



VP International Headquarters Newsletter – Canadian Edition

July 2025

From the Patron

Col Luc Vachon, Commander 14 Wing



Over the past few years, the RCAF has understandably focused its attention on force generation during a period of significant personnel shortages. As a result, engagement with VP International (VPI) has understandably taken a back seat. However, as the RCAF begins to grow and stabilize, now is the time to reenergize and refocus on the value VPI brings to our community. I assumed command of 14 Wing Greenwood in the summer of 2024 and, with that, the honour of serving as the VPI Patron. While the mandate of VPI has remained consistent, the structure and operational realities of our respective forces continue to evolve in response to shifting fiscal and global security demands. Today's Maritime and Long-Range Patrol aviation community includes not only traditional aircrew but also a growing cadre of Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) operators. Many of them may not yet be familiar with VPI or its proud legacy. Maritime domain awareness has never been so crucial as the contested nature of our oceans once again returns to the forefront. With more and more nations aligning on common platforms — most notably the widespread adoption of the P-8A Poseidon — we are not just flying the same aircraft; we must ensure we can operate them together. Interoperability remains critical, but our future success depends on pushing beyond that, toward true interchangeability. That means common SOPs, aligned checklists, and aircrew and maintainers who can seamlessly integrate across allied squadrons. While this is especially relevant for P-8A users, we also owe it to ourselves and our partners to explore how these same principles can be applied to RPAS operations. We have an opportunity — and a responsibility — to reenergize the spirit of camaraderie. VPI continues to offer a valuable forum for connection, mentorship, and professional fellowship across nations and generations. Just as strong crews build trust in the air, we should continue to strengthen our bonds on the ground.

From the HQ President

LCol Keith Fugger



Something is most certainly in the air in the RCAF Long Range Patrol community. There's a renewed sense of purpose, of drive, and of ambition. Some would call it change, others would say it's an evolution. The Government's announcement to procure the P-8A for the RCAF triggered a tidal wave of activity. We are seeing a transition of demographic from post-Cold War members to a younger generation willing to take control of their destiny. This will also hopefully lead to a resurgence in VP International not only in Canada but with all our P-8A partners. VP International is about fellowship, camaraderie, and the bonds that join us from operating in a common and increasingly dangerous environment. VPI Wings are places of reflection about the past, present and the future. They are places of social interaction after a challenging mission, be it operational or exercise. They are also places of joy, entertainment, and rivalry between crews, squadrons, and nations. Most importantly, VPI Wings are what their membership makes and wants of them. As the new generation of aircrew step up, we will also see an evolution at VP International and its Wings. In fact, it has already started. We have an updated and more inclusive constitution, and we anticipate a newly designed VPI Coin to be available in the coming months. We also look forward to hosting more international crews in the future, either just passing through or during exercises. To get involved, download a membership form at www.vpinternational.ca/join. This is your VPI. Help steer its course and take advantage of the learning that happens beyond the flightline!



New VP International challenge coin includes the P8A on the reverse

404 LRP *'Hunter'* Training Squadron

LCol Alex Gignac, Commanding Officer



404 Long Range Patrol and Training Squadron has continued to serve as the cornerstone of aircrew and maintenance training for the Royal Canadian Air Force's Long Range Patrol fleet throughout FY 24/25. This year saw the successful integration of new ACSO, AESOP, and maintenance instructors into the Training Establishment, reinforcing the Squadron's instructional depth and operational readiness. A major highlight was the Squadron's leadership in reviving Simulation Exercises (SIMEX) across the fleet with a renewed focus on peer-level conflict. These exercises have proven instrumental in evaluating crew effectiveness and enhancing mission command capabilities in complex, contested, and degraded operational environments.

The Squadron also made significant strides in simulation excellence and technical training. 404 has taken a national leadership role in advancing distributed synthetic training, deepening integration with allied forces and partners, and helping other units tap into this rapidly growing training environment. Additionally, the reintroduction of ACS Technician training at 404 marks a critical step in addressing the fleet's maintenance needs, ensuring the CP-140M Aurora remains mission-ready through to its retirement. These accomplishments underscore 404 Squadron's enduring commitment to innovation, excellence, and operational support within the RCAF.

405 LRP *'Pathfinder'* Squadron

Cpl Jake Shearer, Squadron Historian



405 Sqn continues to maintain a moderate-to-high operational tempo compared to previous years, not surprising given the drastic change in the global security environment. Since the last newsletter in 2023, the Eagles focused on individual upgrade and crew training to fill gaps created by posting experienced personnel to the USN Personnel Exchange Program at VP-30 in NAS Jacksonville, FL, and to the SEEDCORN program at RAF Lossiemouth, UK. The collective efforts of our members ensured mission success in accelerating training, returning to historical upgrade timelines while increasing the output of reliable and serviceable aircraft, using parts and assemblies from the cannibalization of four CP140M aircraft that were removed from service after reaching their end of life.



