



# VP INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER

May 2015

## From the VP International Patron, Colonel Iain Huddleston



As the current patron of VP International I congratulate the VPI leadership team on their renewed efforts to revitalize our fraternity. Having myself enjoyed the many links and friendships developed through 'grabbing a wet' at the VPI and by active participation in numerous International Nights across the world, I am very hopeful that their efforts will bring a new generation of airmen and airwomen into the fold. We have begun by confirming the continued long-term support of 14 Wing Greenwood and the Royal Canadian Air Force for the VPI Headquarters building. We will continue by reviewing work that was done in preparation for the 40<sup>th</sup> Reunion at RAF Kinloss in 2006, refocusing and further developing how the organization should evolve in order to embrace the new generation of maritime reconnaissance and long-range patrol crewmembers. This electronic reset of our well-respected VPI Magazine is another step in the right direction. Sharing experience and knowledge across our communities has always been a key part of VPI. With the significant shift of our platforms and their capabilities towards the littoral and overland battlespaces, paired with reduced numbers and resources, the professional education of our crews is becoming ever more important. You will read in one of the following articles about our recent Red Tie in Greenwood, where we stepped out on this issue. We aim to do more and I ask you to contribute where and however you can. As I hand over the patronship this summer to Col Pat Thauberger, I will depart the fix hopeful for the future of VPI, looking forward to the 50<sup>th</sup> in 2016. Congratulations once again to the team.

Set Condition One, Rig for MAD!

Iain S Huddleston  
Colonel, RCAF

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## KEEPING IN TOUCH by Major Doug Publicover, President, VP International



It is my distinct pleasure to share with you the first instalment of the VP International Electronic Newsletter. This has been a joint venture supported by the organization's members; without such dedication this would not be possible. It is the intent of this correspondence to reach out to VPI's over 5500 members in 26 nations. In the digital age, various websites and Facebook pages have been created in order to pass on information and more importantly, to re-establish links between the International Headquarters in Greenwood and the active wings around the world. In keeping with the original charter of 1966, Fellowship remains at the forefront of the organization and in interactions of VP units routinely. Over the past couple of years we have seen a resurgence of transiting crews and hosting has remained paramount in fostering international relationships and maintaining the spirit of VPI. 14

Wing Greenwood and the International HQ have played host recently to a RNZAF crew from VP5, several German crews transiting on North American training and USN crews. Let me conclude that VPI is indeed alive and well and it is our desire that this media reaches as much of its membership as possible and that our global ties can be re-established.

### Aims

The aim of the VP International newsletter is to provide a medium for the exchange of ideas of importance to the free world on the broader aspects of Maritime Air and Long Range Patrol doctrine and the employment of related forces. Secondly, it will report on advances in the application of related weapons and high technology systems that are operational or are being introduced.

### Editorial Policy

Contributions are most welcome. The views expressed in this newsletter, unless explicitly stated otherwise, do not in any way reflect official policy of any government, and are the personal views of the author. We reserve the right to make any editorial changes we believe will improve the material submitted without altering the intended meaning.

# Commander's Column

Admiral Harry B. Harris, USN

Commander US Pacific Fleet



As commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet and a P-3 Naval Flight Officer, I'm always looking for sources of information to keep me updated on the global Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance community. I've been a proud member of VP International (VPI) since 1991, and always enjoyed reading the old glossy news magazine, so I applaud the VPI staff for bringing this electronic newsletter to life. I'm honored to be asked to contribute to this first edition and to help VPI promote the evolving role and relevance of maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft in today's interconnected global security environment.

For more than half of U.S. Naval Aviation's storied history – and longer than many of us have been alive – the P-3 Orion has been conducting maritime patrols to help protect the interests of the United States, our allies and our friends. Today, this magnificent warbird remains a workhorse for many nations in anti-submarine

warfare (ASW); anti-surface warfare (ASuW); and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR). For a guy who has spent his career flying the mighty P-3, it's hard to write that the airframe is coming to the end of its service life for the U.S. Navy.

