



ALBERTA AVIATION,
AEROSPACE & DEFENCE

YOUR PROVINCIAL COUNCIL, WORKING FOR YOU



ALBERTA AVIATION AEROSPACE & DEFENCE SUMMIT

MAY 3-5, 2026

EDMONTON CONVENTION CENTRE

ONE VISION. ONE MISSION.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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VICKI NGUY



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NICOLA MCFARLANE



MALEEHA NAVEED

AGENDA: MAY 4

Tradeshow Hours: 9:00-16:00 ■ AME Competition: 9:30-16:00 ■

B2B Meetings: 11:00-16:00 ■

- 7:30** Breakfast: Inspiring Leadership, Inspiring Progress: Women Transforming the Future (*Limited Seating: Advanced Registration Required*) ■
- 9:00** Opening Ceremony ■
- 9:45** One Vision. One Mission. ■
- 10:30** Break ■
- 11:00**
- Overview of the Defence Industrial Strategy ■
 - Indigenous Industry Partnerships ■
 - Advancing Aerospace & Aviation Manufacturing in Alberta - How the Ecosystem Can Scale ■
- 12:00** Lunch ■
- 13:15**
- Modernizing the Canadian Armed Forces: Building the Force of the Future ■
 - Propelling Change: Sustainability in Aviation ■
 - NAV CANADA: Navigating the Future: The Evolution of Canada's Airspace ■
- 14:00**
- Investing in Alberta's Aviation, Aerospace, & Defence Sectors ■
 - Technology and the Future of Aircraft Maintenance ■
- 14:45**
- Defending the Aerospace Frontier in a New Era of Threats ■
 - Airports as Economic and Community Enablers ■
 - Pitch Competition: *Emerging Disruptive Technologies* ■
- 18:00** Evening Gala (cocktail attire, *additional ticket required - \$99/person*) ■
- Gala Cocktail Hour
 - Formal Dinner
 - Awards Ceremony
 - Emerging Disruptive Technologies Pitch Competition Finale with Live Audience Voting

■ De Havilland Hall (Hall D)

■ YYC Calgary Airport Room (D2)

■ Riverview Room

■ Salons 8/9

■ Salons 10

AGENDA: MAY 5

Tradeshow Hours: 9:00-16:00 ■ AME Competition: 9:30-15:00 ■

B2B Meetings: 9:00-12:00 ■

- 8:00 Coffee & Refreshments ■
- 9:00 Welcome Back! ■
- 9:10 Waste Parrot: From Backyard Dreams to Lunar Reality ■
- 9:45 Break ■
- 10:00
- Industrial and Technological Benefits (ITB) Policy Overview & How to Get Involved in Defence ■
 - Advanced Air Mobility: Unlocking the Sky for Rural Prosperity ■
 - Multi-Use: Where Civil Innovation Meets Defence Reality ■
- 10:45
- Technology Partnership to Advance Alberta: Unifying Our Voices for Arctic Security & Sovereignty ■
 - How Technology is Driving Changes in the Aviation and Multimodal Logistics Space ■
 - Airline Operations in a Changing Landscape ■
- 11:30
- Strengthening Defence and Security in Canada: The Risk of The North, Current Landscape and Future Directions ■
 - Transport Canada ■
 - Building the Future Workforce: Aligning Industry Needs with Talent Development ■
- 12:15 Lunch ■
- 13:00 Alberta Cybersecurity Forum 2026: Decision Superiority in the Age of Adaptive AI ■
- 13:45 Space Superiority and Why it Matters ■
- 14:30 Summit Wrap-Up ■
- 14:45 AME Awards ■

■ De Havilland Hall (Hall D)

■ YYC Calgary Airport Room (D2)

■ Riverview Room

■ Salons 8/9

■ Salons 10

Kendra Kincade

President & CEO, Chair



Distinguished Guests and Colleagues,

It is a profound pleasure to welcome you to the 2026 Summit. As you open this program and prepare for the days ahead, you are joining a collective of visionaries, operators, and leaders who define the strength of Alberta's aviation, aerospace, and defence sectors. This year marks our most ambitious gathering to date - a testament to the incredible momentum we have built together.

At the core of our mission is the conviction that a unified Provincial Council is the essential engine for our industry's elevation. We have been tireless in our efforts to deepen the strategic relationships between industry, government, and military leadership. These connections are the bedrock of our success; by aligning our goals and speaking with a single, clear voice, we ensure Alberta remains at the forefront of global innovation and operational excellence.

Our growth as a Council is driven by a commitment to be more meaningful to you, our members. Whether we are fostering the disruptive spirit of our inaugural Pitch Competition or inspiring the 400 students walking the tradeshow floor, we are intentionally bridging the gap between today's achievements and tomorrow's potential. We are not just observing the evolution of our industry; we are architecting it.

I encourage you to use this Summit as a catalyst for connection. The conversations started here - in B2B meetings, during networking sessions, and across our multi-use forums - will shape the trajectory of our province for years to come.

Thank you for your unwavering partnership and for your commitment to our shared vision. Together, we are reaching new heights.

Nancy Paish

Summit Committee Chair



On behalf of the Alberta Aviation, Aerospace and Defence Summit planning committee, it is my absolute pleasure to welcome you to this important gathering of industry leaders, innovators, and professionals.

This Summit represents an extraordinary opportunity for us to come together, share insights, explore new opportunities, and shape the future of aviation, aerospace, and defence in Alberta and beyond. It is a time for collaboration, celebration, and strategic thinking as we work to grow and strengthen this vital sector.

An event of this caliber does not come together without the dedication and hard work of many. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our planning committee, whose commitment and tireless efforts have made this Summit possible. To our generous sponsors — your support has been instrumental in creating an event that truly reflects the vibrancy and potential of our industry.

To the many volunteers who have given their time and energy, thank you for your enthusiasm and professionalism. Your contributions are what help create a welcoming and seamless experience for all.

And to our attendees and industry members: thank you for being here. Your participation, ideas, and passion drive our industry forward. Your engagement throughout the Summit — in sessions, networking opportunities, and discussions — will ensure this event is not only successful but impactful for the future of aviation, aerospace, and defence in our province.

Together, we are building a stronger, more connected, and more resilient industry. I look forward to the conversations, partnerships, and innovations that will emerge from our time together.

Welcome to the Summit!

Kim Van Vliet & Jeff LaFrenz *Aerospace & Defence Co-Chairs*



On behalf of Alberta Aviation, Aerospace & Defence, and our partners, we are pleased to welcome you to this important gathering of leaders, innovators, and collaborators shaping the future of aviation, aerospace, and defence in Alberta and across Canada.

This summit comes at a pivotal moment. Global security dynamics, technological acceleration, and the need for resilient domestic industrial capacity are converging in ways that demand bold thinking and coordinated action.



Alberta is uniquely positioned to play a defining role in this landscape—bringing together advanced manufacturing, emerging technologies, energy expertise, and a growing innovation ecosystem. Over the course of this program, you will engage with leaders from industry, government, academia, and the defence community to explore opportunities for collaboration, commercialization, and capability development. Our shared objective is clear: to strengthen Canada's sovereign capabilities while building globally competitive industries rooted here in Alberta.

We encourage you to take full advantage of the conversations, connections, and insights that will emerge throughout the summit. The relationships formed here—and the ideas sparked—have the potential to translate into real-world impact across the aviation, aerospace, and defence sectors.

Thank you for being part of this important dialogue and for contributing to the future of Canada's defence and industrial ecosystem.

Nicole Noseworthy, *AME Competition Committee Chair*



On behalf of the Aircraft Maintenance Competition Committee, we are excited to welcome competitors, sponsors, industry partners, and the hundreds of students attending from across Alberta to experience the world of aviation and aircraft maintenance.

