

**Journal of Military and Strategic Studies 2025 Award of  
Excellence<sup>1</sup>**

*Manageable Mandate or Mission Creep?  
The Canadian Armed Forces Assistance to Law Enforcement  
Agencies*

David Sopotyk\*

---

<sup>1</sup> Awarded third place.

\* David Sopotyk, MA graduate from the University of Manitoba, Student Fellow at the Centre for Defence and Security Studies.

In most Western democracies, there are many agencies that are responsible for the security of the state, protection of critical infrastructure and the safety of civilians, but usually there are very few agencies that can enforce national laws, including the collection of evidence of a breach of law or the authority to detain, inspect cargo or vessels and/or arrest individuals. Authority to enforce laws requires constabulary powers, and those are restricted to law enforcement officers – usually referenced as police. The *Police Services Act of Manitoba* (2009)<sup>2</sup>, for example, outlines clear authorities, duties and responsibilities of the police operating in the province of Manitoba.

Police and military organizations are very different organizations with very different mandates and authorities. They may look artificially similar in that they are both organizations whose members wear uniforms, have weapons and respond to crises and conflicts, but militaries in Western democracies do not have the authority to enforce laws in their states or elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> And yet, there are times when assistance of the military are required by the police because of the military's particular capabilities or because more personnel are needed. This paper examines these instances and in a very particular context: Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) assistance to police and coastguard to seize illegal drugs in the United States as a function of the binational North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD).

In the 1990s, NORAD was in search of new missions. Its core missions: aerospace warning and aerospace control were still important, but both the US and Canadian Air Forces were far less busy given that the main threat to North America, the Soviet Union, was no more. Given that the air forces have planes that can assist in aerial surveillance (which can help to track the movements of suspected drug-carrying vessels- planes or

---

<sup>2</sup> Justice, Manitoba, "The Police Services Act, C.C.S.M. c. P94.5." C.C.S.M. c. P94.5, 3 June 2025. <https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p094-5.php>.

<sup>3</sup> There are exceptions when a select few military personnel are granted officer powers to, for example, detain illegal fishers in territorial or internal waters, but the prosecution and collection of evidence is taken by a police officer. As well, while the CAF does have military police, their jurisdiction is limited to any personnel or guests on military bases and in military buildings (at home or abroad), and to detain and arrest if military infrastructure is damaged. If, for example, a Canadian military member is caught speeding in Winnipeg on city streets, the military police have no jurisdiction. If that same military member is speeding on a base, then the military police do have jurisdiction. This research does not include a study of the CAF military police. See <https://forces.ca/en/career/military-police/>

boats), NORAD was mandated to assist with Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush's War on Drugs. The question becomes: does this implicate the military in law enforcement activity? And is it allowed by Canadian law? More simply, is this legal or mission creep by the CAF that should be of concern to Canada's democracy?

To answer these questions, an analysis of primary and secondary sources is used. The most relevant primary sources are the Canadian National Defence Act (NDA), the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD) agreements, and an analysis of former and ongoing CAF operations involving assistance to law enforcement. Secondary academic literature was selected based on its references and analysis of the CAF's assistance to law enforcement agencies (LEA). NORAD's assistance was chosen as the pinnacle of potential mission creep for the CAF; i.e. using the CAF to assist with law enforcement issues in the United States to support third-party actors in the form of US LEA.

First, this paper begins by outlining the CAF's primary role to defend Canada, followed by an explanation of the CAF's auxiliary roles to assist the civil power (i.e. the Government of Canada) in various circumstances: from insurrection to natural disasters, as well as support to LEA. Then the paper explains the authorities and processes required in order for the CAF to assist. This is followed by an explanation of why the CAF began assisting civilian LEA in an anti-narcotics role. Next is an examination of the United States Armed Forces' entry into drug interdiction. The paper then explains what NORAD is and the explanation of its role in assisting LEA. Finally, the paper concludes with some lessons learned about the CAF's assistance to law enforcement and NORAD. Ultimately, this paper concludes that the CAF's assistance to LEA is not mission creep so long as the authorities and processes in place are respected.

## **The Role of the CAF**

The CAF's chief mandate is to defend Canada from armed attacks by foreign actors.<sup>4</sup> Every defence policy since 1964 has confirmed this primary responsibility.<sup>5</sup> The

---

<sup>4</sup> Department of National Defence, *"Our North, Strong and Free: A Renewed Vision for Canada's Defence"* Minister of National Defence William Blair, (Ottawa, Ontario, Government of Canada 2024), Eight core missions; p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. *"White Paper on Defence"* Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 March 1964. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/429769/publication.html>;

authorities to allow CAF members to use deadly force in such situations are outlined in the National Defence Act.<sup>6</sup> The CAF have also been called on to assist allies, NATO and the United Nations to contribute to international peace and stability.

But there are times when the CAF may be asked by the Government of Canada (the civil power) to aid them in cases of an armed insurrection or riots (Part VI of the NDA), which may require the use of force. In such cases, action by the CAF falls under the Emergency Measures Act (formerly the War Measures Act) and assumes the use of force to quell wide-scale civil disobedience.<sup>7</sup> Such action is technically called “aid to the civil power” and has a different mandate and mission from requests for federal assistance in natural disasters (which fall under a large umbrella term, *Operation Lentus*<sup>8</sup>) or for LEA.

---

Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada, “*Defence in the 70s: White Paper on Defence.*” Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 April 1971. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/429769/publication.html>; Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. “*Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada.*” Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 April 1987. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/429765/publication.html>; Department of National Defence. “1994 White Paper on Defence.” Publications.gc.ca, 1994. [https://www.publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2012/dn-nd/D3-6-1994-eng.pdf](https://www.publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2012/dn-nd/D3-6-1994-eng.pdf); Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. “*A Role of Pride and Influence in the World - Defence: Canada’s International Policy Statement: D2-168/2005.*” Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 April 2005. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.666377/publication.html>; Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. “*Canada First Defence Strategy.*” Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, April 3, 2008. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/370141/publication.html>; Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. “*Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada’s Defence Policy.*” Strong, secure, engaged: Canada’s defence policy.: D2-386/2017E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, April 3, 2017. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.835971/publication.html>; Department of National Defence, “*Our North, Strong and Free: A Renewed Vision for Canada’s Defence*” Minister of National Defence William Blair, (Ottawa, Ontario, Government of Canada 2024).

<sup>6</sup> National Defence Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. N-5, s. 130, “*The National Defence Act.*” Department of National Defence 1985, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/ACTS/N-5/index.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Emergencies Act R.S.C., 1985, c. 22 (4th Supp.) “*The Emergencies Act.*” 31 July 2025. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-4.5/index.html>; National Defence Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. N-5, s. 130, “*The National Defence Act.*” Department of National Defence 1985, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/ACTS/N-5/index.html>, Part VI Aid of the Civil power: Riot or disturbance, p. 275.

<sup>8</sup> Operation LENTUS is the umbrella term used for any RFAs for CAF assistance to provincial, territorial or municipal governments during a natural disaster. The CAF’s assistance under Operation LENTUS has ranged from transporting and distributing clean drinking water to the evacuation of entire communities under threat from wildfires. See Defence, National. “*Operation LENTUS.*” Canada.ca, 14 July 2025.