That said, I can tell you the future is here, it's bright, and it's the P-8A Poseidon.

The P-8 is the most advanced long range ASW and ASuW aircraft in the world. It's a true multi-mission aircraft that provides superior, ASW, ASuW and ISR capabilities. It is a militarized Boeing Next-Generation 737 derivative with a maximum speed of 490 knots, a ceiling of 41,000 feet, and a combat range of more than 1,200 nautical miles with four hours on station. Compared to the venerable P-3, it can get there faster, stay as long, and get home quicker.

The P-8 is capable of delivering a number of weapons, including MK-54 torpedoes and Harpoon missiles. In future increments, Multi-Static Active Coherent (MAC), High Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare (HAASW) and Net Enabled Anti Surface Warfare capabilities will be added to its capabilities. As an armed platform, P-8s independently close the kill chain while simultaneously providing data to everyone on the network.

But most importantly, the P-8 offers commanders a potent weapons and sensor platform with a rapid response time for worldwide employment – and for the U.S. Pacific Fleet, it couldn't come at a better time to help us lead a strategic rebalance to the Indo-Asia-Pacific.

As part of the rebalance, the U.S. Pacific Fleet has been the first to get our nation's most advanced aviation platforms. The P-8, V-22 Ospreys, MH-60 Romeo and Sierra helicopters and EA-18 Growlers are already here – and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter will be here soon. Combined with new ships and submarines, the U.S. Navy has a tremendously capable force to help protect U.S. maritime interests in the Indo-Asia-Pacific and around the globe.

In March 2012, Boeing delivered the first P-8 aircraft to the U.S. Navy at Jacksonville Naval Air Station. The "War Eagles" of VP-16 made the Navy's inaugural P-8 deployment in Dec. 2013, deploying with six aircraft to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan as part of Task Force 72. VP-16 was followed by VP-5 and the current squadron, VP-45. These deployments were augmented by P-3 and EP-3 squadrons to fulfill U.S. Seventh Fleet's maritime patrol and reconnaissance mission sets. U.S. Navy P-3s will continue to deploy with P-8s around the globe until the last Orion leaves service around 2020. The EP-3 will be phased out over time as well as its capabilities are being transitioned to the MQ-4C Triton.

The P-8's have already proven their worth during ongoing high-tempo and high-visibility operations in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Because the aircraft is expeditionary in nature and maintains superior levels of readiness, I can send it anywhere at any time and expect it to get the job done with excellence.

During the first deployment to Seventh Fleet, we put the P-8s to the test under difficult operational circumstances including the search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, where Task Force 72 rapidly deployed two aircraft first to Malaysia, then to Australia to aid in the search. Their performance surpassed all expectations in a search area that expanded to cover large swaths of the Indian Ocean. VP-16 conducted 45 missions with almost 400 flight hours, covering over half a million square nautical miles. I was able to observe their performance first hand during a visit to Australia, and I can tell you, the P-8 aircraft and the Sailors who fly it are truly impressive.

Since the initial VP-16 deployment and during subsequent deployments of VP-5 and VP-45, the P-8 has built a strong reputation completing more than 900 sorties and more than 8,000 flight hours during ASW and ISR missions in my area of responsibility.

Working collaboratively with regional allies and partners is critical to U.S. Pacific Fleet operations, so it was helpful to have the P-8 participate in Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2014, the world's largest international maritime exercise. I'm also excited that the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) will take delivery of its first P-8 in 2017. Australian airmen are already training at VP-30. The P-8 will significantly increase Australia's ability to patrol its 1 million square miles of maritime jurisdiction. Additionally, the Indian Navy received its first of eight P-8I Neptunes in December 2012. A number of other countries are considering the P-8 so I look forward to the day when it will replace the P-3 as the global standard for maritime patrol and reconnaissance.

Our Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter, requested \$3.4 billion in fiscal 2016 and \$10.1 billion over the future years' defense program to support continued development and procurement of 47 P-8s through fiscal 2020. Ultimately, the U.S. Navy will have 117 P-8s in our inventory.