This event highlights the incredible talent, professionalism, and opportunities within the aviation maintenance industry while giving students the chance to explore rewarding careers in aviation and aerospace. Through hands-on competition, networking, and industry engagement, we hope this experience inspires the next generation of aviation professionals.

A sincere thank you to our sponsors and partners whose generous support makes this event possible. Your commitment to aviation education and workforce development helps create meaningful opportunities for students and future AMEs across Alberta.

We would also like to recognize the Aircraft Maintenance Competition Committee members who work diligently behind the scenes to organize and deliver such a fun, engaging, and successful event. Their dedication and countless hours of effort are instrumental in bringing this competition to life each year.

Thank you to everyone attending, participating, and supporting this event. We wish all competitors the very best of luck and hope you enjoy an outstanding two days of teamwork, engagement, and competition!

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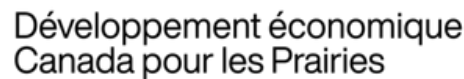
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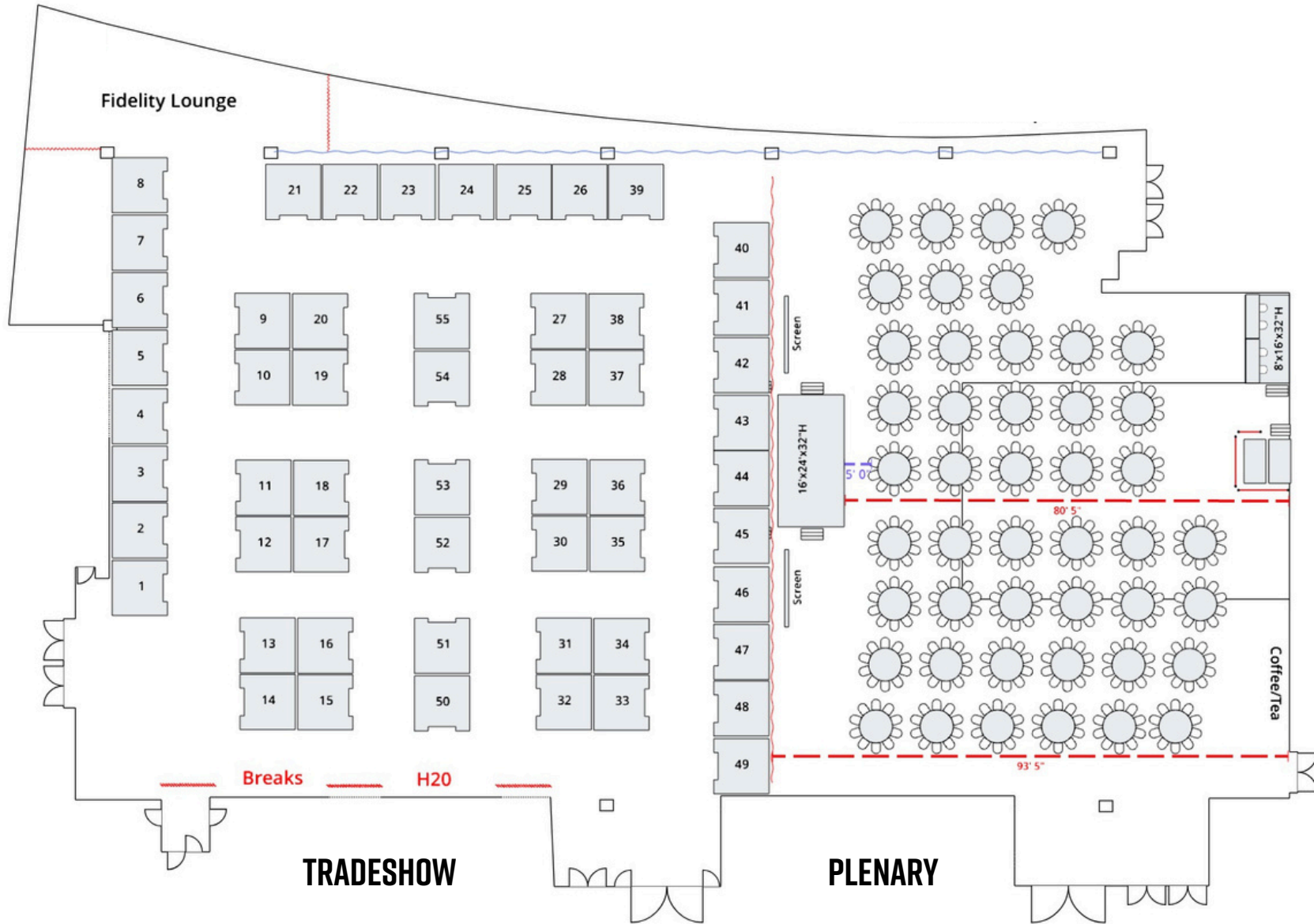
COMPETITION TEAMS



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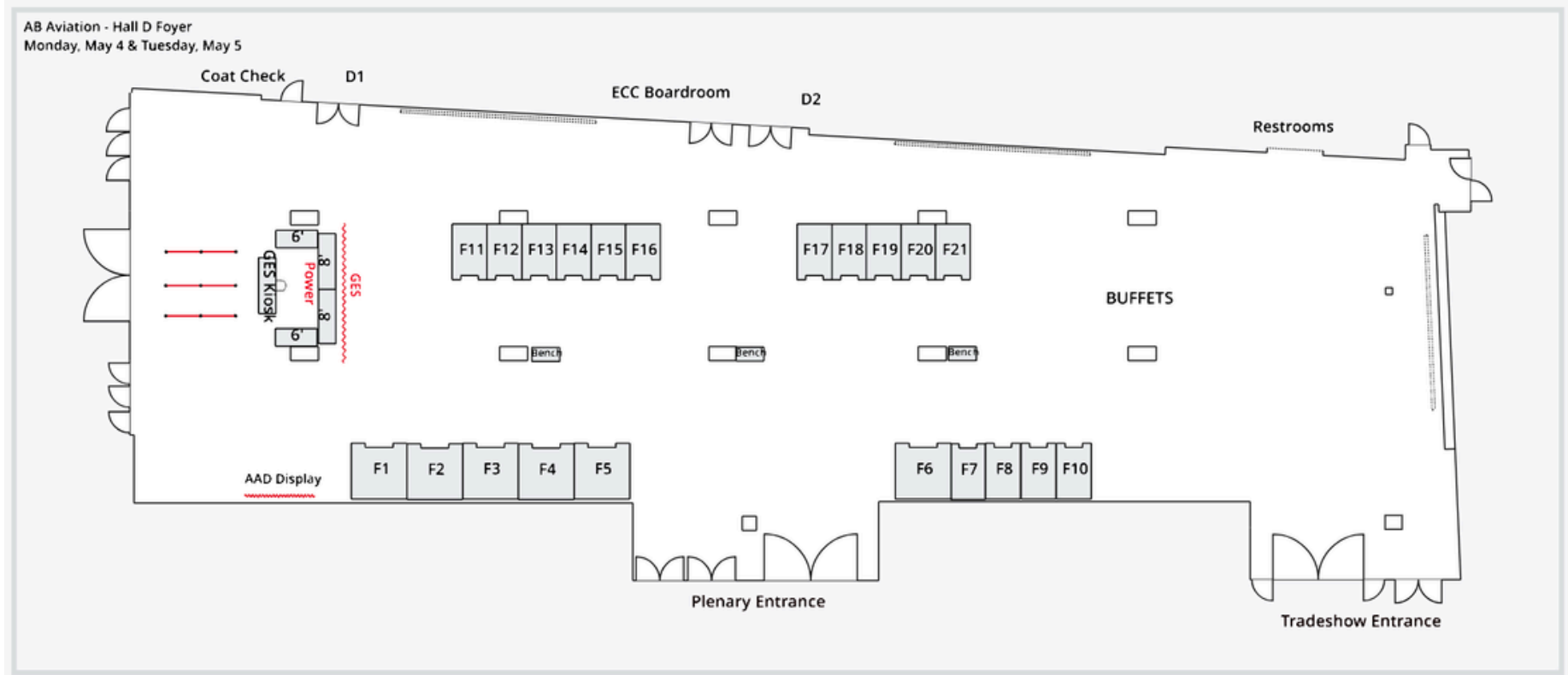
DE HAVILLAND HALL (HALL D)