RCAF crews participate in SEEDCORN program training on the P-8A at RAF Lossiemouth.

405 Sqn participated in 14 major exercises, six smaller exercises, and 12 operations conducted at home and around the world. Two of those operations, NEON and HORIZON, and the Squadron's contribution to Ex RIMPAC 2024 (detachment consisting of two aircraft, two operational crews, two maintenance crews, and over a dozen CTF and CAOC staff) illustrate Canada's pivot to the Indo-Pacific region, testing the RCAF's Agile Combat Employment doctrine. Ultimately, these deployments – away from the traditional NATO-centric area of the North Atlantic and Mediterranean – provided the RCAF with new partnerships in the Philippines and South Korea, and reinvigorated long-standing partnerships with Australia and New Zealand. Of note, the latter three nations are procuring the Boeing P-8A Poseidon along with the US, Canada, Germany, Norway, and the UK, who will all form a new operational consortium in the maritime patrol community.



RCAF CP140M Detachment with South Korean personnel at RIMPAC 2024, Hawaii.

Despite an aging airframe and a reduction in parts availability, the Squadron's Maintenance Team sustained tremendous operational focus, setting 14 Wing Greenwood and the entire CP140M fleet up for success as the Sqn grew back to 4 operational crews of Eagles!

407 LRP 'Demon' Squadron

Capt Andreann Martin



As per previous years, the Demons have been quite busy, balancing force generation and force employment taskings. Notable international deployments included Op NEON, contributing to United Nations Sanctions Enforcement against North Korea, and collaborated with 14 Wing to support ongoing Canadian Joint Operations Command missions in the North Atlantic.

At home, the Demons provided a Canadian government presence where they enforced national sovereignty of our coastlines, including the High Arctic, on Op LIMPID and continued to foster bilateral relationships with NORAD.

Away from home base, they participated in numerous exercises such as the US Navy's Submarine Commander's Course which provided an excellent opportunity for the aircrew to progress their individual upgrades and collective training as well as to work alongside US Navy counterparts in a dynamic maritime environment. Demons also participated in RIMPAC 2024 which strengthened our interoperability and built capable and adaptive coalition partnerships.

Other noteworthy exercises include TASWEX 24 and Exercises DYNAMIC MONGOOSE and COMPTUEX that provided opportunities to generate ASW skills, promote interoperability, and continue engagement with important Canadian allies.

During pre-deployment training for Op NEON, aircrew participated in a Strike Coordination and Reconnaissance/Dynamic Targeting exercise with CF18s. This training not only provided valuable exposure to being intercepted by fighter aircraft and to the necessary recording procedures but also provided concurrent intercept training for the fighter pilots and NORAD.

407 Sqn was invited to attend the MPA (Maritime Patrol Association) West Coast Reunion 2024 in Washington State where they deployed a CP140M and aircrew. This reinvigorated healthy rivalries between a multitude of other Maritime Patrol Communities, and reinforced relationships with industry partners and military members both past and present.

415 LRP 'Swordfish' Force Development Squadron

Maj Richard Harding, Force Development Flt Comd



This past year saw significant progress in obtaining the final configuration of the CP140M as the fleet nears its sunset. With aircraft 140117 completing its production acceptance testing, the Aurora Incremental Modernization Program has officially come to a close. Started in 1998, this program provided multiple updates and operational benefits to the fleet; however, additional work will continue under smaller individual projects. 2025 will mark the completion of the five remaining update projects to the Block IV Aurora. These include the introduction of an integrated Iridium Satcom terminal to increase the speed and bandwidth of beyond line-of-sight connections, the installation of T3CAS and a Mode 5

transponder, ARC-234 radio modernization, and software upgrades to the mission systems. These improvements will keep the CP140M operationally capable and relevant from now until end-of-life in 2030.

Beyond the CP140M work, the Swordfish have been heavily involved in CP8A transition by establishing a Transition Flight to manage the implementation sub-working groups and to coordinate with the Project Management Office, 1 CAD, and other key stakeholders. The team has worked hard to produce keystone documents including the Master Implementation Plan. These efforts were closely coordinated with allied CP8A operating nations as we attempt to learn from their best practices to expedite RCAF implementation. With the scheduled arrival of the first three CP8A aircraft in 2027, the transition is rapidly approaching and must occur quickly, requiring significant investment in Squadron and Wing resources, namely our people. The improved reliability and interoperability offered by the CP8A will be a welcome addition to the Long Range Patrol community and to the RCAF.



CP8A ([Boeing Canada](#))