There is little doubt that the future of the global Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance community is bright. This is due in no small way to the great legacy of all the PPCs, TACCOs, NAVCOMs, Sensor Operators, Engineers, Ordnancemen, Technicians and all other aircrew around the world that went before us. We owe all of them a tremendous debt of gratitude.

## 5 SQUADRON RNZAF

Sgt Wayne Jones, RNZAF

It's been a busy few years for 5 Squadron. We now have six newly upgraded P-3K2 aircraft on the flight line, following the completion of a major upgrade project that started in 2004. The P-3K2 project provided significant avionics upgrades to the aircraft's communication, navigation, surveillance and data management systems. It also gave us a glass flight deck, including a Flight Management System. Along with these changes to the aircraft, we also gained mission preparation and analysis systems, crew training facilities and software testing and integration tools.



The upgraded P-3K2 Orion aircraft introduces a fundamental change to the way 5 Squadron operates our Orions. We have transitioned from being solely a maritime patrol force to becoming an airborne surveillance and response force. This change is significant, as it means the focus of our operations will include overland operations, as well as traditional maritime operations.

The upgrade process has meant significant workload for the entire squadron, as the different trades (both aircrew and maintenance) learned the new systems and how to most effectively employ them. There was a long period of operational testing and evaluation, as new tactics and procedures were trialed and this process remains ongoing.

All aircrew have now successfully transitioned onto the P-3K2 and our operational tempo is now back to pre-upgrade rates. We have now completed two P-3K2 Operational Conversion Courses, with a third currently underway. 5 Squadron has also begun participating in exercises again, after a hiatus during the upgrade process, including participation in Joint Warrior in Scotland, Bersama Shield in Malaysia, Kakadu in Australia and RIMPAC in Hawaii. The 2012 RIMPAC was the first time the New Zealand Defence Force had been invited to participate for 26 years and it was a welcome return to an exercise that provides us with significant training benefit as well as a forum for fostering valuable professional partnerships within the VP world. We look forward to all these exercises as a chance to meet up with fellow VP aviators and to learn from them.

Even when the upgrade process effectively reduced the number of operational aircraft and crews we had available, we still had to maintain 'business as usual' at home. This meant we still had to provide SAR coverage for the world's largest SAR region with a crew on call to be airborne in less than two hours, 24/7. In the last two years, we have flown just over 600 hours on SAR, from Antarctica to the equator. The most high profile SAR was the search for Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 – we initially deployed to Malaysia for two weeks, before continuing the search in the Indian Ocean from RAAF Base Pearce. During the period of the search for MH370, we flew 284.1 hours over 28 sorties and deployed 57 people to Malaysia and Australia.

Another significant milestone for the squadron is our ongoing operational deployment to the Middle East, Operation Takapu. We initially deployed in August 2014, intending to operate in the region until December, but regional instability meant that our skills could be well-utilised in the Arabian Gulf and Gulf of Oman, so we have extended the deployment. We are providing maritime security and anti-piracy support in the region, as well as building multilateral defence relationships and demonstrating our interoperability with our key allies and partners. As part of Op Takapu, we also briefly deployed to the Seychelles to participate in the EU counter-piracy mission, with our P-3K2 conducting long range maritime patrols along the Somali coast and Gulf of Aden. The focus of the multi-national EU maritime mission is to deter acts of piracy and armed robbery within the Horn of Africa region, as well as indirectly providing awareness to World Food Programme ships of possible attack as they transit the Somali coastline. To date we have flown over 90 operational sorties, which is close to 1000 flying hours.



So, we have a "new" aircraft and lots of new people on the Squadron. The workload is high, but as always, we like to work hard and play hard. We look forward to meeting up with as many VP people as possible in the future!

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**NEW VPI MEMBERS** – during a recent visit to Greenwood by a German P-3 Orion crew two new members of VPI were welcomed into VPI by the Greenwood Wing President, John Leeder.