This paper examines requests not involving force, which are formally called requests for federal assistance (RFA)<sup>9</sup> and the CAF's involvement in these requests for assistance to assist law enforcement agencies in particular.

### **The Role of the CAF in Drug Interdiction Missions**

To understand how Canada's federal government (the civil power) may request the CAF's assistance and how this differs from their primary mandate of national defence it is important to examine the legislation that enables them to conduct these different types of activities. The CAF's primary responsibility is to all matters related to the defence of Canada.<sup>10</sup> This includes defending against threats or attacks on Canada and participating in efforts to deter and defeat adversaries.<sup>11</sup> There are occasions, however, when law enforcement agencies require the capabilities of the CAF. In such cases, as is the case with a request under Op LENTUS for assistance in cases of natural disasters or aid to the civil power (in the case of insurrections), there are very clear sets of authorities and designated civilian actors who determine if CAF assistance is merited and in what form and for how long. In no circumstances may the CAF operate in Canada or abroad (whether to defend the state or assist an ally or allied organization) without the express authorization of the National Command Authority – i.e. the Prime Minister or their designate. Therefore, in all cases of CAF activity and missions, the civil power holds the ultimate authority and responsibility of the CAF.

A determination by the provincial police or federal police (such as the RCMP)<sup>12</sup> for assistance by the CAF to LEA requires many levels of approval. A clear need for help and

---

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-lentus.html>

<sup>9</sup> Canada, Public Safety. "Parliamentary Committee Notes: Requests for Federal Assistance (RFA) Process." Public Safety Canada, 25 March 2024. <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/trnsprnc/brfng-mtrls/prlmntry-bndrs/20240322/15-en.aspx>.

<sup>10</sup> Department of National Defence, *Our North, Strong and Free*, Part I Department of National Defence Establishment of the Department.

<sup>11</sup> Department of National Defence, *Our North, Strong and Free*, "Eight core missions," p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Note, it is highly unlikely local or municipal police would request CAF support except when there are international events such as the Olympics or a G7 meeting but in these occasions, the RCMP are the lead and will make the determination of behalf of municipal agencies.

specific capabilities must be requested for prescribed periods of time. The head of the police or RCMP must request of the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada (the lead for all security-related matters in Canada<sup>13</sup>) for assistance. Once Public Safety Canada has confirmed the legitimacy of the request, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada makes a formal request to the Minister of National Defence requesting CAF assistance to LEA. If the Minister is assured that the assistance is in the national interest and that the matter cannot be effectively dealt with except with the assistance of the CAF, permission will be granted.<sup>14</sup> One of the more common assistance to LEA requests is to assist with anti-narcotics efforts because drug smuggling and the trafficking of drugs into and throughout Canada can be interconnected with other illegal activities like illegal migration and human trafficking, and successive governments have confirmed these activities to be a threat to national security. Given Canada's small federal police force and the size of Canada, assistance is often requested.<sup>15</sup>

### 1. Saying Yes to an Anti-Narcotics Role

Saying *yes* to a drug interdiction role is curious when law enforcement roles normally fall outside the purview of a military command's core mandate. The decision to add an anti-narcotic mandate to the CAF portfolio was not solely to enable LEA to better fulfill their mandates, as the merging of police and military is often met with apprehension because it conjures a slippery slope to military coups and militarization of police. Rather, the growing problems that drugs were causing within society have been

---

<sup>13</sup> The lead used to be the Department of the Solicitor General, but this department was replaced by Public Safety Canada in 2003.

<sup>14</sup> National Defence Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. N-5, s. 130, "*The National Defence Act*." Department of National Defence 1985, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/ACTS/N-5/index.html>, Part V Miscellaneous Provisions Having General Application: Public Service: 273.6 (2).

<sup>15</sup> Loprespub. "*Canada–United States Border Security: Drug Trafficking and Irregular Migration*." HillNotes, 2 June 2025. <https://hillnotes.ca/2025/03/12/canada-united-states-border-security-drug-trafficking-and-irregular-migration/>.

a longstanding concern of the Canadian government, beginning with alcohol, opium and psychedelics in the early 1900s.<sup>16</sup>

The first noted incidence of the RCMP requesting assistance from the CAF began in the 1970s when drug smugglers started becoming bolder in their operations by employing motherships.<sup>17</sup> Drug smugglers travel using a larger vessel that transports drugs from source countries and offloads illegal narcotics onto smaller vessels once they have come close to their destination. To request assistance from the CAF in the form of air and maritime surveillance to counter these illegal operations, the RCMP initially had to fund these activities from their own budget.<sup>18</sup>

The assistance the military provided could vary depending on the operation. In 1978, one case involved the interdiction of the mothership known as "*Toernyn*".<sup>19</sup> The RCMP travelled on board two Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) destroyers so that RCMP officers could conduct the arrests.<sup>20</sup> Essentially, the Royal Canadian Navy was a taxi service. The reason why the RCMP required the CAF's assistance is that they did not always have the resources (including vessels with enough speed and reach) to detect, monitor, and intercept drug smugglers where they would offload illegal narcotics. Moreover, RCMP aircraft were too slow and lacked the equipment to detect smugglers. The formalization of the military's assistance to law enforcement, however, did not come until 1986, when the drug crisis had reached epidemic proportions in Canada.<sup>21</sup>

By 1986, drug abuse rates in Canada (including pharmaceutical drug abuse) had reached an all-time high. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney declared it an epidemic that

---

<sup>16</sup> Canadian Drug Policy Coalition Staff. "*History of Drug Policy in Canada.*" Canadian Drug Policy Coalition, 14 July 2021. <https://drugpolicy.ca/about/history/>.

<sup>17</sup> E Murray, L. "*Maritime Enforcement: The Canadian Federal Government's Marine Fleets and the Navy's Mission.*" *Marine Policy* 18, no. 6 (1994): p. 521–29. doi:10.1016/0308-597X(94)90075-2

<sup>18</sup> Murray, "*Maritime Enforcement,*" p.526.

<sup>19</sup> Murray, "*Maritime Enforcement,*" p 526.

<sup>20</sup> Murray, "*Maritime Enforcement,*" p. 521–29.

<sup>21</sup> Dixie Dysart, "*Committed to Make a Difference: Canada's Role in the Inception of NORAD Counter-drug Operations.*" In *Sic Itur Ad Astra: a: Canadian Aerospace Power Studies: Volume 2: Big Sky, Little Air Force*, edited by W.A. March. Canada: Canadian Forces Aerospace Warfare Centre, 2009: pp. 107-116.

undermined Canada's social and economic fabric.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, by 1987, the illegal drug trade's sales had reached an estimated \$10 billion in Canada, with smugglers having the ability to transport significant amounts of illegal narcotics from South America by air and sea.<sup>23</sup> Following this, the Government of Canada released a five-year drug strategy to tackle the drug abuse crisis, which, among other methods of reduction, aimed at enforcement and control, and international cooperation.<sup>24</sup> But Canada's military had limited capacity to act on its own to support LEA's drug interdiction operations in Canada.

