



Newsletter – March 2026

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Important Announcement:

End of CIAS Project Term

The development term and funding from CanNor for Canadian Institute for Arctic Security project expires on March 31, 2026.

Accordingly, as of April 1, 2026, the CIAS will no longer be a part of the Government of Yukon.

The CIAS Project Lead – Andrew Smith – will return to a substantive position in Government of Yukon – Intergovernmental Relations.

The CIAS may in the future establish itself as an independent entity. Should that take place, CIAS will be a separate organization and will not have any structural connection to the Government of Yukon.

From the Project Lead

Colleagues -

Today's newsletter profiles the activities over the final months of the CIAS project term.

The biggest highlight and the culmination of the CIAS' public facing work was the incredible delivery of Arctic Summit 2026 with partners from the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce. With a sell out crowd of over 400 attendees, and more than 50 presentations, panels and discussion sessions spread across three venues, the planning team feels that the goal of connecting the business and security worlds is achieved. We all hope that the connections at Summit bear much fruit and positive relationships in the near and long term. Thank you to all who joined us in Whitehorse.

The Canadian Institute for Arctic Security has reached the end of its project development and funding term. The mission to build the structures and credibility of the CIAS over the last year and a half has been successful: we've been able to identify the viable path forward for an independent CIAS, and along the way have demonstrated the ways in which the CIAS can build knowledge and connections on Arctic security issues. The future of the CIAS is now in the hands of those willing to build it as Canada's truly independent security knowledge source based in the Canadian North.

It's been an incredible ride. There has been a lot of work in the background that will give a future iteration of the CIAS strong foundations to build on. Thanks to all who have engaged with the CIAS over the project term, and who have invited the CIAS in to share knowledge and connections. The North is stronger because of all our contributions. We are better positioned to collectively understand how to deliver the security and defence commitments for a sovereign and prosperous North.

-Andrew

Arctic Summit 2026



(L-R) Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, MP Rob Oliphant; Gen. (Ret) Wayne Eyre; President of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Candace Laing (Photos: CIAS)

Incredible attendance from across Canada's North, visitors from the South, and global guests made Arctic Summit the success that it was. From February 23-25, the Canadian Institute for Arctic Security and the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce assembled the North, in the North.

Knowledgeable and impactful keynote speakers kicked off day 1 – giving the necessary baseline of the national and global business and security landscapes: from Canada's pivot to diversified trade partners, to the geopolitical climate of our times. The conference then focused in on the North – what do we need, and how are we seeking to achieve it.



(L-R) Eric Bertram, Global Affairs Canada; Arj Grewal, Arctic Training Centre; Council of Yukon First Nations Grand Chief Math'ieya Alatini; Dr. Christopher Sands (Photos: CIAS)

Day 2 saw deeper exploration of US relations, and how Canada is building its defence industry. CIAS brought important presentations on the various threat vectors to the North and made the important connections across sectors that enable clear communication as we build a secure North. The Arctic Expo gave the public an opportunity to see new technologies that are being proven in the Canadian North and will be used to increase presence, decrease environmental impacts, and gather the data that keeps us aware and informed.

On the final day, discussions on research and academia spoke to homegrown workforce development, and the international partnerships that build social and scientific knowledge. The CIAS Conference ONE program culminated with discussion with NATO allies on where they see their role in protecting the Arctic, alongside Canada and other Arctic nations.

Not to mention the receptions, lunches and dinners, and bus rides that made for incidental meetings and networking.



(L-R) Yukon University faculty, staff and alumni; Consul General for France Raphael Dang, Consul General for Germany Marc Eichhorn, Dr. Ken Coates; Zachary Zimmermann, Trent University (Photos: CIAS)

Many thanks to the organizing team, our sponsors, venue staff and the small businesses that helped put the event on. It was because of these great people that our guests were able to fully engage in the spirit of the conference – securing sovereignty and investment.

Review the Arctic Summit agenda: [Link](#).

Review the Arctic Summit speakers: [Link](#).