## INDUSTRY UPDATE – IMP AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

Bruce Sutherland  
Senior Director International Marketing

IMP Aerospace & Defence is a wholly Canadian-owned company and Canada's largest military aircraft maintenance and engineering organization, supporting both military and commercial customers with over 2,400 engineering and technical support staff in operations across Canada. IMP Aerospace & Defence is a Business Unit of IMP Group Ltd., a company of over 4,400 personnel that has been recognized as one of Canada's top 50 Best Managed companies for the past twelve consecutive years.

IMP Aerospace & Defence comprises six Operating Units:

**IMP Aerospace:** With over 600,000 square feet of hangar, shop & office space at Halifax International Airport providing full In-Service and Life Cycle Support. Recent customers include the Royal Canadian Air Force, Royal Norwegian Air Force, NOAA, U.S. Forestry Service, AeroUnion and the U.S. Navy.



**Cascade Aerospace:** Located in Abbotsford BC, providing aircraft ISS services for Original Equipment Manufacturers, military, government and commercial customers in its modern, 230,000 square-foot hangar.

**Canadian SAR Helicopter (CSH):** Headquartered at the Halifax International Airport, the IMP CSH team provides turn-key In-Service Support and Fleet Management to RCAF flight operations at their three Main Operating Bases in Comox, BC; Trenton, Ont; and, Gander, NL.

**IMP Electronic Systems:** Occupying a modern 43,000 square foot facility including a 2,000 square foot Cleanroom

in Hammonds Plains, NS, IMP Electronic Systems manufactures and repairs complex electronic assemblies and wire harnesses. Recent successes include the design and manufacture of spaceflight harnesses for the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) and components for the Radarsat Constellation Mission program.

**IMP Aerostructures:** Operating from a 140,000 square foot facility at Amherst, NS, IMP Aerostructures is a Lean manufacturer and integrator of sheet metal, machined and composite aircraft structures. The operation has comprehensive multi-axis CNC machining, sheet metal forming, metal-to-metal bonding, and composite production capabilities.

**IMP Naval & Land Services:** The IMP Naval & Land Services Team provides coordination for the application of IMP Aerospace & Defence products and services to the Naval and Land environments.

IMP Aerospace & Defence is Canada's Prime Contractor for the P-3 Orion and C-130 Hercules and supports the following seven RCAF aircraft fleets:

- Lockheed Martin (LM) CP-140 Aurora (1 of only 2 LM Authorized P-3 Service Centers in the world)
- Lockheed Martin CC-130H Hercules ( LM Authorized C-130 Service Center)
- Lockheed Martin CC-130J Hercules ( 1 of only 2 LM Authorized C-130 J Heavy Maintenance Centers in the world)
- Agusta Westland CH-149 Cormorant (AW101) (Turn-Key In-Service Support)
- Sikorsky CH-124 Sea King (H3/S61)
- Bell Helicopter CH-146 Griffon (Bell 412)
- CT-114 Tutor - Snowbirds

### Recent P-3 Successes

September 18th 2014 - IMP Aerospace delivered the 100th CP-140 Aurora Third Level Inspection and Repair Program (TLIR) aircraft to the RCAF following a ceremony at its Halifax Stanfield International Airport facility. Participation at the ceremony included the 14 Wing Commander Iain Huddleston and 14 Wing personnel. The Aurora fleet began maintenance inductions at IMP Aerospace in 1984 and is now in its sixth TLIR cycle. IMP Aerospace is incrementally modernizing and completing a life extension program that replaces the wings and horizontal stabilizers as well as installs state of the art navigation and flight instruments, communications and mission systems that will permit the aircraft to operate effectively beyond the year 2030.

December 15th 2014 - IMP Aerospace delivered the first of 3 CP-140 Aurora fitted with an advanced Beyond Line of Sight (BLOS) satellite communications system. Participation at the delivery ceremony included the Commander of the Royal Canadian Air Force, Lieutenant General Yvan Blondin as well as Director Air Requirements, Colonel Ian Lightbody and 14 Wing Commander Iain Huddleston. IMP Aerospace provided the installation design and modification of the Interim BLOS system in Halifax, NS. The system enables secure high-speed data streaming from the aircraft via satellite in areas that are remote from familiar ground stations.