DE HAVILLAND HALL TRADESHOW EXHIBITORS (HALL D)

Booth #	Exhibitor	Booth #	Exhibitor	Booth #	Exhibitor
1	Social Drones	20	Evident Scientific	39	Phase Metron
2	Vi by VisorPRO	21	Sky Hunter	40	Rosenau Transport - GLS Canada
3	Richardson Executive Search	22	M2M Tech	41	Red Deer Regional Airport
4	MakeSens Inc.	23	Spectra Cann	42	Red Deer Polytechnic
5	Evertz Microsystems	24	Elementiam Materials and Manufacturing	43	Snap-On Tools
6	Taylor Toolworks	25	Runwithit Synthetics	44	NAV CANADA
7	Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security (IDEaS)	26	Pazh PowerTrain Inc.	45	City of Medicine Hat
8	Arctic Defence Logistics Platform (BBE & Det'on Cho Logistics)	27	Carbert Waite LLP	46	Extensive Energy Technology Partnership (EETP)
9	Calgary Airport Authority (YYC)	28	Industrial Machine	47	Agereh Technologies
10	Morson Edge	29	Stress Engineering Services Canada	48	123 Cyber Inc.
11	NAIT	30	Mountain View County	49	Fidelity Manufacturing Group
12	YEG FBO Services	31	Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan)	50	U&C UAS LLC
13	Next Level Manufacturing	32	YEG	51	U&C UAS LLC
14	Nanotess	33	ERDA	52	Canadian Armed Forces
15	Edge Production	34	Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)	53	Canadian Armed Forces
16	LOF Defence Systems	35	ScopeAR	54	Rapid3D
17	Hexagon	36	Space=Defence Technologies Alberta (SDTech AB)	55	GoEngineer
18	Sterling Defence Group	37	TK Array		
19	XYZ Routers and WARDJet Waterjets	38	Vidir		

DE HAVILLAND HALL (HALL D) FOYER



DE HAVILLAND HALL (HALL D) FOYER: START-UP CENTRAL & ACADEMIC ALLEY

Booth #	Exhibitor	Booth #	Exhibitor
F1	Alberta AAD	F12	Pegasus
F2	STEM Collegiate	F13	eOutdoors Ltd./North Forge Mobility
F3	Northern Lights Aero Foundation	F14	Kr8ive Innovations Lab
F4	Alberta College of Aeronautics	F15	Western Canada Aerospace Initiative
F5	University of Calgary	F16	TARKKA Manufacturing Solutions Inc
F6	Elevate Aviation	F17	Pawlutions Ltd.
F7	Veteran's House Canada	F18	Osprey System
F8	Alberta Counsel	F19	InovativAI Ltd.
F9	Firestar Robotics	F20	Water Strider Inc.
F10	Praetorian Studios	F21	Aurora Fluid Systems
F11	True North Ballistics		

Private Breakfast: Inspiring Leadership, Inspiring Progress | May 4 | 7:30-8:45

This event offers a unique opportunity to hear from a select group of leaders about the latest trends, initiatives, and innovations shaping aviation, aerospace, and defense. Our theme, *Women Transforming the Future*, highlights the vision and impact of women driving progress across these industries.



Michele Evans, *Assistant Deputy Minister*
Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan)

Michele provides leadership to PrairiesCan, the federal government's regional economic development agency in Alberta. Michele has been a public servant for nearly 20 years, holding senior leadership positions with the Government of Alberta in sectors like immigration, workforce, tourism, economic development and health. Before entering public service, Michele worked in the private sector in the pharmaceutical industry.



Callie Lissinna, *VP, Strategic Relations & Co-Founder*
Wyvern

Callie Lissinna co-founded Wyvern, the first company to sell hyperspectral imagery from space. She graduated from the Y Combinator startup accelerator with her co-founders in 2022 and from Creative Destruction Lab (Toronto, space stream) in 2019. She has held various roles in business operations, leadership, engineering, and sales, and has helped the company raise over \$24MM in funding to date. Previously she managed the AlbertaSat student satellite program at the University of Alberta.



Meghan Donohoe, *Co-Founder*
Pebble

Dr. Meghan Donohoe is a leadership practitioner and researcher with nearly two decades of experience working inside organizations and alongside leaders across industries. With a PhD in Industrial-Organizational Psychology focused on leader stress and well-being, her work focuses on how leaders can perform, support their teams, and navigate complexity - all at the same time. Meghan partners with organizations navigating change to challenge outdated norms and build more intentional, sustainable ways of working.



LCol Riel Erickson, *Team Lead Women, Peace and Security & Elsie Initiative & CAF Liaison Officer to Women, Peace and Security Ambassador Global Affairs*

LCol Erickson is Canada's fifth female fighter pilot and a senior officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Raised in Alberta, she was inspired to serve after watching her uncle deploy as a CF-18 pilot during the Gulf War. She earned a degree in Chemical and Materials Engineering from the Royal Military College of Canada before completing the Fighter Pilot Course in 2006, where she received the Top Gun Award for air-to-ground excellence. Her career spans CF-18 operations, multinational exercises, pilot instruction, and command of 2 Canadian Forces Flying Training School.

Opening Ceremony - Welcome | May 4 | 9:00 -9:30



Kendra Kincade, *President & CEO, Chair Alberta Aviation, Aerospace & Defence (Alberta AAD)*

Kendra Kincade is an accomplished Air Traffic Controller and a former Honorary Colonel with the RCAF's 417 Helicopter Squadron. As the current Chair of the Alberta AAD, Kendra is driving forward a bold vision to grow Alberta's aviation, aerospace and defence sectors. With over 25 years in the industry, She is committed to positioning Alberta as a national leader in innovation, investment, and opportunity.

Kendra's work has earned widespread recognition, including the IATA Inspirational Role Model Award, the Trailblazer Award from the Northern Lights Aero Foundation, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal and the King Charles III Coronation Medal. She has also been named a SHEInnovator by UN Women and a Woman of Inspiration by the Universal Women's Network.

Provincial Greetings



Justin Wright, *MLA Cypress-Medicine Hat & Military Liaison Government of Alberta*

With over 20 years of experience in entrepreneurship, business management, and public service, MLA Wright has established himself as a multifaceted leader. As the founder of Fryer Tuck's Food Truck Inc., Wright successfully scaled the business to eight locations in just 18 months. He was recently appointed Parliamentary Secretary of Rural Health-South, Chief Caucus Whip.

Federal Greetings



Michele Evans, *Assistant Deputy Minister*
Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan)

Michele provides leadership to PrairiesCan, the federal government's regional economic development agency in Alberta. Michele has been a public servant for nearly 20 years, holding senior leadership positions with the Government of Alberta in sectors like immigration, workforce, tourism, economic development and health. Before entering public service, Michele worked in the private sector in the pharmaceutical industry.