March 12 Federal Announcement

An ambitious new plan to defend, build and transform the North

From Yellowknife, Prime Minister Carney unveiled new details on NORAD modernization that will see significant investment in the three northern Forward Operating Locations (Iqaluit, Yellowknife and Inuvik) and the Deployed Operating Base in Goose Bay. Each location can expect a build out of infrastructure and improvements to existing facilities, including airfields, ammunition storage, accommodations and connectivity.



Prime Minister Mark Carney announces \$35B for defence and infrastructure in Canada's North with Canadian Armed Forces members in Yellowknife, NWT on March 12, 2026 (Photo: CBC)

The announcement also included that Whitehorse and Resolute will each see a Northern Operational Support Hub (NOSH). The Northern Operational Support Nodes (NOSN) facilities in Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet, giving northern operational sustainment and reach to the Canadian Armed Forces.

The announcement also included information on other existing and new funding streams that will increase air and land transportation links throughout the North.

Finally, the Major Projects Office is now tasked with four new Northern projects, in addition to the Northwest Critical Conservation Corridor which has future opportunity for connecting the Yukon and Northern BC electricity grid, supporting new critical minerals opportunities in the west.

PM News Release: [Link](#).

Background: [Link](#).

Research Papers

The project term research reports are now posted on the CIAS webpage. Both Chris O'Brien and Zach Zimmermann were able to present on their research at Conference ONE during Arctic Summit.

- **Safeguarding Democracy in the Arctic and North: Foreign Interference, Disinformation, and Electoral Resilience in Canada's Arctic (Eadre Consulting/Polar Coordinates)** [Link](#)

Abstract: A paper on foreign interference in elections, specifically for elections in territories and Indigenous governments. Authors were connected by CIAS with security, intelligence, and foreign affairs contacts to contribute to the report. They examined federal and territorial reports on foreign interference in elections and expanded their scope to cover information manipulation and media literacy.

- **Too Much Geography? Evaluating the Locations of Canadian Armed Forces Infrastructure in the North and Arctic.** (Zachary Zimmermann, Trent University) [Link](#)

Abstract: The paper evaluates the capabilities of the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Royal Canadian Navy in Northern and Arctic operations. It describes the operational limits (coverage to reach all locations in the Arctic by plane and boat) and the requirements for operational sustainment and dwell time in remote locations. It offers recommendations on where CAF investment is best used to develop supporting/enabling terrestrial infrastructure in the Canadian North, to gain full geographic coverage and reduce response times.

Zach did a follow-up interview on his research with CBC Yukon during Arctic Summit: [Link](#)

Other Activities

Arctic Security Working Group Annual Meeting

November 5-6, 2025 – Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

- Presented by Joint Task Force North.
- Online participation. Provided update on CIAS activities.

Northern Maritime Security: Threats In, To and Through the Arctic and North Atlantic

November 25, 2025 – Ottawa, Ontario

- Presented by the Canadian Maritime Security Network, North American and Arctic Defence and Security Network, Embassy of Denmark in Canada, and the Government of Greenland.
- In-person participation with national and north Atlantic delegates.

Hybrid Threats in the Arctic Workshop

November 26, 2025 – Ottawa, Ontario

- Presented by the North American and Arctic Security and Defence Network.
- In-person participation with Canadian and allied security experts and practitioners.

Early-Career Pubinar: NATO, the Arctic, and the Future

November 26, 2025

- Presented by the North American and Arctic Security and Defence Network Emerging Leaders Node and the NATO Association of Canada.
- In-person participation with emerging scholars and leaders in Arctic and transatlantic security and defence.

Canada-North Pacific Arctic Workshop: Navigating Emerging Geopolitical Dynamics in the Canadian Arctic and North Pacific

January 19-20, 2026 – Vancouver, British Columbia

- Presented by the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada.
- In-person participation with national and Pacific academics, diplomats and security practitioners.

Panel on Arctic Security & Resilience with the Nordic Ambassadors to Canada

March 9, 2026 – Whitehorse, Yukon

- Presented by the Nordic Embassies to Canada, Canadian International Council - Yukon Chapter and Canadian Institute for Arctic Security.
- Public panel with Nordic Ambassadors to Canada.
- Presented during the 2026 Arctic Games.

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