April 2015 – To this date, IMP has delivered 2 of 3 Interim BLOS and 1 BLOS proof of concept aircraft, as well as 7 re-winged (ASLEP) Aurora, 6 installed with Block III of the Aurora Incremental Modernization Program (AIMP) avionics systems upgrade. It's expected that fourteen of these exceptionally capable, strategic aircraft will undergo the combined ASLEP/AIMP/TLIR modification and repair and overhaul work. Internationally, IMP has delivered 4 Royal Norwegian Air Force ASLEP aircraft with the fifth of 6 being delivered May 2015.

#### New Opportunities

According to Jane's World Air Forces 2014, there are 344 P-3 Orions still being flown and IMP Aerospace is offering its unique and essential support to countries such as Japan (95 A/C), Chile (3), Brazil (9), and Germany (8) to name a few. The number of companies capable of providing P-3 Orion support at IMP's level of expertise and experience is reducing world-wide. IMP's comprehensive CP-140 (P-3) capabilities resulting from 35 years of in-service support, engineering, maintenance and modification of this platform have established IMP Aerospace & Defence as a global leader in sustaining and modernizing the P-3 Orion platform.



 IMP AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

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## Russian Navy Accepts First in New Class of Nuclear Attack Submarine

By: [Dave Majumdar](#)

Russian television has reported that the Russian Federation Navy has accepted its first Project 855 Yasen-class nuclear-powered attack submarine into this week.



Called K-560 *Severodvinsk*, the 13,800 ton boat has been in construction at the Sevmash yards since 1993—its completion long delayed due to Russia's economic malaise since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. It was not until 2010 when Russia launched the new submarine, which has been undergoing sea trials since September 2011.

*Severodvinsk* is expected to be the quietest and most capable Russian attack submarine to date being far more potent than the older Soviet-era Akula and Sierra-class designs. But the new vessel is not expected to be quite as silent as the U.S. Navy's *Seawolf* or *Virginia*-class boats.

According to the state media outlet *Ria Novosti*, *Severodvinsk* has a submerged displacement of 13,800 tons, length of 119 meters, speed of 31 knots, and can dive to 600 meters. It has a crew of 90 including 32 officers. It is armed with 24 Oniks (SS-N-26) and Kalibr (SS-N-27) cruise missiles along with a host of 533mm torpedoes and mines. It is the first Russian or Soviet-designed submarine to feature a spherical bow sonar array.

In addition to *Severodvinsk*, there are two additional Yasen-class submarines that are already under construction. These additional vessels, *Kazan* and *Novosibirsk*, are being built to a somewhat modernized design standard designated Project 855M Yasen-M. A third vessel will be laid down in August, according to Russian Television.

Russia is expected to order three further Project 855M boats in 2015, and ultimately the country could build more than eight Yasen-class submarines.

Russia is already working on a follow-on design to the Yasen-class, Russian television reports. "The harsh laws and rules of shipbuilding do not allow any pauses in designing new generations of submarines," Russian navy commander Adm. Victor Chirkov told the station.

Meanwhile, the Russian Navy continues production of the Borei-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine to replace the Project 941 Typhoon-class and Project 667BDRM Delta IV-class boomers.

Three of the Borei-class submarines have been completed thus far, while a fourth vessel with a modified design called *Knyaz Vladimir* is currently under construction. The new design is called the Project 955-A Borei II—and may carry 20 ballistic missiles rather than the 16 found on older vessels in the class.

