening of in-bound containers; its remote location is not a terrorist target relative to more urban ports along the Pacific coastline; 100 per cent inter-modal [rail-to-ship/ship-to-rail] traffic flows through a sparsely populated region; and one terminal/one mode [rail]/one rail give Prince Rupert Port a competitive security advantage and make it North America's new Pacific Gateway.

Territorial claims

Ambassador Dr Hasjim Djalal, Advisor to the Indonesian Naval Chief of Staff gave a dramatic account of managing conflict among countries surrounding the South China Sea. He emphasised the need to respect the interpretation of territorial claims by individual countries in order to achieve a working level of informal dialogue. His description of multiple territorial claims to islands as well as national jurisdictions in the region sounded somewhat distant in terms of being of concern to Canada until Senator Bill Romkey (Labrador) questioned Canada's management of the North West Passage. In subsequent discussions on this matter it was acknowledged that Canada might be facing challenges around right of way and mineral rights in that region. With nations like America, Russia, Denmark, Norway and China claiming rights of passage, and possibly mineral exploration rights in the North West Passage, all of a sudden Canada became subject to potential national territorial dispute, not unlike those prevailing in the South China Sea.

Terrorism

Dr Michael Intriligator, University of California, Los Angeles, provided an economic analysis for addressing the challenges of fighting terrorism. Stressing the importance of knowing the enemy he stated

The source of terrorism is probably not poverty and ignorance, as is often alleged, but rather humiliation leading to rage and retribution.

He illustrated such rage by referring to the French football player who 'head butted' the Italian player in the recent World Cup. Noting that we all have a breaking point, he commented that humiliating comments made by the Italian player caused such a response. He also pointed out that the terrorists of 9/11 were neither poor nor uneducated but middle class and well-educated. By way of illustrating the pending terrorist threat he quoted Al Qaeda spokesman Suleiman, Abu Gheith, referring to an accounting of the number of Muslims the U.S. or its allies have killed, having said, 'We have the right to kill 4 million Americans – 2 million of them children.' Under this cloud of potential catastrophe Intriligator provided an economic model based on antiterrorists and terrorists, each party's need for a steady supply of resources and their relative interpretation of risk that a planned terrorist attack will successfully happen.

Canada's Land/Sea Security Interface

From listening to speakers at the workshop it became apparent that there are many subversive elements out at sea that would do harm to Canadian values and property given an opportunity. This line of inquiry caused me to assess the relationship between security forces on land and security forces at sea. This relationship is currently in a state of renewal with new alliances being formed to accommodate old structures. In addition there are new international agreements around ship and port security that Canada has to meet.

International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code)

Maritime security is an integral part of the United Nations' International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) responsibilities. A comprehensive security regime for international shipping entered into force on 1 July 2004. The mandatory security measures, adopted in December 2002, include a number of amendments to the 1974 *Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention*, the most far-reaching of which enshrines the new *International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code*. This document contains detailed security-related requirements for Governments, port authorities

and shipping companies in a mandatory section (Part A), together with a series of guidelines about how to meet these requirements in a second, non-mandatory section (Part B). Canada is a signatory of the *ISPS Code*.

The Maritime Security Operations Centre (MSOC)

Maritime Security Operations Centres (MSOCs) are the new organisation entities for managing maritime security in Canada. Under the leadership of the Department of National Defense MSOCs were established in the Atlantic, Great Lakes and Pacific regions in March 2005. The Pacific MSOC is located at CFB Esquimalt. Personnel from Maritime Command, RCMP, Canadian Coast Guard, CBSA and Transport Canada staff the MSOC.

The primary objectives of the MSOC structure are inter-operability among personnel and fusion of all data sources. Transport Canada has lead responsibility for marine safety and security policy coordination and regulation. MSOCs operate through a unified command structure. Each department conducts surveillance to gather information to fulfil their unique departmental needs, as well as sharing information with each other when the need arises, in accordance with respective legislative requirements for client confidentiality.

The MSOC works on terrorism and law enforcement scenarios in close liaison with the US Coast Guard. These scenarios test coastal surveillance with the intention of enhancing communications. The MSOC is the focal point for the collection, analysis, fusion and exchange of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance information. The mission of a MSOC is to provide an intelligence function in maritime security by generating one unified and comprehensive recognised maritime picture.

Canadian Forces Maritime ships patrolling the 200 nautical miles offshore limit can intercept and board shipping as part of their Canadian territorial defence role, if they sense the need to do so. The RCMP, or local police force like Vancouver Police Department Marine Squad, provides more of a law enforcement function within the 12-mile offshore limit when necessary. If the MSOC identifies a ship as

being under suspicion, possibly arising from information gathered at port of departure, the decision has to be made to board the ship prior to it docking, or wait for it to dock.