Jamie Melo, *Associate Director of Operations, Edmonton, Western and Yukon Region, Civil Aviation*
Transport Canada

In his current role, Jamie is responsible for civil aviation operational oversight and regulatory compliance across the region. He developed an early passion for aviation as an air cadet with the 604 Squadron based in Calgary. He pursued this interest by enrolling at SAIT, where he earned his Aircraft Maintenance Engineer certification—an essential first step into the aviation industry. Jamie began his career in aviation maintenance in the Calgary area, working with several commercial approved maintenance organizations and air operators. He joined Transport Canada in 1997 as an Airworthiness Inspector in the Edmonton office.

Alberta AAD: Your Provincial Council Working For You - One Vision. One Mission. | May 4 | 9:00-9:15



Kendra Kincade, *President & CEO, Chair*
Alberta Aviation, Aerospace & Defence (Alberta AAD)

Kendra Kincade is an accomplished Air Traffic Controller and a former Honorary Colonel with the RCAF's 417 Helicopter Squadron. As the current Chair of the Alberta AAD, Kendra is driving forward a bold vision to grow Alberta's aviation, aerospace and defence sectors. With over 25 years in the industry, She is committed to positioning Alberta as a national leader in innovation, investment, and opportunity.

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One Vision. One Mission. | May 4 | 9:45-10:30

Continuing the conversation: Discover how Alberta is bringing its aviation, aerospace, and defence sectors together. From breaking down silos to creating a unified industry voice, this dynamic group of speakers offer a high-level look at the province's shared vision and the opportunities it creates for everyone in the sector. Be inspired by what's next for Alberta's industry.



Malcolm Bruce, *Retired CEO*
Edmonton Global

Malcolm Bruce is the former Chief Executive Officer of Edmonton Global, where he served as the organization's inaugural leader and helped establish the region's first unified economic development corporation. During his tenure, Malcolm worked to strengthen the Edmonton Metropolitan Region's global competitiveness by attracting investment, championing regional collaboration, and bringing together the collective strengths of 14 municipal partners. He recently retired from this role after guiding the organization through its foundational years and establishing a long-term growth vision.



Myron Keehn, *President & CEO*
Edmonton International Airport (YEG)

Myron's 30 years of experience working in the private and public sectors in North and South America, Asia, and Europe help him to see and implement new and effective approaches to airport developments and operations. In Myron's 17 years at Edmonton Airports, he has driven the development of YEG's Airport City Sustainability Campus - an ecosystem of companies driving innovation in e-commerce, cargo/logistics, advanced manufacturing, and pharma. His vision and tenacity have attracted over \$1.2B USD of private investment to YEG. Myron's mission is to recast the roles that airports play, evolving beyond utilities into economic engines for cities, regions and countries.



LCol Tristan McKee, *Commanding Officer, Squadron 401*
Royal Canadian Air Force

LCol McKee was born in Whitby, Ontario, graduated from the Royal Military College of Canada in 2003 with a degree in Computer Engineering and earned his pilot wings in 2004. He completed fighter training in Cold Lake and served with 425 Squadron in Bagotville, later returning as an Instructor Pilot on both the CT-155 Hawk and CF-18 Hornet. Promoted to Major in 2014, he held key roles including Training Officer and Operations Officer with 401 Squadron. He also served at NORAD Headquarters in Colorado Springs in strategic planning and leadership roles. After completing the Joint Command and Staff Program in 2023, he returned to Cold Lake and now serves as Commanding Officer of 401 Squadron. He deployed twice on Operation IMPACT, accumulating over 200 combat flight hours over Iraq and Syria.



Phillippe Poutissou, *VP*
De Havilland Defence

Phillippe leads De Havilland Canada's engagements with government and defence customers seeking specialized solutions based on De Havilland aircraft, including the Twin Otter Guardian and Special Mission Dash 8s. He also oversees the exploration of future production opportunities for De Havilland Defence. With 30 years of experience in the Canadian Aerospace industry, Phillippe has broad professional expertise that supports DHC's vision to keep the existing fleet flying and to develop versatile dual-use aerospace solutions for commercial and defence applications. His deep specialization in turboprop aircraft markets and operations supports the continued advancement of De Havilland Canada's portfolio of aircraft programs.



Luc Sabourin, *VP, Canadian Operations & General Manager*
Arcfield Canada

Luc Sabourin leads the strategic planning to advance future business opportunities and scale the Canadian Operations. Luc started his career in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), where he served as Commanding Officer 1 Air Maintenance Squadron (1 AMS) in Cold Lake, Alberta where he managed preventive and corrective maintenance operations in support of the CF-18 fighter aircraft. He was later appointed as Director A4 Maintenance at 1 Canadian Air Division Headquarter in Winnipeg, Manitoba where he was responsible for the standards and management of all RCAF aircraft maintenance operations.



John Edelman, *VP, Business Development*
CAE Defence & Security Canada

John is a former Royal Canadian Air Force aerospace engineer with 32 years of tactical, operational, and strategic experience, including deployment to Afghanistan. He has specialized in unmanned systems since 2008, supporting platforms such as the CU-161 Sperwer and CU-170 Heron. Following his military career, John joined CAE Defence & Security, where he has led international training system programs across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. He currently leads CAE's partnership with General Atomics on Team SkyGuardian, supporting Canada's remotely piloted aircraft system competition and advancing next-generation defence capabilities.

Municipal Greetings | May 4 | 10:30-10:35



Andrew Knack, *Mayor*
City of Edmonton

Mayor Knack is a three-term Edmonton City Councillor representing the west end in Wards 1 and Nakota Isga. A U of A commerce graduate, he previously managed a retail business and served on local community league boards. First elected in 2013, Andrew is known for his collaborative, community-focused leadership and commitment to public service. He has led key initiatives in public engagement, transportation innovation, and accessibility, and championed projects including the Lewis Farms Recreation Centre and Library. Andrew brings an open, optimistic approach while advocating for practical solutions that support residents and strengthen communities.

Canada's Western Hub for Defence & Security



The Edmonton region is the only place in Western Canada where geography, innovation and industry come together to deliver Canada's defence and security priorities. The Edmonton Region Defence Alliance (ERDA) is advancing a coordinated regional strategy to attract defence investment, support dual-use innovation and strengthen Canada's industrial base.

Why Edmonton

- **Strategic location:** Gateway to the North
- **Supply Chain Resiliency:** Port Alberta and Canada's largest airport by land mass (Edmonton International Airport)
- **Industrial & Innovation Power:** Alberta's Industrial Heartland & globally recognized research ecosystem

Discover how Edmonton can support your defence objectives

www.edmontonglobal.ca/erda/

EDMONTON REGION DEFENCE ALLIANCE



ALLIANCE RÉGIONALE D'EDMONTON POUR LA DÉFENSE

Indigenous Industry Partnerships | May 4 | 11:00-12:00

This session will highlight the role of Indigenous participation and partnerships within Western Canada's aviation, aerospace, and defence sectors. Speakers will explore opportunities for meaningful engagement, economic participation, and long-term collaboration across industry, communities, and governments. The discussion will focus on building respectful partnerships, supporting Indigenous-led initiatives, and identifying pathways for shared growth across the sector.



Chelsey Quirk, *CEO*
Indigenous Tourism Alberta

As a proud Métis woman, Chelsey has spent much of her career advocating for Indigenous rights, diversity, equity, and inclusion through non-profit, government, and private sector positions. Following a rewarding career with the Government of Canada in Ottawa, Chelsey joined the team at Edmonton Airports in 2015 where she works to create meaningful and collaborative relationships that drive connectivity, economic growth and reconciliation for the Edmonton Metro Region. She led the opening of the first-of-its-kind Indigenous Interpretive and Retail Centre at YEG, shining a spotlight on the vibrant Indigenous history, culture, and retail offerings in and around the region.