The CAF was formally tasked to take up the role of drug interdiction with the release of the 1986 National Drug Strategy.<sup>25</sup> By 1987, the extent of the CAF's participation became formalized with the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Department of National Defence (DND) and the RCMP. This MOU provided the RCMP with a specific number of ship days and aerial surveillance hours from the DND at no charge. These hours were more of a guideline than a strict measurement, as the MOU also stipulated that DND attempt to fulfill requests that exceeded the allotted time. The stipulation that limited the CAF's frequency of assistance was contingent on what operational commitments would allow, but directed the CAF to pass along intelligence if they witnessed suspicious activity in the conduct of their routine operations.<sup>26</sup> By 1989, to better facilitate communications and to understand the CAF's limitations in relation to their other responsibilities, a CAF liaison officer was posted at the RCMP HQ's Drug Enforcement Directorate, which later increased to three CAF personnel.<sup>27</sup>

This came about as *Operation SABOT* (1989 – 2019) increased the CAF's assistance to law enforcement operations in size and scope. In addition to maritime and air

---

<sup>22</sup> House of Commons Special Committee On Non-Medical Use Of Drugs, "Policy For The New Millennium: Working Together To Redefine Canada's Drug Strategy Report of the Special Committee on Non-Medical Use of Drugs," House of Commons Canada, 2002, <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/372/SNUD/Reports/RP1032296/snudrp01/snudrp01-e.pdf>, Chapter 3: Canada's Drug Strategy.

<sup>23</sup> Nicolas Allarie, "Shelf Life Extended: The Longevity and Continued Relevance of the Binational North American Aerospace Defense Command." MSpace Angular, May 2016. <https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/items/8f09cc2b-346e-4bb2-8396-dd1b7d2ac85f/full>.

<sup>24</sup> Allarie, "Shelf Life Extended," p.73.

<sup>25</sup> Allarie, "Shelf Life Extended," p. 73.

<sup>26</sup> Murray, "Maritime Enforcement," p. 521–29.

<sup>27</sup> Murray, "Maritime Enforcement," p. 521–29.

surveillance, the CAF were also tasked to look for illegal marijuana operations on land as well. Under Operation *SABOT*, the RCAF utilized aircraft and crews to conduct flyovers to identify outdoor illegal marijuana grow operations on behalf of the RCMP, who would conduct all law enforcement actions on the ground. The RCMP's objective with Operation *SABOT* was the eradication of illegal outdoor grow operations in Canada.<sup>28</sup> Operation *SABOT* can be seen not only as a reaction to the growing political concerns about the drug crisis but also as a signal to the United States of the seriousness that Canada was taking in response to the drug crisis.

Although Operation *SABOT* did meet with some success in locating and destroying outdoor grow operations, it employed a *cold hit* technique whereby RCAF crew and aircraft surveilled suspected or likely locations in the hopes of locating illegal marijuana plants.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the operation would alternate coverage locations through Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island.<sup>30</sup> As a result, the operations were predominantly reactive and not proactive because of the random nature of aerial searches. Operation *SABOT* ceased in 2019<sup>31</sup> because of the availability of new geographical information systems that evaluated the potential use of locations through image analysis by analysts from satellites. This allowed the RCMP to identify outdoor grow operations without the use of RCAF aircraft.<sup>32</sup>

The only other anti-narcotic mission conducted by the CAF to assist law enforcement is *Operation CARIBBE*, which began in November 2006.<sup>33</sup> Operation *CARIBBE* is the CAF's contribution to American-led multi-national counter-narcotic

---

<sup>28</sup> Department of National Defence. "Operation *SABOT*." Canada.ca, 6 May 2022. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/recently-completed/operation-sabot.html>.

<sup>29</sup> RCMP "E" Division Drug Enforcement Branch, "TR-03-01 Operation *SABOT* and Illicit Crop Information Management Using Satellite Imagery." Publications.gc.ca, January 2002. [https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2008/ps-sp/PS63-2-2001-3E.pdf](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2008/ps-sp/PS63-2-2001-3E.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> Department of National Defence. "Operation *SABOT*," Canada.ca, 6 May 2022.

<sup>31</sup> Department of National Defence. "Operation *SABOT*," Canada.ca, 6 May 2022.

<sup>32</sup> RCMP "E" Division Drug Enforcement Branch. "TR-03-01 Operation *SABOT* and Illicit Crop Information Management Using Satellite Imagery." Publications.gc.ca, January 2002.

<sup>33</sup> Department of National Defence, "Operation *CARIBBE*." Canada.ca, 17 July 2025.

operations in the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific Ocean. In support of this mission, the CAF contributes a rotational deployment of RCN ships and aircraft to patrol, detect, and monitor drug traffickers. In 2010, the CAF's role was formalized with US Coast Guard (USCG) teams (who have officer powers to detain and arrest in US jurisdictions) to operate from RCN vessels to conduct law enforcement activities following an MOU. This rotational deployment usually consists of RCN vessels such as the *HMCS Harry DeWolf* and CP-140 Aurora aircraft to detect and monitor vessels and aircraft attempting to smuggle narcotics into the United States. RCN vessels also work alongside Colombia and the Dominican Republic to curb drug smuggling.<sup>34</sup>

The CAF's assistance to law enforcement on the seas has some defined limits of action. While LEA conducts arrests, searches, seizures, and general law enforcement activities, the law of the sea governs the CAF's use of force in addition to the International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and Canadian law. This allows the CAF to use force in self-defence only, but the RCN vessels have the speed and reach to interdict vessels intentionally avoiding internal or territorial waters.<sup>35</sup> In other words, the RCN can transport personnel and cargo and ensure the safety of personnel; they do not engage in law enforcement activities.

If the CAF acts outside its mandate in assisting law enforcement, then members are still liable to face charges under the military and the Canadian criminal justice systems. The CAF's assistance to law enforcement remains to provide needed capabilities to LEA to fulfill their mandate, but not to assume the roles of police. Effectively, this gives LEA more capability without having to procure specific assets and allows them a greater reach to areas they would otherwise be unable to surveil, a greater ability to detect, monitor, and interdict drug traffickers on the high seas or remote areas. While the CAF does have its constraints under assistance to LEA, its role remains to provide equipment, transport, and the personnel to operate them.

Given that the CAF have assisted LEA since the 1970s, it made it easier to say *yes* to NORAD in the late 1980s. Thus, when the United States requested that Canada include

---

<sup>34</sup> Department of National Defence, "Operation CARIBBE." Canada.ca, 17 July 2025.