The ultimate scenario from a security perspective is that some marine vessel will be steered alongside a cruise or cargo ship, into Vancouver Port, or some similar location, with a high explosive device or a 'dirty bomb' on board. Ideally the goal is to be forewarned about such an incident from intelligence gathering and to restrict movement accordingly. Aside from being prepared to manage such terrorism scenarios, plans have to be in place for dealing with suspicious vessels that are not in compliance with Canadian regulations, or may be trafficking in people, smuggling drugs, etc. The new unified command structure within the MSOC is expected to facilitate such decision-making efficiently and effectively.

The National Risk Assessment Centre (NRAC)

The National Risk Assessment Centre (NRAC), within the CBSA, is another new security resource established in January 2004. NRAC, which operates 24/7, serves as an interface between intelligence agencies at the international, national, and local levels. The Centre uses sophisticated intelligence-gathering techniques and technology and shares its intelligence with law enforcement partners and field officers across Canada. This information is used to stop entry of high-risk people, illegal contraband, drugs and weapons into Canada. In support of maritime security, the NRAC works closely with MSOCs.

Security at the Port of Vancouver

At the local 'police on the beat' level of security, the Vancouver Harbour Watch Program is made up of public and private volunteer interests including Vancouver Police Department (VPD) Marine Squad, Canadian Coast Guard, CBSA, Vancouver Port Authority (VPA), BC Pilots, Seabus, Seaspan, Coast Mountain, etc. The program provides a platform for collating information about unusual or suspicious happenings that may be observed by a stakeholder member. BC marine pilots who

are the first Canadian representatives to step foot on any foreign vessel coming into port are an integral part of this program. (See *Piloting: A symphony of motion*, **Mariner Life**, Oct. 2006) They, along with other program stakeholders, have a detailed understanding of how the ports operate and when things are not 'normal'. The program serves as a frontline intelligence resource and is organised through the RCMP's Waterfront Enforcement Operation Office at Vancouver Port.

With a \$12.8 million investment the Vancouver Port Authority (VPA) is committed to going above and beyond the ISPS requirements in ensuring maximum security of the perimeter around its territorial responsibilities. The Authority is achieving this goal through absolute control of its gates and doorways. All access points are continuously monitored using digital cameras and any attempt at tampering with them results in security personnel being dispatched in seconds. The perimeter of the Port is monitored through state-of-the-art digital telescopic cameras and software that can scan details of vehicles and individuals behaving in a manner that is out of the ordinary and follow them around the property. Cargo and passengers have to go through stringent security procedures prior to boarding any ship at the Port. VPA is able to profile all ships in dock and it shares information and intelligence with its security partners. Clearly the vision of VPA is to see Vancouver Port being the most secure facility of its kind in the world.

Some concern was expressed during interviews about a 'Big Brother' ethos around port property through the use of digital telescopic cameras monitoring the behaviour of all marine personnel, visitors and the public. Perhaps, in our post 9/11 world, this technology is just expanding the traditional role of 'the police on the beat.'

Enforcement and Education

In researching this article, the armed policing role of the American Coast Guard was frequently compared with the Canadian Coast Guard, which does not 'guard' Canada but provides a search and rescue service among other duties. These conversations were held

against the public debate around CBSA personnel deserting their post at the Peace Arch border crossing in response to a police incident in California and the ensuing debate about CBSA personnel needing to be armed. Border Service personnel, traditionally called customs and immigration officers, currently function as Peace Officers, having the authority to arrest suspicious individuals at port of entry and relying on the RCMP for law enforcement backup. Canada's newly elected federal government has initiated programs for training CBSA personnel in the use of firearms. It is not clear at present if such a function will serve only a self-defence role, or if CBSA personnel will be expected to engage in Law Enforcement duties. Currently, if a law enforcement concern exists prior to a ship docking, the RCMP accompanies Border Service or Transport Canada personnel in conducting their regulatory duties.

Clearly maritime security requires an armed law enforcement capability to uphold compliance with Canadian law. The American Coast Guard model, with its other different levels of armed personnel evident around port properties in the US, was generally regarded as an excessive way for Canada to allocate public funds, aside from differences in gun cultures between the two countries. The need for a new service with armed personnel was questioned relative to

allowing existing law enforcement capability to evolve to meet identified needs.

Lack of anti-terrorism education was identified as an obstacle in developing a professional strategy. Acknowledging the McKenzie Institute, Toronto, as such an educational resource, Jamie Gibson of the VPD Marine Squad, said,

Public apathy towards security is a problem. Canadians don't think it can happen here. There is a reluctance to accept that we are on the terrorist's list.

Postscript: Subsequent to the original publication of this article it has been learnt that security studies are being promoted in Canada under the auspices of the Canadian Association for Security and Intelligence Studies (CASIA), <http://www.casis.ca/>.

Websites:

Canadian Maritime Forces <http://www.navy.forces.gc.ca>

Canada Border Services Agency <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca>

Transport Canada <http://www.tc.gc.ca/MarineSecurity/Strategic/mandate.html>

International Maritime Organization security <http://www.imo.org>

The Mackenzie Institute <http://www.mackenzieinstitute.com>

