

INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH

MARC-ANDRÉ MEUNIER, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, CANADIAN COAST GUARD, CENTRAL AND ARCTIC REGION

Marc-André was formerly a member of the Canadian Armed Forces for 22 years and has held various positions in several units. During his military career, he took part in the execution of operations in several countries and also participated in the Canadian Armed Forces humanitarian mission in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake. In 2012, he was appointed Supervisor and Liaison Coordinator for 2nd Canadian Division Headquarters and Joint Task Force (East). Marc-André joined the Coast Guard in 2017 as Regional Director, Incident Management in the Central and Arctic Region and was the Incident Commander at the G7 Summit at La Malbaie in 2018. He has extensive experience in managing security and emergencies.



Marc-André possesses a Master's Degree in War Studies from the Royal Military College of Canada and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Montreal.

What challenges do you think the Coast Guard will face over the next 5 years?

The Canadian Coast Guard faces various challenges similar to those faced by the private sector. For example, climate change has a major impact on all operations: In the event of a flood, we collaborate with other government agencies in order to provide timely humanitarian assistance. The navigation period in the Arctic is growing steadily. We have increased our Arctic presence as part of the Oceans Protection Plan and we will continue to monitor this evolving situation. The Coast Guard works with other federal partners to ensure response readiness, as well as to anticipate and warn stakeholders of weather phenomena affecting navigation.

Technological change: As we are operating in an increasingly digital era, the Coast Guard is currently testing innovative e-navigation solutions while implementing proven technologies with both the marine industry and international organizations to ensure safe and efficient waterways. We are looking for talented employees in a very competitive job market. The Coast Guard ensures proper training and integration in order to maintain a high level of competence and organizational effectiveness, and to encourage employees to pursue careers with us. Lastly, the Coast Guard is implementing a strategy to extend the life of our aging fleet in order to maintain service standards while replacement vessels are being built.

Based on current forecasts, what does the Canadian Coast Guard plan to put in place in order to provide icebreaking services in Quebec's waterways?

First, the Canadian Coast Guard, Central and Arctic Region, will aim to deploy its light and medium icebreaker fleet at strategic locations in order to provide effective waterway icebreaking services in line with the overall 2017-2022 commitments.

Second, since flood control is a priority of the icebreaking program, units will be deployed in the Trois-Rivières and Québec City areas to maintain an ice-free waterway in the Montréal-Québec corridor.

Third, other units will provide icebreaking services for the Saguenay, the Estuary and the Gulf of St. Lawrence including the Lower North Shore. The Central and Arctic region will work with the Atlantic Region using a zonal approach in order to ensure efficient services across all sectors.

To ensure efficient navigation and ultimately better safety on the water, the Canadian Coast Guard has invested in four-season light buoys. Can you provide details regarding their deployment and installation?

The Coast Guard is currently manufacturing and installing 4-season buoys (B4S) in the St. Lawrence. To date, there are two models of buoys: 1.3m annual light spar and 0.7m diameter spar (ELA 1.3 m / ELA 0.7 m). In 2019, 71 and 26 ELA of 1.3 m and 0.7 m respectively were deployed. In total, since the start of the deployment in 2018, 31 ELA 0.7m buoys were positioned in Lake Saint-Louis, and 154 ELA 1.3 m buoys between Montreal and Traverse North.

If and when circumstances allow (i.e.: ship availability and weather conditions), B4S deployment operations are scheduled to continue this winter. A second wave of mooring is planned to begin in the spring of 2020. The objective is to complete the deployment of all B4S in the St-Laurent sector by Fall 2020.



Captain Molly Kool
Photo credit : Canadian Coast Guard

On May 22, 2019, the Government of Canada announced that it is investing more than \$15.7 billion to renew the Canadian Coast Guard fleet. Once these funds are made available to the Coast Guard, what are the steps that need to be taken before the new icebreakers become operational on the St. Lawrence Seaway?

The Coast Guard warmly welcomes the Government of Canada's decision to move forward with fleet renewal as part of the National Shipbuilding Strategy. Fleet renewal will include the construction of six icebreakers, two offshore patrol vessels and 16 multipurpose / light icebreakers. It is important to note that this investment has been added to the five previously approved vessels (a polar icebreaker and four scientific vessels) for a grand total of 29 new vessels.

Following the Government's approval, the Coast Guard Fleet Renewal Division began developing construction plans for the new vessels. Additionally, discussions are already underway with Vancouver's Seaspan shipyards that will be tasked with building all 16 multipurpose vessels, and with the Halifax Irving shipyard that will be tasked with building the two offshore patrol vessels. The process of identifying a third shipyard by Public Services and Procurement Canada is currently underway; the selected site will then be commissioned to construct the icebreakers in accordance with them Coast Guard's capability requirements.

The Coast Guard has already welcomed into service one new scientific vessel the CCGS Sir John Franklin. We expect to welcome two more into service in the coming months. We anticipate that the offshore patrol vessels will be delivered in 2025. Multipurpose vessels and icebreakers will be delivered in subsequent years.

The Coast Guard recognizes that its current fleet is aging. For this reason, we are actively engaged in maintaining levels of service while the vessels are being constructed by working on extending the life of current vessels and acquiring four commercial vessels (three of which have already been purchased) to support our operations and maintain our levels of service.

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