CANSEC 2019 ALLOWED defence firms from Canada and around the world to put the spotlight on their top systems and unique technologies they hope to offer the Canadian Armed Forces.

The Italian aerospace firm, Leonardo, had a major presence at the trade show in Ottawa at the end of May, highlighting its capabilities both for air training and search and rescue.

Alessandro Profumo, Leonardo’s Chief Executive Officer, told Espirit de Corps, that the firm has a major presence in Canada with around 400 staff. It has recently opened an office in Ottawa to be closer to its customers in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

One of the key programs for the company is the Cormorant helicopter mid-life upgrade, said Profumo. That upgrade will expand the life of the search and rescue helicopters to 2040, he added.

“It’s very very important to improve the search and rescue capability,” Profumo explained. ”It also has significant involvement of local companies. The local supply chain will be involved and developed thanks to this program.”

He said he expects the upgrade contract to be finalized next year.

Leonardo is also focused on the RCAF’s Future Aircrew Training Program. The company is one of five firms that the Canadian government has qualified to bid on the program.

Leonardo is looking at providing the training services, the fixed-wing aircraft and the helicopters needed for the training project. It could also provide platforms to other firms that are qualified for the Future Aircrew Training Program. “We think we have the capability to provide the overall service but we are open also to other flexible solutions,” Profumo said. “Both in fixed wing and helicopters we think we have very good solutions in terms of platforms.”

What the firm offers Canada for the program still has to be decided, depending on the specific requirements the federal government comes up with. “It is still in the process of being defined,” Profumo noted. “We are following very closely how this will develop.”

SAAB made a splash at CANSEC 2109 with its push to position its Gripen E as the solution for Canada’s future fighter jet program. The Swedish aerospace firm has been highlighting the fact that if Canada so desires, it could build the aircraft in the country, making maximum use of the expertise of domestic firms and creating high-tech jobs. The Liberal government has been emphasizing the transfer of new technology and expertise to Canadian aerospace firms as well as the creation of high-tech jobs as among its key goals for the fighter jet program.

Airbus has also suggested it could also build its Typhoon fighters in Canada, but Saab said if the federal government wants the planes built on a domestic production line its commitment is solid.

For the Canadian program, Saab is hoping to follow the same process that helped it win a recent fighter jet competition in Brazil. The first batch of Gripen E fighter jets are being built in Sweden but the technology is then being transferred to Brazilian firms so they can assemble the remaining aircraft.

“We think that is the model that makes sense for Canada,” said Patrick Palmer, senior vice-president of Saab Canada. “We’re going down that path but we’re also looking at how the request for proposals is written and what the customer values. Certainly, if that is what the customer values for Canada that is something that we can easily do.”

The Gripen E is the newest of the fighter jets being offered to Canada. The first Gripen E for the Swedish military is expected to be delivered later this year. The first of the 36 aircraft ordered by Brazil in a $5-billion program will be delivered in 2021.
“The Swedish aerospace firm has been highlighting the fact that if Canada so desires, it could build the aircraft in the country, making maximum use of the expertise of domestic firms and creating high-tech jobs.”

Per Alriksson of Saab Aeronautics said the Gripen is designed specifically for operations in the Arctic, giving it a leg up on other planes. “Sweden has air force bases in what you call the far North,” he added. “We operate there daily. (The Gripen) has Arctic DNA built into it.”

Alriksson said the Gripen E can operate from remote airfields in the north, landing and taking off on runways less than 800 metres in length. It has a quick turnaround time for missions, with technicians able to reload and refuel the planes in 10 minutes. “It is pretty good in operating in dispersed locations as you have in Canada,” he added.

Naval Group briefed journalists on its long-term goal to continue its presence in Canada, including focusing on what will be an eventual replacement of the Royal Canadian Navy’s Victoria-class submarines. The firm has highlighted its capabilities in this area, in particular its key role in Australia’s new submarine program.

In February, Naval Group and Australia signed a contract worth $46 billion Canadian to build 12 Attack-class submarines. The deal also emphasizes Naval Group providing new technologies to Australia.

Logistik used CANSEC to highlight its extensive experience in providing uniforms to the Canadian Armed Forces and militaries around the world. The company’s name is well known to Canadian military personnel as it has been supplying the Department of National Defence for more than 20 years.

Logistik points out that it offers key elements of the Integrated Soldier System and supports over 317,000 individual Canadian users working in a wide variety of corporate and government organizations such as National Defence, Canada Border Services Agency, Canada Post and Correctional Service Canada.

It also owns Australian Defence Apparel which was originally established in 1912. That firm is responsible for the manufacture of the expertly of domestic firms and creating high-tech jobs.”

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Although there were few details about the new ship project, Trudeau said the vessels are needed because of the declining state of the Canadian Coast Guard fleet. “Canadians deserve better than having this fleet rust out, and dealing with this problem is long overdue,” Trudeau told journalists.

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., CAE Canada, MDA, and L3 WESCAM used CANSEC to announce they were expanding their Team SkyGuardian to include even more Canadian companies. Team SkyGuardian Canada is a group of firms who support the MQ-9B SkyGuardian produced by General Atomics to fulfill Canada’s remotely piloted aircraft system requirements.

To expand the team, General Atomics and the associated companies will hold a series of industry engagements across Canada. Various companies can brief the team on their core business capabilities. Team SkyGuardian could offer Canadian industry various business opportunities in the Canadian remotely piloted aircraft system project and across the global fleet of more than 400 MQ-9 aircraft flying throughout the world. While current Team SkyGuardian members represent the larger defence and aerospace companies in Canada, General Atomics hopes the upcoming industry engagements will emphasize small and medium-sized firms.