<sup>35</sup> Major B. M. Clute, "The Lawfulness Of Canadian Interdiction Of Stateless Vessels On The High Seas In Counter-Narcotics And Counter-Terrorism Operations," Canadian Forces College, 2014. Chapter II International Law: <https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/259/290/301/286/clute.pdf>.

a binational response utilizing NORAD assets to target illegal drug activity in the continental United States, the Canadian Government was wary (given the international element) but accepted it as an auxiliary role for the command in January 1989.<sup>36</sup>

As outlined in the next section, so concerned was the United States with the influx of drugs, especially from Mexico and South America, that successive Presidents, beginning with Nixon, declared a “war” to achieve their eradication.<sup>37</sup> Given that the United States was Canada’s most important ally and partner in the defence of North America, and that the NORAD Agreements needed to be renewed at least every five years causing political tensions, Canada agreed to NORAD adopting drug interdiction as a role; it was a convenient response to a growing issue in Canada and it would assist and curry favour with the United States.<sup>38</sup>

While Canada and the United States have always had parallel anti-narcotics programs that have involved national military personnel and assets, it is arguably the decision by the United States to characterize illegal drugs as a threat to national security that implicated all military commands, including NORAD, to become involved in anti-drug efforts. Given that NORAD is the front line of defence for North America, it is NORAD’s role in support of LEA that informed later Canadian national efforts like Op CARIBBE and the Canada-US ShipRider program.<sup>39</sup>

## **2. The United States military’s entry into drug interdiction**

By 1987, the United States had come to recognize that the sale of illegal narcotics was contrary to national interests because of the instability it caused to partner countries in the Southern Hemisphere. The concern was the political power the sale of illegal drugs

---

<sup>36</sup> Allarie, “*Shelf Life Extended*,” p. 76.

<sup>37</sup> Ernesto Londoño, “Nixon Started the War on Drugs. Privately, He Said Pot Was ‘Not Particularly Dangerous.’ - The New York Times.” The New York Times, 14 September 2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/14/us/nixon-marijuana-tapes.html>.

<sup>38</sup> Dysart, “*Committed to Make a Difference*,” p. 107-116.

<sup>39</sup> The latter is a program for the Great Lakes to ensure that criminals cannot escape the jurisdiction of police via the Great Lakes to enter Canada or the United States. Shiprider is a Canada-US program that has Canadian and US law enforcement officers on the same ship. Depending on the jurisdiction of an arrest, the appropriate nationally designated police officer takes over the arrest protocol. In later iterations, officers were cross-trained in the other nation’s laws. See <https://rcmp.ca/en/federal-policing/border-integrity/canada-us-shiprider>

gave to guerrilla groups, as drug trafficking allowed for the financing of their operations.<sup>40</sup> The same year that the 1988-1989 National Defense Authorization Act was passed, the National Security Strategy was updated to reflect the increased interest in curbing the illicit drug trade.<sup>41</sup> The United States paid more attention to the link between drug trafficking and the funding of low-intensity conflicts in countries in Latin America. The United States also recognized drug trafficking as a direct means to fund international terrorism. To combat this growing concern around the drug trade, military intelligence collection was needed to subvert trafficking because the military operated outside of the United States, often in neighbouring countries that were the source of the drugs.<sup>42</sup>

President Reagan also tasked other elements of the United States' military to assist LEA and established new task forces to assist and coordinate in the detection and monitoring of drug traffickers along specific approaches. Joint Task Force South (JTFS), established on 22 February 1989, had the mandate to support law enforcement interdiction efforts by conducting detection and monitoring of traffickers in the Caribbean Sea. The JTFS changed its name in 2003 to the Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATFS) and is under US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM).<sup>43</sup> The JIATFS often works with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the United States Navy (USN), the United States Coast Guard (USCG), and the former United States Customs Service (USCS). However, this list is not exhaustive, as the total number of agencies involved in drug interdiction could be as few as 37 and as many as 154.<sup>44</sup>

Joint Task Force agencies are responsible for *day-to-day* operational control of military units working in drug interdiction roles. They do this by providing law

---

<sup>40</sup>President Ronald Reagan, "National Security Strategy of the United States 1987." Historical Office, 1987. <https://history.defense.gov/Historical-Sources/National-Security-Strategy/>.

<sup>41</sup> Reagan, "National Security Strategy, 1987."

<sup>42</sup> Reagan, "National Security Strategy, 1987."

<sup>43</sup>Joint Interagency Task Force South, "JIATFS History." Joint Interagency Task Force South. n.d. <https://www.jiatfs.southcom.mil/About-Us/History/>.

<sup>44</sup>John Ahart, Gerald Stiles, Project Air Force. National Security Strategies Program., Arroyo Center. Strategy and Doctrine Program., United States. Army., United States. Air Force, and Rand Corporation. *The Military's Entry into Air Interdiction of Drug Trafficking from South America*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1991.

enforcement with information about the detection and monitoring of drug smugglers they receive from the US military, including NORAD.<sup>45</sup>

As drug interdiction efforts became more successful at sea, drug traffickers changed their routes and methods of smuggling into the United States. Then, smugglers began flying narcotics to remote areas in northern Mexico to distribute to traffickers on the ground who would then bring them over the border through official ports of entry or by foot. Tracking the planes was something NORAD was equipped to do. NORAD simply needed to include the step of passing along the intelligence to LEA.

### **3. What is NORAD**

NORAD is a binational defence command between Canada and the United States with the primary missions of aerospace warning, control, and maritime warning for North America. Originally operational in 1957, its main concern was the threat posed by the Soviet Union's long-range bombers. When the Cold War ended, Presidents Reagan and then H.W. Bush (Sr) required all US agencies to direct their attention to the scourge of illegal drugs imported into the United States, given that the Soviet Union was no longer. This support to LEA included NORAD.

### **4. How NORAD got involved in drug trafficking**

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the declining threat of the Soviet Union led NORAD to adopt a new mission subset to adapt to the changing threat environment. The increasing political attention to the drug crisis and the threat it posed to both Canada and the United States created the conditions for greater action and cooperation to capture the smugglers, cartels, and other support networks that were allowing the flow of drugs into both countries.<sup>46</sup> NORAD's participation in drug interdiction began informally in 1988 but became formal until the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1988 (under President Reagan) and 1989 (later under President H.W. Bush) were passed. Under Title VIII: General Provisions of the Act, the US Secretary of Defense has authority, when requested by federal law enforcement agencies, to assign members of the armed

---

<sup>45</sup> Ahart and Stiles, *"The Military's Entry into Air Interdiction of Drug Trafficking from South America."*

<sup>46</sup> Allarie, *"Shelf Life Extended,"* P.76.

forces to assist in searches, seizures, and arrests outside the land area of the United States.<sup>47</sup> In other words, the US military may assist LEA *in the approaches to the United States* in international waters and airspace. The Posse Comitatus Act<sup>48</sup> prevents US regular forces from operating in the continental United States or Alaska and Hawaii for domestic law enforcement activities. This restriction extends to foreign militaries at all times except when embedded as part of a US command.

