

#SECD - The Senate Committee on National Security and Defence

MILITARY UNDERFUNDED: THE WALK MUST MATCH THE TALK

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Chronic underfunding and a dysfunctional procurement system have pushed the Canadian Armed Forces to the breaking point.

Confusion as to Canada's key defence priorities only compounds the urgent problems facing the military.

Strong support and clear direction are imperative, but these have been in short supply from successive governments.

The federal government's Defence Policy Review, launched in 2016, provides **an opportunity to make up for years of neglect.**

Members of the Senate Committee on National Security and Defence have been studying these issues and make 16 recommendations in their report, *Military Underfunded: The Walk Must Match the Talk*.

In formulating their recommendations, senators have had the benefit of insight from a number of expert witnesses and independent sources.

The independent Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer identified a "funding gap" in defence spending, while the nonpartisan Canadian Global Affairs Institute estimated that **at least \$2 billion a year would be necessary simply to maintain the status quo.**

The military's procurement system, meanwhile, is weak and ineffective. Billions of dollars of available money is allowed to lapse each year and there is little accountability.

A newly-established process for major procurements is unlikely to lead to improvements. The process involves the departments of National Defence, Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Public Services and Procurement, Transport, and the Treasury Board — in short, too many players.

Parliament has the responsibility to provide the Canadian Armed Forces with the resources it needs.

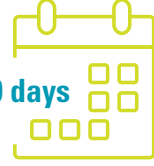
We rely on them — they must be able to rely on us.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

There is clear evidence that Canada is not spending enough money on national defence to ensure the protection of Canadians.



To effectively defend Canada and honour our international commitments,
defence spending must increase to 2% of gross domestic product (GDP).



The committee recommends that the government present a budget plan to Parliament **within 180 days** to increase defence spending to 1.5% of GDP by 2023, and to 2% of GDP by 2028.

It is difficult to plan for the future when objectives are not clear. The Canadian military has commitments at home and abroad; identifying priorities and providing the necessary support is essential for success.

The committee recommends that the government make the necessary investments to ensure the military is fully equipped and trained to carry out Canada's defence priorities:

- The protection of Canadian sovereignty, including the Arctic,
- The defence of North America under NORAD, and
- Full participation in NATO as well in United Nations and other multilateral international operations.

Fixing military procurement will require an extensive overhaul of current practices. A representative group of parliamentarians should work toward finding a long-term solution.

The committee recommends that Parliament establish a Special Joint Parliamentary Committee with senators and MPs to study and report on military procurement. In the meantime, the Minister of National Defence should appoint a lead negotiator for each procurement project valued at over \$1 billion to make the process more efficient.

NEXT STEPS

The government can no longer stand idle while the Canadian Armed Forces are at risk of catastrophic failure. The committee's report shows the need for action; its recommendations provide a clear way forward. Members of the committee await the government's response. Inaction is not an option.



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READ THE REPORT

Military Underfunded: The Walk Must Match the Talk

<http://info.sencanada.ca/defencepolicy>