Collins Aerospace Systems showcased a variety of systems, including its capabilities in space and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance as well as wide band HF technology. It is also focusing on five areas for the Canadian Forces in the future. Those are the Canadian Surface Combatant, Joint Fires, tactical communications, the future fighter and the Future Aircrew Training Program, Lee Obst, managing director, Mission Systems in Canada for Collins Aerospace, told Esprit de Corps.

Obst said the company has been growing steadily in Canada and in the last five years has more than doubled in size. Collins Aerospace in Canada currently has 1,200 people and in excess of $1 billion in revenue.

General Dynamics Land Systems – Canada has for years been an anchor for CANSEC and this year was no different.

The London, Ont. firm showcased its continued expansion of the Light Armoured Vehicle 6.0 family of vehicles. It displayed the LAV 6.0 Combat Support Vehicle (CSV) Maintenance and Recovery Vehicle (MRV), and a 1:10 scale model representative of a LAV 6.0 Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD) solution.

The LAV 6.0 MRV uses the fielded LAV 6.0 baseline incorporating variant role-specific solutions that offer highly protected mobile recovery, repair and maintenance capabilities, the company pointed out. It also provides integral recovery and maintenance capabilities with the necessary tools and spare equipment. The LAV 6.0 MRV has the same high level of protection and mobility capability as the baseline configuration, plus the added capabilities to recover a deeply mired vehicle, and perform maintenance across a full spectrum of operations, General Dynamics officials said.

The LAV 6.0 GBAD sensors and specialized weapons systems provide tactical air defence protection to friendly forces and vital installations during operations.
I understand the operational necessity of having our fighter aircraft based in these northern bases. However, the question begs, do our pilots and their families need to be permanently based there?

What if our fighter squadrons were officially based in major urban centres for all of their administrative duties, with simulator training capabilities, like firefighters who rotate shifts living at the fire hall? Why not simply transport the pilots and ground crew into Bagotville and Cold Lake when they are to conduct their actual flying operations? Obviously, in a time of crisis it would be a case of all-hands-on-deck, and in such circumstances you would really not want all the families there anyway. Even flying for the airlines, flight crews spend days away from their families if they are on the long haul routes. Under such a system of commuting in and out of forward operating fighter bases, the spouses could enjoy the career opportunities of a major city, which they are denied under the current arrangement.

Cash bonuses for signing and retention of personnel might work in the short term, but it is necessary to sort out a longer-term solution. There is no indication that the global demand for skilled aviators is going to diminish in the foreseeable future, and RCAF pilots are among the best in the world. It costs a fortune to train such pilots, so perhaps it is time we get more creative about keeping them in uniform. Dangling a cash carrot won’t fool them for long. Follow us on Twitter @EDC_Mag.

FEATURE — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

Besides being part of Team SkyGuardian, CAE had its other business ventures to highlight at CANSEC 2019. It has been awarded a subcontract from Lockheed Martin Canada to begin work during the design phase of the Canadian Surface Combatant ship program. During the design phase over the next several years, CAE will support combat systems training needs analysis and training media analysis that will contribute to the overall CSC training system design, the firm noted. In addition, CAE will provide human factors engineering and professional services to input to the design of critical spaces aboard the ship as well as support the establishment of an integrated data environment.

Besides the successful Asterix conversion, Davie had been keen on promoting its shipyard capabilities and highlight that it is the largest yard in Canada. To support future shipbuilding requirements, the Canadian government intends to add a third Canadian shipyard as a partner under the national shipbuilding strategy, the government noted. The government stated it will move forward with a competitive process to select the third shipyard in the coming months with industry officials pointing to Davie in Quebec as a front-runner in that process.

Trudeau also hinted that Davie could become that third shipyard. “We recognize that it’s an opportunity for Davie to apply to become that third shipbuilding facility because there will be a tremendous amount of work in the coming years for workers in our shipbuilding industry right across the country from coast to coast, to coast,” Trudeau said.

HISTORY FEATURE — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

Ware’s tactical headquarters was taking a lot of mortar and artillery fire, resulting in casualties. Fragments from a mortar bomb which struck a nearby building killed Captain R. Shelton, the Forward Observation Officer for the 3rd Field Regiment, RCA. Then Major G. Rankin, representing the commander of the 3rd Field Regiment, was shot in the leg. During the move up to February, Lieutenant Donald Gower had become separated from Ware’s party. As the commander of the antitank gun platoon, Gower was to stick with Ware until it was determined where and how the guns should be deployed. Reaching the edge of the woods and seeing wire up ahead, Gower realized he had gone too far and began retracing his steps.

Once, when the shelling eased, Gower asked the man lying next to him if he had seen Ware. Getting no response, Gower shook him and only then realized that the man had been killed seconds earlier by flying shrapnel. Pressing on, Gower found some more men huddled behind a tank. As he started asking them about Ware, another massive counter-barrage crashed down and everyone piled under the tank for cover. Suddenly the tank, which the infantry had thought derelict, fired up its engine and pivoted. Men clawed their way out from under the tank, rolling this way and that to avoid the grinding tracks. Gower found himself alone under the tank, scrambling to escape. Reaching under to grab his hand, a soldier dragged him clear. It was obvious that the PPLCU attack was collapsing.

ANSWERS TO THE TRIVIA QUESTIONS ON PAGE 58:
1. HM Queen Elizabeth II
2. They all died by suicide.
3. The D-VII (187 mph vs. 182 mph).
4. Sir Sam Hughes, (recommended twice by Sir Sam Hughes!).
5. After the Polar Medal, before the Centennial Medal.
6. Seven
7. He was assassinated in Ottawa.
8. Minden (1 August vs. 13 September 1759.)
9. 87.6 mm.
10. Five (Charlie, Mike, Oscar, Romeo, Victor)