



RCAF general officers met in Ottawa in September 2015, to discuss the future of the RCAF and means of implementing the concept of “AIRPower – In Formation”. PHOTO: Corporal Vicky Lefrançois

# A Gathering of Eagles

## *and a discussion of the RCAF's future*

A gathering of eagles took place last month at the Royal Canadian Air Force officers' mess in Ottawa, hosted by the commander of the RCAF, Lieutenant-General Mike Hood.

As part of the RCAF general officers' conference, past commanders of Air Command and the RCAF joined currently-serving general officers for an historic gathering.

During the day, serving general officers, including those who serve outside the RCAF proper, discussed the flight plan for the RCAF, and advancing the “AIRPower – In Formation” vision, which is drawn from *Air Force Vectors*.

The commander also outlined the collaboration that would be welcome and in fact required among all Air Force general officers across the Canadian Armed Forces.

“While I am the commander of the RCAF,” he told them, “you are the institution.”

All former commanders of the Air Force, dating back to the re-establishment of the air component of the Canadian Armed Forces in 1975, with the exception of one former commander and two commanders who have passed away, were present for a dinner that evening. The last time such a gathering took place was in 2005.

### **Commander's Goals**

In his presentation, Lieutenant-General Hood outlined his goals and desired “end state” to the general officers,

and the five key RCAF Lines of Effort underpinning these goals.

- Sustain and build upon successful delivery of high-calibre tactical air power
- Better harness the intellectual capital potential of the RCAF
- Improve RCAF airpower delivery through greater integration and coordination
- Enhance institutional discipline and accountability
- Ensure institutional commitment to one RCAF airpower airworthiness/safety system

### **Intellectual Capital**

Following Lieutenant-General Hood's remarks, Lieutenant-Colonel Kelvin Truss, the commanding officer of the Canadian Forces Aerospace Warfare Centre, discussed the effort to better harness the intellectual capital of the RCAF. He posed the question “Are we doing enough to leverage our intellectual capital?” to improve professional AIRPower mastery and individual AIRPower-mindedness.

The leadership “metacompetencies” required at the most senior levels – expertise, cognitive capacities, social capacities, change capacities and professional ideology –, he suggested, are not being adequately nurtured at the intermediate and advanced levels of training.

He emphasized that there is a need to overtly



Lieutenant-General Mike Hood, commander of the RCAF, speaks during the annual RCAF general officers' seminar held in September 2015, in Ottawa. PHOTO: Corporal Vicky Lefrançois

## From *Air Force Vectors*

### Vision

An Agile and Integrated air force with the Reach and Power (**AIRPower**) essential to Canadian Armed Forces operations.

### Mission

The RCAF will provide the Canadian Armed Forces with relevant, responsible and effective **AIRPower** to meet the defence challenges of today and into the future.

recognize, invest in and value a conceptual component, which is a framework of thinking within which military personnel can develop understanding about both their profession and the activities that they may have to undertake.

### History and Heritage

Dr. Richard Mayne, the RCAF's senior historian, took to the floor to discuss history and heritage as a key element in harnessing RCAF intellectual capital.

He reiterated the commander's intent regarding this line of effort, saying, "As the steward of Canadian airpower and air power expertise in Canada, the RCAF will have a thorough understanding of its history and heritage. As a result, history and heritage will be institutionalized so that it not only strengthens the RCAF's sense of identity and is used as a strategic lessons-learned instrument, but also forms a key element that builds AIRPower mastery and AIRPower-mindedness within the Air Force."

Dr. Mayne noted several lines of operation within the history and heritage mandate, and some of the key issues surrounding these LOOs.

**History:** There are large gaps in the RCAF historiography that require publications to fill. There is also a need to capture the RCAF's history so that it is available for tomorrow's generations as well as future air history and AIRPower researchers.

**Museums:** RCAF Museums require more cohesion and coherence as strategic instruments.

**Information Resource Centre:** The RCAF needs to provide a first-class archives and research centre to support and encourage study of air history and air-power issues.

