



**The Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia**  
**Security Affairs Committee Paper on**  
**The Security of the Nova Scotia Coastline and Continental Perimeter**

When heightened concern with homeland security became apparent with the introduction of more robust security measures at our borders, airports and sea ports, it prompted the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia (RUSI) to examine the status of security measures on the province's vast sparsely inhabited and historically vulnerable Atlantic Coastline and Continental Perimeter.

RUSI's Security Affairs Committee (SAC) embarked on an extensive study and determined that responsibility for security on the shoreline rests with the RCMP, and the Army is mandated to support its security operations should it be requested.

It confirmed that other than an infantry battalion and an artillery regiment in the Halifax Garrison and an artillery battery in the Yarmouth area, there are no other combat troops in the province stationed on its Atlantic Coastline from Yarmouth to Canso where RCMP security operations are most likely to require Army support.

SAC confirmed that since the downturn in the small boat fishery over the past several years, the 7/24-hour surveillance on our shores it once provided has been appreciably eroded. It concluded that this, and the increasingly stringent security measures at the Port of Halifax and the International Airport, makes the shoreline more attractive than hitherto for criminals, illegal immigrants and others, including potential terrorists.

After an assessment of the roles and capabilities of infantry, artillery, engineer, and reconnaissance regiments making up the combat arms, the consensus was that a reconnaissance regiment with its surveillance capability was deemed best suited to support RCMP coastline security operations. Its 'seek and find' capability would enable it to respond most effectively to RCMP requests for support with soldiers trained for the task.

Unlike PEI and each of the other mainland provinces, there is no army reconnaissance capability located in Nova Scotia. Currently such support for RCMP security operations in the province must come from Land Force Atlantic Area (LFAA) regiments in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

SAC believes it important that an army reconnaissance unit be located in the province so that operational readiness and compatibility can be assured in time of crisis. Such a unit needs to establish a familiarity with the coastline, its communities, coastal watch organizations in the area and equally important, bond with the RCMP and be readily available to exercise frequently on the coastline. Anything less will not ensure effective and timely response to all RCMP requests for support of its security operations on the coastline.

The RCMP confirms that the security threat to the coastline from criminals, illegal immigrants and potential terrorists is taken very seriously and remains an ongoing concern. It considers the threat is not likely to diminish any time soon and possibly could escalate.

SAC concludes that there is an obvious need for an army reconnaissance unit located in Nova Scotia. This is in keeping with Canada's determination to keep our border, shorelines and the continental perimeter secure and its citizens safe. Such a modest measure makes military sense and funding is not a factor.

In view of the above, SAC has difficulty understanding the resistance to locating an army reconnaissance unit in Nova Scotia and the persistence that "there is no requirement."