Following the authorization for the use of the military by federal LEA in drug enforcement, former President Ronald Reagan mandated the United States' military to participate in drug interdictions on 29 September 1988.<sup>49</sup> In support of drug interdiction, the Department of Defense (DOD) tasked Air Force General John L. Piotrowski, who was dual-hatted as the US Element Commander NORAD (USELEMNORAD) and Commander-in-Chief NORAD (CINCNORAD from 1987 to 1990, to take the lead on air surveillance of illegal drugs transiting in the approaches to North America. As NORAD's core mission was air warning of threats to the approaches to North America, this required NORAD to warn of a new activity – illegal drugs entering the continental United States. General Piotrowski tasked NORAD assets (including planes, radars and US NORAD personnel) to contribute information to the wider US counter-narcotic command, control, communications, and intelligence network. However, CINCNORAD was only authorized to task US assets that did not include Canadian personnel or equipment. Thus, to employ the full range of NORAD air detection and monitoring assets in drug interdiction required the formal approval of Canada and specifically the National Command Authority – the Prime Minister of Canada, Brian Mulroney, via his Ministers

---

<sup>47</sup> Congress.gov., "S.1174 - 100th Congress (1987-1988): National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989." 23 October 1987. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/100th-congress/senate-bill/1174>.

<sup>48</sup> The United States Congress. "§1385 TITLE 18—CRIMES AND CRIMINAL PROCEDURE Page 352 ...." Gov.Info, n.d. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2019-title18/pdf/USCODE-2019-title18-partI-chap67-sec1385.pdf>.

<sup>49</sup> North American Aerospace Defence Command, "A Brief History of NORAD." North American Aerospace Defence Command NORAD History, 20 August 2020. [https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD/A%20Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD%202020.pdf?ver=S\\_hqhyuj86oqSPU617OYkA%3d%3d](https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD/A%20Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD%202020.pdf?ver=S_hqhyuj86oqSPU617OYkA%3d%3d).

of Defence: Bill McKnight (1989-1991), Marcel Masse (1991- 1993) and Kim Campbell (1993).<sup>50</sup>

To acquire Canadian participation via NORAD in the US military's drug interdiction role (which to be clear, did not mean that US military interdicted the drugs or arrested drug smugglers – they were limited to passing along information obtained via radar and sensors), General Piotrowski requested that the US State Department approach the Canadian Chief of Defence Staff, General P.D. Manson, for approval, to which he agreed (after confirmation with the Ministers of Defence and the Primer Minister – Brian Mulroney) and the use of NORAD assets in the performance of US counter-drug missions.<sup>51</sup> Less than a week later, the Government of Canada (GoC) confirmed illegal narcotics to be a threat to both countries and approved to perform counter-drug missions with Canadian support.<sup>52</sup> Thus, binational assistance to drug interdiction via NORAD assets and capabilities began on 4 February 1989. Thereafter, General Piotrowski published SNOWFENCE 90 CAMPLAN, a four-phase plan for NORAD to effectively integrate its intelligence, detection, and monitoring assets to contribute to the wider civilian-led anti-narcotic trafficking efforts. The plan was to modernize and expand NORAD's radar networks, integrate surveillance assets, and its communication system to better connect to corresponding agencies. The anti-drug computer network (ADNET) was the communication system implemented. The ADNET network connected military and civilian control centres for communication and coordination in anti-narcotic efforts. SNOWFENCE 90 CAMPLAN also outlined command and control relationships and force employment criteria.<sup>53</sup>

The implementation of SNOWFENCE 90 CAMPLAN's modernization and expansion of radar networks had several phases and concentrated on different problem

---

<sup>50</sup> Dysart, "Committed to Make a Difference," p. 107-116; North American Aerospace, Defence Command. "A Brief History of NORAD." North American Aerospace Defence Command NORAD History, 20 August 2020. [https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD/A%20Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD%202020.pdf?ver=S\\_hqhyuj86oqSPU617OYkA%3d%3d](https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD/A%20Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD%202020.pdf?ver=S_hqhyuj86oqSPU617OYkA%3d%3d) 15 Oct 1989 CINCNORAD published the counter-narcotics campaign plan, SNOWFENCE 90 CAMPLAN. This detailed overall doctrine, strategy and force employment plans in support of national anti-drug efforts.

<sup>51</sup> Nicolas, "Shelf Life Extended," p.76.

<sup>52</sup> Dysart, "Committed to Make a Difference," p. 107-116.

<sup>53</sup> Dysart, "Committed to Make a Difference," p. 107-116.

areas in North America. SNOWFENCE 90 CAMPLAN began with expanding and modernizing the continental United States (CONUS) radars along the southwestern United States border and then the entire southern border, followed by the establishment of a Caribbean radar network and then new radars to replace the inactive Pinetree radars, and the completion of the North Warning System (NWS) to replace the Distance Early Warning (DEW) Line.<sup>54</sup> To be clear, the radar investments were not solely for the drug interdiction role but part of an overall NORAD modernization plan. NORAD planners were able to develop counter-narcotic tactics using military equipment and assets such as ground radar, the E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), and alert fighters that would intercept, identify, and monitor suspected drug smugglers. Additionally, following Canadian participation, this allowed NORAD aircraft to operate in drug interdiction efforts in both Canadian and American airspace.<sup>55</sup>

NORAD provided the information it gathered to the US Joint Surveillance System (JSS), NORAD Regional Operation Control Centers (ROCCs), and NORAD Headquarters (NORADHQ) located at Cheyenne Mountain. The JSS is an air surveillance network made up of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the United States Air Force (USAF) radars. The ROCCs centralized information taken from NORAD assets automatically processed it, and provided additional data.<sup>56</sup> By late 1989, the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) established a Forces Command Drug Interdiction Center to lead all combatant commands supporting drug interdiction. This centre fused and validated the air surveillance data it received from various military sources, such as NORAD, before forwarding it to law enforcement.<sup>57</sup> In 1990, NORAD began unifying these efforts and experience with drug interdiction into the newly established NORAD Tactical Centre (NORTRIC), which organized air smuggling data from various sources into one comprehensive picture.<sup>58</sup>

Around the same time as the establishment of NORTRIC, further support to military assistance to law enforcement operations in cross-border drug interdictions.

---

<sup>54</sup> Dysart, *Committed to Make a Difference*, p. 107-116.

<sup>55</sup> Dysart, *Committed to Make a Difference*, p. 107-116.

<sup>56</sup> Allarie, *Shelf Life Extended*.

<sup>57</sup> Allarie, *Shelf Life Extended*.

<sup>58</sup> Allarie, *Shelf Life Extended*.