**Commemorations:** Commemorative activities at the wing and squadron levels are ongoing and upcoming, and the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the RCAF is less than 10 years in the future.

## AIRPower – In Formation

The "AIRPower" concept is taken from the RCAF vision statement and derived from the RCAF capstone publication, *Air Force Vectors*, which brings together the concepts and capabilities that position the RCAF as an [A]gile and [I]ntegrated air force with the [R]each and [P]ower essential for Canadian Armed Forces' operations.

AIRPower has both a practical (air power) and intellectual (airpower) element, and both elements, from tactical air power application to strategic airpower mindedness, need to be mastered to ensure the comprehensive and integrated application of AIRPower.

Further, to be successful, the RCAF flies 'In Formation.'

We are one air force team, and we must fly in formation, together – irrespective of aircraft or mission. Each RCAF capability is key to the defence of our country and our values – and it is by working together – in formation – that Canadian Air Power delivers the results that we are famous for. We must also fly in formation with other services, and with the rest of the defence team – as well as our partners in other departments who help enable us prepare for future challenges.





All but three former commanders of Air Command and the Royal Canadian Air Force since the unification of the Canadian Armed Forces in 1968 joined serving RCAF general officers for a mess dinner held September 2, 2015, in conjunction with the RCAF general officers' seminar. Seated, from left, are Lieutenant-General Fred Sutherland; Lieutenant-General Don McNaughton; Lieutenant-General Bill Carr; Lieutenant-General Mike Hood; General Paul Manson; Lieutenant-General Larry Ashley; and Lieutenant-General David Huddleston. Standing, from left, are Lieutenant-General Angus Watt; Lieutenant-General Ken Pennie; Lieutenant-General Dave Kinsman; Lieutenant-General Al Dequetteville; Lieutenant-General Lloyd Campbell; Lieutenant-General Scott Clements; Lieutenant-General André Deschamps; and Lieutenant-General Steve Lucas. (See page 3 for dates of service.) PHOTO by Corporal Vicky LeFrançois

#### **Commanders of Air Command**

1975–78 Lieutenant-General W.K. (Bill) Carr  
 1978–80 Lieutenant-General G.A. (Allan) MacKenzie  
 (deceased)  
 1980–83 Lieutenant-General K.E. (Ken) Lewis  
 (deceased)  
 1983–85 Lieutenant-General P.D. (Paul) Manson  
 1985–86 Lieutenant-General D.M. (Don) McNaughton  
 1986–88 Lieutenant-General L.A. (Larry) Ashley  
 1989–91 Lieutenant-General F.R. (Fred) Sutherland  
 1991–93 Lieutenant-General D. (David) Huddleston  
 1993–95 Lieutenant-General G.S. (Scott) Clements  
 1995–97 Lieutenant-General A.M. (Al) Dequetteville  
 2005–07 Lieutenant-General J.S. (Steve) Lucas  
 2007–09 Lieutenant-General A. (Angus) Watt  
 2009–11 Lieutenant-General J.P.A. (André)  
 Deschamps

#### **Chiefs of the Air Staff**

1997–00 Lieutenant-General D.N. (Dave) Kinsman  
 2000–03 Lieutenant-General L.C. (Lloyd) Campbell  
 2003–05 Lieutenant-General K.R. (Ken) Pennie  
 2005–07 Lieutenant-General J.S. (Steve) Lucas  
 2007–09 Lieutenant-General A. (Angus) Watt  
 2009–11 Lieutenant-General J.P.A. (André)  
 Deschamps

#### **Chiefs of the Air Force Staff and Commanders of the Royal Canadian Air Force**

2009–12 Lieutenant-General J.P.A. (André)  
 Deschamps  
 2012–15 Lieutenant-General J.A.J.Y. (Yvan) Blondin  
 2015–present Lieutenant-General M.J. (Mike) Hood