



CANADIAN GLOBAL AFFAIRS INSTITUTE
INSTITUT CANADIEN DES AFFAIRES MONDIALES

Greening Government and Defence

By Lily Schricker
December 2021

CONFERENCE REPORT

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Prepared for the Canadian Global Affairs Institute
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Nick Xenos — Executive Director of the Centre for Greening Government

Saleem Sattar — Director General Environment and Sustainable Management at the Department of National Defence

QUESTION: *What is the Government of Canada's (GOC) contribution to climate change and what are the main challenges?*

Nick Xenos

- The Government of Canada's contribution to climate change is reflected in its strengthened climate change plan, aiming for a net-zero carbon emission 2050 and a 45 per cent reduction by 2030.
- Being one of the country's biggest asset owners, the GoC plays a major role in making its operations, buildings, transportation, industry, and procurement climate resilient.
- The GoC's main challenges are:
 - the maintenance of critical services and operations in extreme climate conditions;
 - the management of buildings in different geographical parts of the country; and
 - the support of greening activities of their governmental partners.

QUESTION: *Can you talk to us about the Greening Government Strategy and the role of Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS)?*

Nick Xenos

- In order to achieve its overall net zero target by 2050, the Greening Government Strategy consists of four pillars: (1) Greening real property; (2) Greening fleet; (3) Greening procurement; (4) Developing climate resilient government operations.
- The Greening Government Strategy aims to be net zero across all the GoC's operations through specific commitments:
 - Developing net zero buildings;
 - Lowering embodied carbon;
 - Purchasing electric and/or hybrid cars;



- Administering 100 per cent clean energy;
- Encouraging corporate disclosure of carbon footprints;
- Diverting 75 per cent of waste.
- The Centre for Greening Government of the TBS has the following roles:
 - Leading and coordinating the implementation of the Greening Government Strategy;
 - Tracking the carbon footprint of the GoC;
 - Policy-setting and management in real property, fleet, and procurement;
 - Operating the greening government fund and new low carbon fuel procurement program.

QUESTION: *Can you give us an overview of your role within the Department of National Defence (DND) and how it relates to the implementation of the Greening Government Strategy?*

Saleem Sattar

- The director general of DND's Environment and Sustainable Management is in charge of managing its real property and operations, since a significant portion of the ecological footprint stems from areas.
- This role naturally relates to the implementation and management of the Greening Government Strategy.
- The success of the Greening Government Strategy therefore relies on the achievement of net zero targets in these focus areas.

QUESTION: *DND/ Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) has established its own greening strategy and goals. How do the Centre for Greening Government and DND coordinate their effort to support the net-zero emission goals?*

Saleem Sattar

- The DND has created its own departmental strategy called the "Defence, Energy and Environmental Strategy" (DEES). This strategy is not only in alignment with the core elements of the Greening Government Strategy, but also customized for defence-specific elements, such as fleet and energy management.



- The DND coordinates closely with the Centre for Greening Government to ensure their targets are aligned.
- The DND works with local and regional bodies to enhance access to energy, recycling, and commuting facilities.
- The DND collaborates with other federal departments of the GoC, including Natural Resources Canada, Environment Canada, Treasury Board, and Public Works to receive expertise in science, contracting, access to programs, and policy-making.

QUESTION: *Who are the main partners you are working with to advance the Greening Government Strategy?*

Nick Xenos

- The TBS takes a number of strategic greening actions by partnering with various networks.
- Coordinating with Governmental partners: There are 27 governmental departments, of which the DND is the main one, that own real property in fleet. The TBS provides them with technical expertise in the realization of the strategy.
- Establishing communities of practices: the TBS collaborates with other like-minded bodies across the country, including industries, provinces, and Crown corporations.
- Communicating with non-governmental organizations: the TBS is partnered with NGOs focused on green building, procurement, and transportation that have sustainability networks across Canada.
- Fostering an international network for strategic coordination in greening activities: the TBS is facilitating knowledge mobilization in greening strategies through international platforms.

QUESTION: *Is DND/CAF operating under the same standards as the rest of the government? Is there any tailoring of some of the GoC objectives/initiatives to the needs of DND/CAF?*

Saleem Sattar

- In the process of aligning with the Greening Government Strategy's targets, DND is actively seeking flexible and innovative solutions to accommodate its non-conventional office portfolio.



- Some of DND's infrastructures need to be updated or modernized in order to comply with today's electric heating laws and reach net zero.
- DND needs to find innovative power systems that do not rely on imported fuel to operate in a self-sustaining or off-grid manner.
- DND also needs to invest into electricity grids to power current infrastructures according to greening standards.

QUESTION: *When speaking about operations, we would usually think of military operations and deployments. However, as the largest federal Department, the daily activities of Defence are at the core of its emissions. What areas of greening are prioritized at this stage?*

Saleem Sattar

- The DND has opened up a third front on emission reduction called "National Safety and Security Fleet".
- The National Safety and Security Fleet incorporates the Greening Government Strategy into three initiatives to attain net-zero status.
 1. Prioritizing lower carbon emitting fuels;
 2. Operating cleaner operations within its fleet to reduce energy and fuel consumption;
 3. Creating and designing cleaner, more sustainable aviation and marine fleets that can operate with less carbon footprint.

QUESTION: *Can you give us a sense of where efforts across the rest of the federal government (outside of defence) will be focused in the near, and medium term?*

Nick Xenos

- Near- and medium-term efforts across the federal government's departments will be made in the following areas:
 - Capacity-building in order to analyze how to create zero carbon buildings and fleet;
 - Developing zero carbon heating and electricity systems;
 - Educating industries on green options;
 - Mobilizing departments to buy green;
 - Advancing climate resilient infrastructures.



QUESTION: *What kind of innovation/technology is the Department seeking to help advance its greening objectives?*

Saleem Sattar

- DND is working with academic, industry-and science-based partners to establish new innovations in the following areas:
- Heating: DND has launched a green heat test drive to find innovative solutions to roll out low carbon, counter sequencing issues, and low intensity heat.
- Deployment operations: DND is focusing on redesigning relocatable tent camps for environmental and energy reasons, but also to lessen the logistical burden for the CAF.
- Operational fronts: DND is operating projects, which evaluate microgram electricity generation for camps, as well as methods of maximizing naval operations, navigations, and simulations.

► About the Author

Lily Schricker is an undergraduate student at Bishop's University, pursuing an honours degree in International Relations and Politics. For the past two years, she has been coordinating the Québec Undergraduate Student Conference under the supervision of Dr. Sarah-Myriam Martin-Brûlé, Associate Professor at Bishop's University. Currently, Lily Schricker is co-authoring a journal article under the Consortium on Electoral Democracy on the design of an Indigenous voting behaviour study in Northwest Territories, Canada, alongside Dr. Jerald Sabin, Assistant Professor in the School of Public Policy and Administration at Carleton University. Lily is a student collaborator under the Network for Strategic Analysis (NSA) and member of the Équipe de recherche sur la politique internationale des conflits civils (ÉPICC). As part of her interest in International Relations, Lily completed an internship as a constituency assistant for the Green Party in Germany (2021). Lily is a trilingual student (French, English, German).

► Canadian Global Affairs Institute

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