Project NORTHSTAR, to which NORAD played a role, was a system for the collection and distribution of drug enforcement intelligence between 8 provinces and 14 states along the border region of Canada and the United States.<sup>59</sup> Project NORTHSTAR was intended to manage requests for military support in anti-drug operations involving interdiction when there were multiple conflicting requests for military assistance.<sup>60</sup> By 1991, the NORAD renewal of the NORAD agreement officially included the adoption of support to counter-narcotics operations through monitoring and surveillance for law enforcement as an ancillary mission.<sup>61</sup>

The formalization of NORAD's anti-narcotic role was a welcome addition to the toolkit of LEA, as NORAD's capabilities and personnel provided the ability to detect and monitor drug traffickers flying into the United States and Canada. Absent NORAD information, the flow of narcotics would be unchecked, as the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)'s capabilities only maintained two types of radar coverage to monitor civilian aircraft: surveillance of approaches to US national airspace and departures from airports, as well as the en route system of flights between destinations. Also, despite the FAA's ability to monitor almost all air traffic in the entire continental United States<sup>62</sup>, including Alaska and Hawaii,<sup>63</sup> flight monitoring only extended to flights of 10 000 feet and above, while having near non-existent coverage of flights below 5000 feet, and many parts of the southern border had no coverage. This made it difficult to monitor traffickers who typically flew at a height of 1000 feet or less to avoid detection.<sup>64</sup>

Police forces often relied on intelligence that they could either gather, visually confirm, or through information received from ground controllers. Although the

---

<sup>59</sup> Dysart, "Committed to Make a Difference," p. 107-116.

<sup>60</sup> Dysart, "Committed to Make a Difference," p. 107-116.

<sup>61</sup> Department of National Defence, "1994 White Paper on Defence." Publications.gc.ca, 1994. [https://www.publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2012/dn-nd/D3-6-1994-eng.pdf](https://www.publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2012/dn-nd/D3-6-1994-eng.pdf).

<sup>62</sup> United States, Congress. Office of Technology Assessment, *The Border War on Drugs*. Washington, DC: Congress of the U.S., Office of Technology Assessment, 1987.

<sup>63</sup> United States Department of Transportation, "FAA Historical Chronology, 1926-1996." FAA Historical Chronology, 1926-1996 | Federal Aviation Administration, 19 July 2019. [https://www.faa.gov/about/history/chronolog\\_history](https://www.faa.gov/about/history/chronolog_history).

<sup>64</sup> United States, Congress. Office of Technology Assessment. *The Border War on Drugs*. Washington, DC: Congress of the U.S., Office of Technology Assessment, 1987.

difficulty of confirming that suspicious aircraft were in fact smuggling drugs remained challenging because aircraft that the United States Customs (USCS) and other police forces possessed could not always follow a suspicious aircraft to its destination, as police aircraft often had limited flight times.<sup>65</sup> The inclusion of NORAD into anti-narcotic missions was thus a pragmatic solution, as they possessed assets that could provide far more detailed and extensive monitoring, detection, and tailing of low and slow flying aircraft for much greater distances. Additionally, drugs were primarily being smuggled in from other countries or areas where NORAD could provide coverage, such as the Caribbean, Mexico, and South and Central America.<sup>66</sup>

NORAD's implication in anti-drug missions, however, was not without occasions of overreach. On 12 March 1989, the United States' air defence radar detected aerial drug traffickers and USAF fighter jets assigned to NORAD pursued them into Nova Scotia until USCS agents took over the pursuit. The traffickers landed in Sorel, Quebec, where USCS agents arrested them. The USCS agents also took Canadian airport facility staff into custody while they searched for the narcotics, an event witnessed by a nearby resident who mistook what was happening as a terrorist hijacking and contacted the Quebec Provincial Police.<sup>67</sup>

When the Quebec Provincial Police arrived, they observed the USCS agents reading the suspected smugglers their US Miranda rights while a Black Hawk helicopter operated by US military personnel landed at the airstrip.<sup>68</sup> Although the US Department of Defense informed DND that USCS agents and USAF aircraft were pursuing drug traffickers into Canadian airspace and territory, and it was approved (as per NORAD MOUs that allow for air assets of the United States to operate in Canada), no one thought to inform the RCMP or local police of the ongoing operation.

The Canadian embassy in Washington later expressed concerns over violations of Canadian sovereignty.<sup>69</sup> Had the USCS informed local police or the RCMP, they could

---

<sup>65</sup> United States, Congress. Office of Technology Assessment. *The Border War on Drugs*. Washington, DC: Congress of the U.S., Office of Technology Assessment, 1987.

<sup>66</sup> Allarie, "Shelf Life Extended."

<sup>67</sup> Dysart, "Committed to Make a Difference," p. 107-116.

<sup>68</sup> Dysart, "Committed to Make a Difference," p. 107-116.

<sup>69</sup> Dysart, "Committed to Make a Difference," p. 107-116.

have been waiting on the ground to assist in the operation. Only Canadian police or law enforcement may detain and arrest suspects in Canada, and only US officers can detain or arrest suspects in the United States, except for special programs like ShipRider. This was clearly a case of overreach by US law enforcement, not NORAD. The overreach, however, was an important lesson for both countries.

As the world adjusted to the new order, and Desert SHIELD and STORM seized the attention of the US military and allies (including NORAD) in the early 1990s in the Middle East, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a policy announcing a major shift in focus for US drug efforts in November 1993 from counterdrug efforts from "transit zones" to "source countries." NORAD only operates in the continental United States, Alaska and Canada and cannot reach into South America. The new policy reduced the overall NORAD counterdrug mission as a result.<sup>70</sup> As the world continued to change and Al Qaeda and Russia were the new concerns of the 2000s, the drug interdiction support provided by NORAD further waned.

While the RCAF aided law enforcement through aerial surveillance and interception as part of routine NORAD operations, the GoC did not permit the RCAF to operate in sovereign states where drug production was occurring. The limitations to the extent of the CAF's assistance to law enforcement are providing platforms and intelligence to conduct arrests in Canadian territory and maritime approaches. The CAF's assistance through airborne and maritime assets provided invaluable intelligence and capability for law enforcement to detect, monitor, and conduct arrests, which would otherwise be difficult to conduct because of Canada's vast borders.<sup>71</sup>

NORAD assets would monitor drug trafficking aircraft or vessels flying north from the United States into Canada, whereby the pursuing LEA would notify NORAD

---

<sup>70</sup> North American Aerospace, Defence Command, "A Brief History of NORAD." North American Aerospace Defence Command NORAD History, 20 August 2020.

[https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD/A%20Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD%202020.pdf?ver=S\\_hqhyuj86oqSPU617OYkA%3d%3d](https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD/A%20Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD%202020.pdf?ver=S_hqhyuj86oqSPU617OYkA%3d%3d).

<sup>71</sup> Major William M. Snedden, "The War on Drugs: How Does The Cf Measure Up?" Canadian Forces College, 19 April 2001. <https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/259/290/248/snedden.pdf>.

and continue to tail drug traffickers to conduct arrests on Canadian soil by Canadian police.<sup>72</sup>

## 5. Lessons Learned and the Future of Assistance to Law Enforcement

Trump's recent claims of fentanyl pouring in from Canada to the United States and the decision to respond with wide-sweeping tariffs on all Canadian goods prompted additional responses from the GoC to curb drug trafficking.<sup>73</sup> These responses are largely focused on increasing the capacity of Canadian LEA monitoring and detection capabilities. The RCMP is in the process of procuring 60 drones for border integrity. The CAF has assisted by providing over 40 drones to support RCMP activities for border integrity in the interim.<sup>74</sup> Despite the increased attention and pressure to curb drug trafficking, and the increased interdiction capabilities of law enforcement, the CAF's level of assistance has not seen a drastic change in the level of support historically provided. The CAF's level and type of support have remained consistent since the formalization of assistance in the 1970s, but have been greatly informed by NORAD's missions.

