



The Arctic Institute of North America presents the 2018 – 2019

Arctic Speaker Series

Canadian Arctic Sovereignty: The Importance of Being There

Speaker: Tom Lawson	Date: Thursday, January 24, 2019	Time: 6:00 – 7:00 pm	Location: University of Calgary; Last Defence Lounge (LDL) 350 MacEwan Student Centre
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Sovereignty can be defined as authority, control and influence. Canada is a land of 10 million square kilometres, most of it harsh, forbidding and sparsely populated. By comparison, while US territory covers a similar area, the great majority offers welcoming climates and densely populated cities. With a tenth of the population of the US, Canada is faced with the challenge of demonstrating sovereignty across its domain, and in the waters and aerospace surrounding it. Much of the task of Arctic sovereignty has fallen to the military and the Canadian Coast Guard, two national institutions that traditionally

struggle for federal funding. Yet, with resources normally associated with a country of much smaller land mass, the results have been surprisingly effective. This presentation will look at the beginnings of Arctic sovereignty, solutions of the past, and the way ahead.

Biography: As a member of a four-generation Royal Canadian Air Force family, General Lawson looks back on his 40-year military career with deep appreciation. Among many things, it taught him the critical importance of developing leadership qualities within organizations. He especially looks upon his time as Chief of the Defence Staff in command of the Canadian Armed Forces as key in broadening and honing his strategic visioning skills.

Tom Lawson grew up in Etobicoke, Ontario, and graduated from the Royal Military College of Canada with a degree in Electrical Engineering. He completed pilot training and was posted to Germany where he flew the CF-104 Starfighter. He then returned to the Royal Military College to complete a Master's degree in Electrical Engineering and to serve as a lecturer at RMC.

Lawson attended the United States Air Force Staff College in Alabama and completed a Master's of Public Administration at Auburn University. Completing CF-18 Hornet training, he returned to Germany to fly operationally until the base closed. Lawson then returned to CFB Cold Lake to instruct on the CF-18, where he was in charge of the Fighter Weapons Instructor Course.

Appointed Commanding Officer of 412 Squadron, he flew the Challenger aircraft in the VIP role, and was then placed in charge of career management for the Air Force, during which time he completed the United States Air Force Air War College.

As a Colonel, Lawson joined General Hillier's CF Transformation Team and led the stand up of the Strategic Joint Staff. He was then posted to CFB Trenton as commander of the nation's largest base before being promoted to Brigadier-General and appointed Commandant of the Royal Military College of Canada.

Promoted to Major-General, Lawson was appointed Assistant Chief of the Air Staff, then was promoted to Lieutenant-General and appointed Deputy Commander NORAD in Colorado Springs.

In 2012, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the appointment of General Lawson as incoming Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) to replace outgoing General Walter Natynczyk. As CDS, Lawson oversaw the completion of the Canadian mission in Afghanistan, the deployment of Canadian troops to Eastern Europe following Russian aggression in Crimea, and the Canadian Forces contribution to the coalition effort against the Islamic State. He completed his term as CDS in July 2015.

Lawson graduated from RMC as Cadet Wing Commander and Sword of Honour recipient. He was top graduate on his Starfighter and Hornet training. He was appointed Commander of the Order of Military Merit in 2012.

General (Ret'd) Lawson now engages in Board work, provides strategic advice to Chief-suite executives and enjoys speaking engagements based on his years in Canadian Armed Forces command positions.

This event is **free and open to the public**, but please **REGISTER** at:
(<https://arctic.ucalgary.ca/general-rettd-tom-lawson-arctic-speaker-series>)
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