Carmelita Crisp, *Manager, Indigenous Partnerships & Engagement*
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT)

Carmelita has spent over 20 years leading community-defined training, applied research, and partnership initiatives with more than 70 Indigenous communities across Western and Northern Canada. Her work focuses on co-developing culturally grounded education and research projects that support workforce development, environmental stewardship, and community capacity building. Carmelita currently leads Indigenous engagement for projects such as Future Skills Centre's Scaling for Impact. She also serves on NAIT's Research Ethics Board and founded the Indigenous Reconciliation and Leadership Advisory Council. Carmelita is also a citizen of the Métis Nation of Alberta.



From Talent to Technology

Alberta's Trusted Partner in Aviation, Aerospace & Defence

From skilled talent to breakthrough innovation, NAIT connects industry with workforce development, applied research, and partnerships that keep Alberta's aviation, aerospace, and defence sectors moving forward.



nait.ca/aerospace



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Cliffton Cross, Council Member
Frog Lake First Nations #121 & #122



Cliffton is proud to say that he was born and raised, attended K-12, graduated, married, and raised a family in his home First Nation. Councillor Cross holds the portfolios of Education, Child and Family Services, Youth and Recreation, Energy, Finance, Transportation, Economic Development, Housing, Capital Projects, Library/Archive and Data Management, this has brought his attention and focus to Capacity Development, Research & Innovation, Financial Planning, Community Mapping, and Economic Development with holistic Strategic/Integrated Ecosystem Planning through an Indigenous-led two-eyed seeing approach.

Ryan Fox, Program Manager
Des Nedhe Group Defence



With over three decades of cross-sector leadership, Ryan has built an exceptional career spanning aerospace and defence, public transportation, enterprise technology, and natural resources. Beginning in Edmonton in the 1990s, he developed deep expertise in complex, regulated industries before taking on national and international roles across Canada, the U.S., and Europe. A defining pillar of Ryan's career is his commitment to Indigenous economic reconciliation—successfully establishing joint ventures and partnerships across oil and gas, forestry, and defence that create sustainable, long-term opportunity.

Advancing Aerospace & Aviation Manufacturing in Alberta - How the Ecosystem Can Scale | May 4 | 11:00-12:00

This session will explore Alberta's evolving aviation, aerospace and defence manufacturing landscape. Panelists will discuss current capabilities, emerging opportunities, and what is needed to attract, grow, and retain manufacturing investment in the province. From global OEMs to local suppliers, the conversation will focus on collaboration, supply-chain readiness, workforce and regulatory considerations, and Alberta's value proposition as a manufacturing hub.



Chris Pavle, *VP, Aeronautical Division*
Amtech Aeronautical Limited

Chris has 32 years of experience in aircraft fleet support engineering, design, and certification. He is a graduate of SAIT's Aeronautical Engineering Technology program with diplomas in Mechanical Engineering and Advanced Aeronautical Engineering. Ten years was spent supporting DND fleets at Spar/CAE followed by 22 years of engineering and certification at Amtech Aeronautical where he currently holds the position of Vice President, Aeronautical Division. He is a Transport Canada Delegate with delegation in structures, mechanical systems, interiors, and powerplants.



Jeff Litster, *President, General Manager & Co-Founder*
Fidelity Manufacturing

For over 34 years, Jeff has played a very active role within Canada's manufacturing eco-system and is actively involved with all levels of government, academia, as well as private business and more recently has shifted his focus more towards business development specifically within the A&D sector. In 2012 Jeff was recognized in Calgary's top 40 under 40 and in 2019 as an EY Entrepreneur of the year finalist.



Dr. Robert Martinuzzi, *Associate Head (Research) & Professor, Schulich School of Engineering*
University of Calgary

Professor Martinuzzi is a Pratt & Whitney Canada Research Fellow and Professor of Fluid Mechanics. His fundamental area of research is the physics of turbulent, separated flows. His research strategy includes the development of reduced or low-order models for inter-scale energy transfer dynamics and applications to flow control as well as developing strategies for machine learning control. He is an expert in non-intrusive experimental techniques, especially in optical velocimetry (PIV, LDV). His work focuses on transport phenomena in bluff-body wakes, turbulent wakes, remote-sensing and fluid-structure interactions.



Dennis Hoepfner, *Aircraft Certification Consultant*
Upward Aviation Services Ltd.

Dennis has 50 years of experience in Aviation, 37 of which were in Transport Canada. In his current role as an Aircraft Certification Consultant, Dennis offers services in aircraft certification education, design approval assistance and aircraft imports. As an active Transport Canada delegate, Dennis supports companies in obtaining STCs and other design approvals, and has assisted in the import of aircraft where foreign design approvals require Transport Canada acceptance. In semi-retirement, his goal is to encourage the development of younger people in the aviation industry.

Overview of the Defence Industrial Strategy | May 4 |

11:00-12:00

This session will provide an overview of Canada's new Defence Industrial Strategy and its implications for the national defence and security ecosystem. The speaker will outline the strategy's core objectives, including strengthening domestic industrial capacity, enhancing supply chain resilience, supporting innovation and export growth, and aligning industry capabilities with evolving Canadian Armed Forces requirements. The talk will highlight how the strategy is expected to shape future procurement approaches, partnerships, and investment priorities, offering attendees insight into what the new framework may mean for Canadian companies, research institutions, and allied collaboration.



Elliot Hewitt, *Manager, Aerospace & Defence Initiatives, Alberta Region*
Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan)

Elliot has worked in a variety of sectors including tourism, retail sales, social work and even started his own company prior to joining the Government of Canada in 2000. Elliot began his public service career with Service Canada and later Agriculture Canada's Rural and Co-operatives promoting the federal government's role in economic development in rural communities across the prairies. He joined Western Economic Diversification(now PrairiesCan) in 2013 and has been supporting defence procurement activities for the department since 2015, now managing the Regional Defence Investment Initiative funding for Alberta.



Ravi Singh, *Director General Defence Industrial Strategy*
Department of National Defence

Ravi is a senior public servant with over two decades of experience leading policy, governance, and transformation initiatives across the Government of Canada. He has worked provincially, and federally across central agencies including TBS and PCO, and large and small departments, advising prime ministers, ministers, deputy ministers, and senior industry leaders on complex issues including national security, economic development, corporate accountability, and international affairs.



Colin MacNeil, *Acting Senior Director*

Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) Canada

In his current role, Colin leads work on the aerospace, defence and marine sectors. In his current role, he is responsible for providing strategic investment advice focused on advancing Canada's industrial, innovation and technological capabilities across civil, defence and dual-use applications. Since joining the federal government in 2006, Colin has taken on progressively senior roles in aerospace, skills development, economic policy and security, along with coordinating Canada's presence at international air shows. Colin holds a Master of Public Administration from Queen's University, a Bachelor of Commerce from Saint Mary's University and has completed the High Potentials Leadership Program at Harvard Business School.



LCol Kyle Welsh, *Pilot, Directorate Air Requirements - Combat 6 (Air Mobility Combat Capabilities)*,

Royal Canadian Air Force

LCol Welsh is a Royal Canadian Air Force pilot currently serving at RCAF Headquarters within the Directorate of Air Requirements as the Air Mobility Project Director. In this role, he leads several major capability initiatives, including the Strategic Tanker Transport Capability (STTC), the RCAF 105 Project - the mid-life upgrade of the CC130J Hercules fleet, and the CC177 Weapons Systems Trainer. His academic accomplishments include a degree in Commercial Aviation Management, a Masters in Public Administration, and a Masters in Defence Studies. His operational flying experience spans the CU170 Heron, CC177 Globemaster, and CC130J Hercules, with deployments on Op ATHENA, Op ATTENTION, Op IMPACT, Op PRESENCE, Op LENTUS, and multiple OPEN SKIES missions. He brings extensive operational, staff, and program management experience to air mobility force development and modernization.