The CAF's domestic and binational assistance to law enforcement in drug interdiction remains an ongoing effort with an extensive history. The CAF's mandate to fulfill assistance to law enforcement requests in both a domestic and in a binational capacity would not be possible to the extent that it currently operates without NORAD as an avenue of cooperation. NORAD provides a comprehensive ability to monitor and detect aerial and maritime phenomena that civilian agencies, such as the FAA, NavCanada, and LEA, do not possess.

Without NORAD, the CAF's assistance to law enforcement is limited to operations in Canada only. NORAD facilitates information sharing about drug traffickers' locations to LEA and coordinates operations across various departments in both Canada and the United States. Formal functions of assistance to law enforcement provide clear limitations

---

<sup>72</sup> Dysart, *Committed to Make a Difference*, p. 107-116.

<sup>73</sup> Sean Boynton, "Trump Drags Canada into U.S.-China Trade War, Claims Fentanyl Still Flowing - National." Global News, 24 April 2025. <https://globalnews.ca/news/11147492/donald-trump-tariffs-china-canada-fentanyl/>.

<sup>74</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, *Border Integrity Defined*. Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 5 March 2025. <https://rcmp.ca/en/federal-policing/border-integrity/border-integrity-defined>.

to the CAF regarding law enforcement activities. This maintains the democratic tradition of keeping the military separate from law enforcement. Therefore, the CAF's assistance to law enforcement is likely to continue. Despite any potential future demands of President Trump on Canada to increase efforts in drug interdiction LEA, it is important to note that increasing the CAF's commitments to assist law enforcement limits their ability to conduct military operations elsewhere.<sup>75</sup>

### **Abbreviations and Terms**

ADNET	Anti-drug Computer Network
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CBP	Customs and Border Protection (United States)
CINCNORAD	Commander-in-Chief NORAD
CONUS	Continental United States (includes only the 48 lower states)
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency (United States)
DEW	Distance Early Warning Line
DND	Department of National Defence
DOD	Department of Defense (United States)
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration (United States)
FORCOM	Forces Command
GoC	Government of Canada
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff (United States)
JIATFS	Joint Interagency Task Force South
JSS	Joint Surveillance System

---

<sup>75</sup> Clute, Major B. M. "The Lawfulness of Canadian Interdiction of Stateless Vessels on the High Seas in Counter-Narcotics and Counter-Terrorism Operations." Canadian Forces College, 2014. Chapter II International Law: <https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/259/290/301/286/clute.pdf>.

JTFS	Joint Task Force South
LEA	Law Enforcement Agencies
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDA	National Defence Act (Canada)
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defence Command
NORADHQ	North American Aerospace Defence Command Headquarters
NORTRIC	North American Aerospace Defence Command Tactical Centre
NWS	North Warning System
RFA	Request for Federal Assistance
RCAF	Royal Canadian Navy
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RCN	Royal Canadian Airforce
ROCC	Regional Operations Control Centre (Canada)
USAF	United States Air Force
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USCS	United States Customs Service
USELEMNORAD	US Element NORAD Commander
USN	United States Navy
USNORTHCOM	United States Northern Command
USSOUTHCOM	United States Southern Command

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Andrea Charron, for the guidance, support, and feedback throughout the process of writing my major research paper. Dr. Charron has been a mentor throughout my graduate studies, and her encouragement and classroom experiences inspired me to pursue defence studies and to complete a Master of Political Studies. Additionally, I would like to thank Colonel Chris Morrison for his feedback on an initial draft as well as his encouragement.

Special thanks to Iona Starr for selecting me as the recipient of the Paul Buteux Graduate Student Conference and Research Award. Her generous contribution has been invaluable to me in my studies at the University of Manitoba.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Michael and Colleen, for their continued and unwavering support throughout my studies.

---

## Bibliography

- Ahart, John, Gerald Stiles, Project Air Force. National Security Strategies Program., Arroyo Center. Strategy and Doctrine Program. United States. Army., United States. Air Force., and Rand Corporation. *The Military's Entry into Air Interdiction of Drug Trafficking from South America*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1991.
- Allarie, Nicolas. "Shelf Life Extended: The Longevity and Continued Relevance of the Binational North American Aerospace Defense Command." MSpace Angular, May 2016. <https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/items/8f09cc2b-346e-4bb2-8396-dd1b7d2ac85f/full>.
- Boynton, Sean. "Trump Drags Canada into U.S.-China Trade War, Claims Fentanyl Still Flowing - National." Global News, 24 April 2025. <https://globalnews.ca/news/11147492/donald-trump-tariffs-china-canada-fentanyl/>.
- Canada, Public Safety. "Parliamentary Committee Notes: Requests for Federal Assistance (RFA) Process." Public Safety Canada, 25 March 2024. <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/trnsprnc/brfng-mtrls/prlmntry-bndrs/20240322/15-en.aspx>.
- Canadian Drug Policy Coalition Staff. "History of Drug Policy in Canada." Canadian Drug Policy Coalition, 14 July 2021. <https://drugpolicy.ca/about/history/>.
- Clute, Major B. M. "The Lawfulness Of Canadian Interdiction Of Stateless Vessels On The High Seas In Counter-Narcotics And Counter-Terrorism Operations." Canadian Forces College, 2014. Chapter II International Law: <https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/259/290/301/286/clute.pdf>.
- Congress.gov. "S.1174 - 100th Congress (1987-1988): National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989." 23 October 1987. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/100th-congress/senate-bill/1174>.
- Department of National Defence. "Operation CARIBBE." Canada.ca, 17 July 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-caribbe.html>.
- Department of National Defence, "Operation LENTUS." Canada.ca, 14 July 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/operation-lentus.html>.

---

Department of National Defence, *“Our North, Strong and Free: A Renewed Vision for Canada’s Defence,”* Minister of National Defence William Blair, (Ottawa, Ontario, Government of Canada, 2024).

Department of National Defence. *“Operation SABOT.”* Canada.ca, 6 May 2022. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/recently-completed/operation-sabot.html>.

Department of National Defence. *“1994 White Paper on Defence.”* Publications.gc.ca, 1994. [https://www.publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2012/dn-nd/D3-6-1994-eng.pdf](https://www.publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2012/dn-nd/D3-6-1994-eng.pdf).

Dysart, Dixie. *“Committed to Make a Difference: Canada’s Role in the Inception of NORAD Counter-drug Operations.”* In *Sic Itur Ad Astra: A: Canadian Aerospace Power Studies: Volume 2: Big Sky, Little Air Force*, edited by W.A. March. Canada: Canadian Forces Aerospace Warfare Centre, 2009: pp. 107-116. [https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2011/dn-nd/D4-7-2-2011-eng.pdf](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2011/dn-nd/D4-7-2-2011-eng.pdf).

Emergencies Act R.S.C., 1985, c. 22 (4th Supp.), *“The Emergencies Act.”* Public Safety Canada 21 July 1988. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-4.5/page-2.html#h-213927>.