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## RCAF's First CP-140 Aircraft Features ViaSat's Mobile Satellite System



ViaSat has successfully integrated its advanced airborne satellite communication system onto the Royal Canadian Air Force's (RCAF) CP-140 Aurora maritime patrol aircraft. The company will be working in collaboration with L-3 Electronic System Services (ESS), the Canadian Department of National Defence (DND) and IMP Aerospace. It also completed the first flight of the upgraded aircraft in less than 90 days from the beginning of the quick reaction capability project. [ARTICLE](#)

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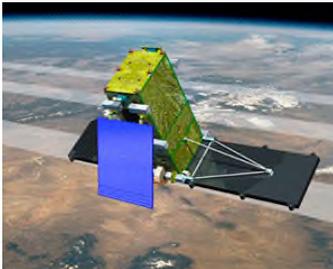
## Support from the sky – how will the UK replace Nimrod?



By the time the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) officially cancelled the Nimrod programme in 2010, the writing had been on the wall for some time that the aircraft would never fly as part of the Royal Air Force (RAF) fleet. Now, with the major components of the UK's next-generation maritime security capabilities – Joint Strike Fighter, Type 26 destroyers and Astute class attack submarines – still some time away, the UK's vulnerability in this area is becoming increasingly critical. [ARTICLE](#)

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## Canadian satellites "on target" to revolutionise maritime domain awareness



The Canadian government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper is prioritizing sovereignty as the top focus for its Arctic strategy, according to a public statement made this year at the World Economic Forum. It is also looking to strengthen regulations of the oil-and-gas and mining sectors and ocean shippers in the region.

To achieve this, a robust surveillance and communications network is a must but, with budgets as tight as they are, there remains anxiety over the ability to meet full expectations. In efforts to lower long-term costs and provide the widest coverage available, Canadians are looking to the stars. The RADARSAT Constellation Mission, an initiative to cover surveillance requirements from national defence through to environmental protection, continues to receive strong backing ahead of its completion deadline of 2018. [ARTICLE](#)

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## ANNUAL VPI RED TIE LUNCHEON

This year the VP International Wing at 14 Wing Greenwood celebrated "May Day" with its traditional Red Tie Luncheon with



The President of VPI, Maj Doug Publicover, presents MGen Coates with a VPI coin and plaque

MGen Christopher Coates, Deputy Commander – Canadian Joint Operations Command, as guest of honour. The Red Tie luncheon was started by VPI, 1 May 1990, as a way of acknowledging the prominence of NATO's former maritime adversary, the Soviet Navy. For 25 years, tradition has required all VPI members and guests attending the function to wear a red tie.

The President of VP International, Maj Doug Publicover, introduced the Patron of VPI, WComd Iain Huddleston, who reinforced his commitment to supporting the Association and its goals of military professionalism and fellowship world-wide. He then introduced the guest of honour and provided some insight into the career of MGen Coates, stressing the importance he placed on having him visit 14 Wing Greenwood and taking time from his busy schedule to speak to the members of VPI.

MGen Coates thanked everyone for the visit invitation and indicated that this was really his second visit to Greenwood, the first being an emergency helicopter landing he made here many years ago. The current visit was proving to be very interesting and busy and he appreciated the opportunity to share his thoughts with VPI on the tremendous job the air and ground crew were doing with the Block 3 Aurora. His informative talk covered a few of the types of critical activities he sees our crews being tasked with daily. He feels there is no limit to the variety of missions our crews and aircraft could be called upon to do and the challenges facing everyone in planning for constantly changing roles in the future. MGen Coates encouraged those involved to think about our critical resources, particularly the people who fly, maintain and support the air force. He feels they are the bottom line regarding our continued success. He thanked VPI for the opportunity to visit with them.



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** I would like to thank the many people who have participated in the creation of the VPI newsletter. We are continually looking for articles that would be of interest to the various Maritime, Long Range Patrol and Reconnaissance aviation communities. These can include original works or links to articles and can be emailed to [VPIHQ@eastlink.ca](mailto:VPIHQ@eastlink.ca). To continue receiving the Newsletter please inform [VPIHQ2@eastlink.ca](mailto:VPIHQ2@eastlink.ca) of any changes to your E-Mail Address. Bert Campbell, Editor