Propelling Change: Sustainability in Aviation | May 4 | 13:15-14:00

This session explores how innovation, policy, and cross-sector collaboration are driving sustainable aviation. Moving beyond pledges, we'll examine real-world progress, investment trends, and the scalable solutions reshaping the future of flight.



Dan Juhlin, Principal
Juhlin Remote Pilot Consulting

Dan is a respected leader in the Canadian RPAS (Remotely Piloted Aircraft System) landscape with over a decade of experience spanning operations, analysis, policy development, and training. He has been instrumental in developing solutions that have advanced the Canadian RPAS ecosystem, with technical expertise in RPAS, GIS, spatial modeling, and remote sensing.



Chris Lohmann, *Energy and Sustainability Strategic Leader*
Boeing Canada

Chris began his career in the US Marine Corps as an F/A-18D Weapons and Sensors Officer. Currently, Chris leads innovation and market development for aerospace energy systems and sustainability in Canada for Boeing. Over a twenty-year career he has worked on energy security challenges in synthetic fuels, renewable energy, waste-to-energy, energy storage, EV infrastructure, and microgrids. Prior to Boeing, he led the performance warranty group at Energi Insurance, underwriting and insuring the technical and engineering risk of emerging energy technologies to support project financing.



David C. Bressler, *Professor & VP, International, Innovation & Enterprise*
University of Alberta

In his current role, Dr. Bressler leads the international strategy with oversight over the International Global Partnerships, Enterprise and Innovation and technology transfer portfolio teams. A Full Professor within the Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences, he studies bio/food engineering focusing on the conversion of biomass to valuable materials and chemicals.



Logan Jones, *Sustainability Officer*
Airbus Canada

Logan Jones, PhD, is a sustainability leader at the forefront of decarbonizing the aerospace industry. With over 17 years of experience spanning aviation, technology, and environmental strategy, Logan currently serves as the National Sustainability Officer at Airbus Canada. In this role, he orchestrates the company's sustainability roadmap, navigating complex ESG regulatory landscapes and championing corporate environmental goals.



Katherine Ayres,
CEO, CAYRES Inc.
General Counsel, Great North Airlines

Katherine is a municipal and aviation lawyer with over 32 years in aviation and 17 years practicing law in a large firm environment. She is the first lawyer to merge municipal and aviation law into a single practice focused on Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and the integration of drone and VTOL operations into community airspace. Katherine is a glider pilot and commercial fixed-wing pilot, and frequently speaks and writes on aviation and AAM law, aviation law, corporate governance for modern air carriers, and the future governance of airspace.



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NAV CANADA - Navigating the Future: The Evolution of Canada's Airspace | May 4 | 13:15-14:00

Join NAV CANADA for an exclusive look at how digital innovation and modern infrastructure are reshaping air traffic management across 18 million square kilometers of domestic and oceanic airspace.



Marie-Pier Berman, *Vice President & Chief of Operations*
NAV CANADA

Marie-Pier is VP and Chief of Operations at NAV CANADA, where she provides tactical and strategic leadership for the Operations group overseeing the national delivery of air traffic services (ATS). She is responsible for ensuring the safe, efficient, orderly, and cost-effective provision of ATS, and leads the development and implementation of programs, procedures, and practices across ATS Standards, Flight Operations, and Aeronautical Information Management (AIM), aligning business initiatives with corporate objectives to deliver value to customers. A passionate advocate for mentorship, diversity, and inclusion, Marie-Pier is committed to developing future leaders in aviation and serves on the Elevate Aviation Board of Directors and has most recently been named an ICAO Global Ambassador.

Modernizing the Canadian Armed Forces: Building the Force of the Future | May 4 | 13:15-14:00

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) are undergoing a critical modernization to remain agile, interoperable, and ready in an increasingly complex security environment. This session will examine key CAF modernization priorities across air, marine, ground, space, cyber, and defence platforms, including capability renewal, digital transformation, and workforce evolution. Panelists will explore what modernization means in practice—how new technologies, partnerships with industry, and innovative procurement approaches are reshaping Canada's defence posture—and what opportunities this creates for Alberta's aviation, aerospace, and defence sectors to support and enable the force of the future.



Jeff LaFrenz, *CEO & Co-Founder*
VizworX Inc.

Jeff LaFrenz is the Co-Founder and President of VizworX, a company specializing in advanced decision support, operations, and education software solutions. With over 30 years of experience in technology commercialization, Jeff is a serial entrepreneur, international speaker, and recognized technology leader. He brings a multi-disciplinary, multi-industry perspective, with deep expertise in management, marketing, and technical domains. A dedicated community advocate, Jeff actively volunteers his time as a member of various industry and academic boards and committees.



BGen Brendan Cook, *Director General Air & Space Force Development*,
Royal Canadian Air Force

BGen Cook joined the RCAF in 1991 and graduated from Royal Roads Military College in 1995 with a Bachelor of Science in Oceanography and Earth Observational Science. An Air Navigator since 1996, he served operationally with 407 (MP) Squadron before completing a Master of Physics in Underwater Acoustics at the Royal Military College. His career includes key roles in acoustics research, maritime test and evaluation, UAV operations in Afghanistan, and strategic planning at National Defence Headquarters. Promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel in 2014, he commanded 405 Squadron and deployed on Op IMPACT, earning the Meritorious Service Medal. After promotion to Colonel, he graduated from the U.S. Air War College and commanded 14 Wing Greenwood. Promoted to Brigadier-General in 2023, he currently serves as Director General Air & Space Force Development, focused on RCAF force development and modernization.



BGen Wade Rutland, *Commander 3rd Canadian Division and Joint Task Force (West)*

Canadian Armed Forces

BGen Rutland joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1995 as a primary reservist. BGen Rutland has participated in operations in Bosnia, Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Latvia, as well as multiple domestic deployments within Canada. He holds a Bachelor of Engineering Degree and two Masters Degrees (Defence Studies and Strategic Studies). He is a graduate of the US Army Ranger Course. BGen Rutland was appointed Commander 3rd Canadian Division and Joint Task Force (West) on 27 June 2024.



John Edelman, *VP, Business Development*

CAE Defence & Security Canada

John is a former Royal Canadian Air Force aerospace engineer with 32 years of tactical, operational, and strategic experience, including deployment to Afghanistan. He has specialized in unmanned systems since 2008, supporting platforms such as the CU-161 Sperwer and CU-170 Heron. Following his military career, John joined CAE Defence & Security, where he has led international training system programs across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. He currently leads CAE's partnership with General Atomics on Team SkyGuardian, supporting Canada's remotely piloted aircraft system competition and advancing next-generation defence capabilities.



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Investing in Alberta's Aviation, Aerospace, & Defence Sectors | May 4 | 14:00-14:45

Alberta is positioned to lead Canada's next wave of growth in aviation, aerospace, and defence — but leadership takes investment. This session brings together the organizations driving capital, innovation, and strategic partnerships into Alberta's sky-bound industries. From airport expansions and aerospace R&D to advanced manufacturing and defence technology, hear how Alberta's economic development leaders are attracting global investors, supporting local companies to scale, and building the infrastructure for long-term competitiveness.

Whether you're an entrepreneur, policymaker, or investor, this is your roadmap to understanding where the opportunities are and how to get involved in Alberta's next major growth frontier.