E Murray, L. *“Maritime Enforcement: The Canadian Federal Government’s Marine Fleets and the Navy’s Mission.”* *Marine Policy* 18, no. 6 (1994): pp. 521–29. doi:10.1016/0308-597X(94)90075-2.

Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. *“A Role of Pride and Influence in the World - Defence: Canada’s International Policy Statement: D2-168/2005.”* Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 April, 2005. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.666377/publication.html>.

Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. *“Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada’s Defence Policy.”* Strong, secure, engaged: Canada’s defence policy.: D2-386/2017E-PDF - Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 April 2017. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.835971/publication.html>.

Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. *“Canada First Defence Strategy.”* Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 April 2008. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/370141/publication.html>.

- Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. *“Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada.”* Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 April, 1987. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/429765/publication.html>.
- Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. *“Defence in the 70s: White Paper on Defence.”* Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 April 1971. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/429769/publication.html>.
- Government of Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada. *“White Paper on Defence”* Government of Canada Publications - Canada.ca, 3 March 1964. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/429769/publication.html>.
- JOINT Interagency Task Force South. *“Jiatfs History.”* Joint Interagency Task Force South. n.d. <https://www.jiatfs.southcom.mil/About-Us/History/>.
- Joint Interagency Task Force South. *“Home.”* JIATFS History, 1800. <https://www.jiatfs.southcom.mil/About-Us/History/>.
- Justice, Manitoba. *“The Police Services Act, C.C.S.M. c. P94.5.”* C.C.S.M. c. P94.5, 3 June 2025. <https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p094-5.php>.
- Londoño, Ernesto. *“Nixon Started the War on Drugs. Privately, He Said Pot Was ‘Not Particularly Dangerous.’ - The New York Times.”* The New York Times, 14 September 2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/14/us/nixon-marijuana-tapes.html>.
- Loprespub. *“Canada–United States Border Security: Drug Trafficking and Irregular Migration.”* HillNotes, 2 June 2025. <https://hillnotes.ca/2025/03/12/canada-united-states-border-security-drug-trafficking-and-irregular-migration/>.
- National Defence Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. N-5, s. 130, *“The National Defence Act.”* Department of National Defence 1985, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/ACTS/N-5/index.html>.
- National Defence. *“Military Police.”* Military Police | Canadian Armed Forces, n.d. <https://forces.ca/en/career/military-police/>.
- North American Aerospace Defence Command. *“A Brief History of NORAD.”* North American Aerospace Defence Command NORAD History, 20 August 2020. [https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD/A%20Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD%202020.pdf?ver=S\\_hqhyuj86oqSPU617OYkA%3d%3d](https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD/A%20Brief%20History%20of%20NORAD%202020.pdf?ver=S_hqhyuj86oqSPU617OYkA%3d%3d).

- Public Safety Canada. "Requests for Federal Assistance." Public Safety Canada, 25 July 2025. <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/mrgnc-mngmnt/rspndng-mrgnc-vnts/gvrnmnt-prtns-cntr/rqst-fdrl-sstssnc-en.aspx>.
- Public Safety Canada. "Government of Canada Lists Seven Transnational Criminal Organizations as Terrorist Entities." Canada.ca, 26 February 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2025/02/government-of-canada-lists-seven-transnational-criminal-organizations-as-terrorist-entities.html>.
- Public Safety Canada. "Government Operations Centre and Request for Federal Assistance." Public Safety Canada, 18 March 2020. <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/trnsprnc/brfng-mtrls/trnstn-bndrs/20191120/027/index-en.aspx>.
- RCMP "E" Division Drug Enforcement Branch. "TR-03-01 Operation SABOT and Illicit Crop Information Management Using Satellite Imagery." Publications.gc.ca, January 2002. [https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2008/ps-sp/PS63-2-2001-3E.pdf](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2008/ps-sp/PS63-2-2001-3E.pdf).
- Reagan, Ronald. "National Security Strategy of the United States." Historical Office, 1988. <https://history.defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/nss/nss1988.pdf?ver=uXpmo-mT0TKzq2Ut6PmfjA%3d%3d>.
- Reagan, Ronald. "National Security Strategy of the United States." Historical Office, 1987. <https://history.defense.gov/Portals/70/Documents/nss/nss1987.pdf?ver=FUZbPLY3ZDfa4UTDpMkNzw%3d%3d>.
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police. "Border Integrity Defined." Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 5 March 2025. <https://rcmp.ca/en/federal-policing/border-integrity/border-integrity-defined>.
- Snedden, Major William M. "THE WAR ON DRUGS: How Does The Cf Measure Up?" Canadian Forces College, 19 April 2001. <https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/259/290/248/snedden.pdf>.
- The Government of the United States and The Government of Canada. "2006 NORAD Agreement." Agreement Between The Government Of The United States Of America And The Government Of Canada On The North American Aerospace Defense Command, 28 April 2006. [https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/NORAD%20Agreements/2006%20NORAD%20Agreement.pdf?ver=52SH6UU\\_1njFmjjaq4fOUTg%3D%3D](https://www.norad.mil/Portals/29/Documents/History/NORAD%20Agreements/2006%20NORAD%20Agreement.pdf?ver=52SH6UU_1njFmjjaq4fOUTg%3D%3D).

- House of Commons Special Committee on Non-Medical Use of Drugs. *“Policy For The New Millennium: Working Together To Redefine Canada’s Drug Strategy Report Of The Special Committee On Non-Medical Use Of Drugs,”* 2002, <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/372/SNUD/Reports/RP1032296/snudrp01/snudrp01-e.pdf>,
- United States Northern Command. *“DOD Support to U.S. Border Security.”* Border Security, 2025. <https://www.northcom.mil/BorderSecurity/os/frefapp/ref/app/#securing-borders>.
- United States Congress. *“§1385 Title 18—Crimes And Criminal Procedure Page 352.”* Gov.Info, 1848. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2019-title18/pdf/USCODE-2019-title18-partI-chap67-sec1385.pdf>.
- United States Customs and Border Protection. *“March 1, 2003: CBP Is Born.”* U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 13 October 2016. <https://www.cbp.gov/about/history/march-1-2003-cbp-born>.
- United States Department of Transportation. *“FAA Historical Chronology, 1926-1996.”* FAA Historical Chronology, 1926-1996 | Federal Aviation Administration, 19 July 2019. [https://www.faa.gov/about/history/chronolog\\_history](https://www.faa.gov/about/history/chronolog_history).
- United States Office of Technology Assessment. *“The Border War on Drugs.”* Washington, DC: Congress of the U.S., Office of Technology Assessment, 1987.
- United States Southern Command. *“Campaign Martillo.”* Operation Martillo. n.d. <https://www.southcom.mil/Media/Special-Coverage/Operation-Martillo/>.
- White House. *“Designating Cartels and Other Organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Specially Designated Global Terrorists.”* The White House, 21 January 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/designating-cartels-and-other-organizations-as-foreign-terrorist-organizations-and-specially-designated-global-terrorists/>.