Kathryn Ambler, *Executive Director*
Alberta Aviation, Aerospace & Defence

Kathryn is a dynamic leader and innovation strategist with over 15 years of experience navigating complex organizational systems and forging high-impact, cross-sector partnerships. As the Chief Innovation Strategist at Hawthorn Insights, Kathryn specializes in propelling start-up and scale-up companies toward sustainable growth, particularly through strategic entry into the defence market. Her results-oriented, visionary, and inclusive approach to leadership has been honed through management roles with Alberta Health Services and the Government of Alberta. She is also a sessional instructor in the University of Calgary's Master of Precision Health program, where she teaches entrepreneurs how to solve pressing problems through innovation.



Elliot Hewitt, *Manager, Aerospace & Defence Initiatives, Alberta Region*
Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan)

Elliot has worked in a variety of sectors including tourism, retail sales, social work and even started his own company prior to joining the Government of Canada in 2000. Elliot began his public service career with Service Canada and later Agriculture Canada's Rural and Co-operatives promoting the federal government's role in economic development in rural communities across the prairies. He joined Western Economic Diversification(now PrairiesCan) in 2013 and has been supporting defence procurement activities for the department since 2015, now managing the Regional Defence Investment Initiative funding for Alberta.



Tracey Scarlett, *Executive Director*
Venture Capital Association of Alberta

Tracey has started and scaled innovative and technology-based ventures and has built ecosystems and financing programs to support entrepreneurs in growing their businesses. She has held numerous board roles focused in areas of venture financing, innovation, economic development and entrepreneurship. She brings significant governance and operational knowledge of entrepreneurial finance and the innovation ecosystem to her role at VCAA.



Paolo Bomben, *Program Director for Aerospace, Defence & Advanced Materials*
Alberta Innovates

Dr. Bomben leads Alberta Innovates' Aerospace and Defence programming. He also leads the Bitumen Advanced Materials program which seeks to use existing value chains and/or develop new value chains to increase the output of non-combustion products derived from Alberta oil sands bitumen. He is the program manager for the Carbon Fibre Grand Challenge. Before joining Alberta Innovates Paolo spent time in sustainability consulting, and in hydrogen technology and solar cell development as a research scientist. Paolo has an undergraduate degree in Chemistry with a minor in Mathematics from the University of Windsor. He holds a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Calgary.



Thomas Kargacin, *Senior Advisor, Manufacturing, Aerospace, and Defence Investment*
Invest Alberta

Thomas Kargacin is the Senior Advisor for Manufacturing, Aerospace, and Defence Investment at invest Alberta, the Province of Alberta, Canada's arms length Crown Corporation for attracting high value and high impact investments. Thomas has been with Invest Alberta for nearly three years. Since joining, he has helped attract over \$250mn worth of investment to the province, helping to create over 100 new jobs for the province. Thomas firmly believes that Alberta is the world's premier investment destination.



Brent Jensen, *Senior Director Business Development*
Edmonton Global

Brent leads investment attraction efforts across advanced manufacturing, defence, energy transition, and value-added industrial sectors. He is responsible for building and managing an investment pipeline, directing international investment missions, and aligning business development strategy with regional economic priorities. He is also a founding member of the Edmonton Region Defence Alliance (ERDA) and serves on its Steering Committee, supporting the region's positioning as a nationally strategic hub for defence, aerospace, dual-use manufacturing, and advanced technologies.

Technology and the Future of Aircraft Maintenance | May 4 | 14:00-14:45

Maintenance is the backbone of aviation, aerospace, and defence—where safety, reliability, and mission readiness are won or lost. As fleets become more complex and operational demands intensify, cutting-edge technologies are transforming how maintenance is performed and how engineers work on the frontline. From smarter diagnostics to advanced modification techniques, innovation is accelerating at every turn. Join this breakout session to explore the technologies shaping maintenance today and the innovations set to redefine maintenance and modification tomorrow. Discover how the future of fleet support is being built—and what it means for the aircraft maintenance engineer at the heart of it all.



Nicole Noseworthy, *Director, Strategic Growth*
HeavyAero Maintenance Centre

Nicole comes from a background in business development, human resources, and policy and procedure mapping. With a background in business and aviation leadership and almost 10 years in the industry, she ensures that the teams around her have the foundational corporate culture and values to lead the business into sustainable growth. Before her time with HeavyAero, Nicole's experience allowed her to support the expansion and development of regional airports. Her education in business, project management, aviation leadership, and emergency planning allows her to wear multiple hats for multiple organizations, and support the Alberta AAD through the launch and growth of the Canadian AME Competition.



David Nedohin, *Co-Founder & Head of Business Development*
Scope AR

David brings over 20 years of experience driving customer engagement and growth. He focuses on the aerospace, defence, and government sectors, working closely with organizations such as Lockheed Martin, Boeing, General Dynamics, and Northrop Grumman to deliver impactful digital solutions. David is a recognized thought leader, sharing practical AR use cases and success stories that improve training, maintenance, and operational readiness in complex environments. Based in Edmonton, Canada, he is also a 3x world curling champion and a recipient of the Canadian Order of Sport.



Ira Laughy, *Founder & President*
Rapid3D Ltd.

Ira Laughy is the Founder and President of Rapid3D and a 30-year veteran of the 3D technology industry. Since co-founding the award-winning Mecca Media Group in 1995, Ira has been a leader in applying 3D scanning, modeling and metrology technologies to industry. A NAIT Engineering Design and Drafting alumnus, he founded Rapid3D in 2009 to bring 3d scanning to the forefront of Canadian manufacturing, inspection, design and NDT. Under his guidance, Rapid3D has become the leading technical resource for metrology-grade 3D scanning in Western Canada.



Max Schramm, *President & CEO*
Lufthansa Technik Canada

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Airports as Economic & Community Enablers | May 4 | 14:45-15:30

This session will explore the evolving role of airports across Alberta, from regional connectivity to economic development and community engagement. Discussion will touch on infrastructure, events, innovation, and partnerships that support airport sustainability and growth, while positioning airports as key contributors to the broader aviation ecosystem.



Nancy Paish, *CEO*
Red Deer Regional Airport

With a prominent role at Red Deer Regional Airport, Nancy has demonstrated exceptional leadership and strategic planning capabilities, significantly contributing to the airport's growth and operational excellence. With a proven ability to develop and execute long-term plans that align with organizational goals, and strong communication and relationship-building skills with diverse groups, from government officials to local businesses and community leaders.



Monette Pasher, *President*
Canadian Airports Council

In her current role, Monette represents 100 airports across the country. She works with Canada's airports, airlines, government, industry partners and other stakeholders to improve the air passenger experience and create opportunities for travel and trade. As an industry advocate and leader for the past 20 years, Monette possesses extensive knowledge of Canada's airports and policy landscape. She brings a wealth of experience in government and media relations, strategic planning, aviation and tourism. Monette is a proven association leader, having successfully supported Canada's airports both prior to and throughout the pandemic, she was recently awarded as one of the Top 25 Most Powerful Women in Business in Atlantic Canada.



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Shaping a resilient, innovative future for aviation across Alberta.

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YYC Calgary Airport

Trevor Caswell, *General Manager, Villeneuve Airport (ZVL)*



Since joining Edmonton International Airport in 2017, he has led strategic air service development, strengthened industry partnerships, and advanced innovation through commercial drone integration. With over 25 years of executive experience and a Master of Aviation Management, Trevor brings deep expertise in operational leadership, multimodal transportation strategy, and driving sustainable aviation growth.

Rob Bachart, *Chief Real Estate Officer, Calgary Airport Authority (YYC)*



Rob is an experienced senior real estate professional with over 25 years of diverse leadership experience. His career in commercial real estate spans almost two decades, primarily as a landlord representative. Rob comes to Calgary Airports from Winnipeg Airports Authority (WAA), where he was the Director of Real Estate & Development. In that role he was responsible for redefining the airport's real estate mandate and was significantly involved in master and land use planning for both the terminal and campus lands. Prior to joining WAA, Rob held an array of leadership roles within private sector real estate, where he assembled and built a range of comprehensive greenfield and brownfield developments, specific to industrial, office and retail disciplines.

Defending the Aerospace Frontier in a New Era of Threats | May 4 | 14:45-15:30

As global security dynamics rapidly evolve, NATO and NORAD are adapting to a more complex and contested aerospace domain. This session explores how these cornerstone defence alliances are modernizing to address emerging threats—from hypersonic weapons and space-based risks to cyber warfare and Arctic security. With a focus on aerospace and defence innovation, the discussion will highlight Canada's strategic role, opportunities for industry collaboration, and what evolving NATO and NORAD priorities mean for Alberta's aviation, aerospace, and defence ecosystem. Attendees will gain insight into how allied defence frameworks are shaping the future of aerospace capability, resilience, and deterrence.



Kim Van Vliet, *CEO & Founder*
WāVv & ConvergX

Kim founded WāVv over 14 years ago to support, as a civilian, her family's legacy of service to North America through Aerospace, Defence & Security (ADS). As a third generation Van Vliet she specifically is uniquely positioned from the civilian side ensuring that the best technology, research, and innovation is provided to the women and men in our armed forces, ADS, Mining, Tech and Energy sectors. WāVv was created to diligently engage in securing those vital elements.

Kim is the founder and creator of CONVERGX® – a global x-sector congress bringing together decision makers from the Military, Energy, Mining and ADS and Tech industries, to discuss opportunities, technologies, problems, solutions & opportunities that these industries can collaborate on.



BGen Dave Turenne, *Deputy Commander, 1 Canadian Air Division*
Royal Canadian Air Force

With a prominent role at Red Deer Regional Airport, Nancy has demonstrated exceptional leadership and strategic planning capabilities, significantly contributing to the airport's growth and operational excellence. With a proven ability to develop and execute long-term plans that align with organizational goals, and strong communication and relationship-building skills with diverse groups, from government officials to local businesses and community leaders.



BGen Brendan Cook, *Director General Air & Space Force Development*,
Royal Canadian Air Force

BGen Cook joined the RCAF in 1991 and graduated from Royal Roads Military College in 1995 with a Bachelor of Science in Oceanography and Earth Observational Science. An Air Navigator since 1996, he served operationally with 407 (MP) Squadron before completing a Master of Physics in Underwater Acoustics at the Royal Military College. His career includes key roles in acoustics research, maritime test and evaluation, UAV operations in Afghanistan, and strategic planning at National Defence Headquarters. Promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel in 2014, he commanded 405 Squadron and deployed on Op IMPACT, earning the Meritorious Service Medal. After promotion to Colonel, he graduated from the U.S. Air War College and commanded 14 Wing Greenwood. Promoted to Brigadier-General in 2023, he currently serves as Director General Air & Space Force Development, focused on RCAF force development and modernization.



LCol Kyle Welsh, *Pilot Directorate Air Requirements - Combat 6 (Air Mobility Combat Capabilities)*, Royal Canadian Air Force

LCol Welsh is a Royal Canadian Air Force pilot currently serving at RCAF Headquarters within the Directorate of Air Requirements as the Air Mobility Project Director. In this role, he leads several major capability initiatives, including the Strategic Tanker Transport Capability (STTC), the RCAF 105 Project - the mid-life upgrade of the CC130J Hercules fleet, and the CC177 Weapons Systems Trainer. His academic accomplishments include a degree in Commercial Aviation Management, a Masters in Public Administration, and a Masters in Defence Studies. His operational flying experience spans the CU170 Heron, CC177 Globemaster, and CC130J Hercules, with deployments on Op ATHENA, Op ATTENTION, Op IMPACT, Op PRESENCE, Op LENTUS, and multiple OPEN SKIES missions. He brings extensive operational, staff, and program management experience to air mobility force development and modernization.

Rapidly Enabling and Advancing Disruptive Innovation (READI) Pitch Competition | May 4 | 14:45-15:30

Through the READI (Rapidly Enabling and Advancing Disruptive Innovation) Project, funded by the Mobilizing Insights in Defence and Security (MINDS) DND grant, Alberta AAD will explore the following question: *What Emerging Disruptive Technology (EDT) trends could the Defence Team anticipate and how could they be addressed in defence policy development?*

Join the excitement and be a spectator at the READI Pitch Competition, where startups, SMEs, researchers, and industry teams with EDTs pitch their solutions to industry experts and leaders, gain valuable exposure and feedback, and explore opportunities for collaboration. The top 2 pitchers will complete their finale pitch at the Monday Evening Gala, with an opportunity for the audience to engage in live voting for the winner!



RUNWITHIT Synthetics Inc.

Myrna Bittner, *CEO & Co-Founder*

RUNWITHIT's 6D Synthetic Intelligence platform helps you design, explore, and de-risk interconnected system scenarios in emergent behaviour simulations to forecast and optimize anticipated activities and deployments.



Sky Hunter Corp.

Russ Duncan, *Managing Director*

Using aerial technology, Sky Hunter locates pressurized reservoirs using planes outfitted with proprietary hydrocarbon sensors. By collecting, analyzing, and mapping microseeps, Sky Hunter helps reveal subsurface reserves, improving the odds of drilling productive wells and search and rescue.



SpectraCann Ltd.

Leyla Kara, *CEO & Co-Founder*

SpectraCann's portable gas analyzer leverages ultra-sensitive photonics technology to identify chemicals within seconds. Powered by AI/ML, our platform serves the defense, diagnostics, environmental, and drug detection industries with rapid, onsite, molecular-level identification of one or multiple target chemicals.



Elementiam Materials and Manufacturing

Remi Samson, CEO

Elementiam delivers the 3D eyes and artificial brain for industrial robots. Solution Element X is integrated into existing legacy robots to increase their flexibility and accuracy of welding, cutting, and repair applications in environments where fixture varies, tolerances drift and parts are never the same.



M2M Tech Inc.

Magnus Lanoil, AI Strategy Lead

M2M Tech Connect delivers a sovereign Physical AI ecosystem (edge compute, autonomous agentic reasoning, and physics-based digital twins) purpose-built for mission-critical operations with zero cloud dependency and full data residency.

Built for defence and aerospace, our platforms enable organizations to sense, decide, and act locally, simulating operational scenarios and automating complex workflows entirely on-premises.



Pazh PowerTrain Inc.

Mehran Akhondzadeh, CEO

Pazh Powertrain develops retrofit kit solutions that convert existing aerospace, defense, and distributed energy platforms to hydrogen without full asset replacement. Our technology helps operators reduce emissions, improve energy resilience, and extend the value of mission-critical equipment through practical, scalable upgrades.



Phase Metron Inc.

Behnam Mazdouri, Co-Founder & CEO

Phase Metron develops antenna technology that helps satellite antennas deliver fast, reliable internet in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

It is used in planes, ships, and rural regions to provide stable connectivity where traditional networks don't work, using less power and smaller equipment.

Welcome Back | May 5 | 9:00 -9:10



Kendra Kincade, *President & CEO, Chair*
Alberta Aviation, Aerospace & Defence (Alberta AAD)

Kendra Kincade is an accomplished Air Traffic Controller and a former Honorary Colonel with the RCAF's 417 Helicopter Squadron. As the current Chair of the Alberta AAD, Kendra is driving forward a bold vision to grow Alberta's aviation, aerospace and defence sectors. With over 25 years in the industry, She is committed to positioning Alberta as a national leader in innovation, investment, and opportunity.

Kendra's work has earned widespread recognition, including the IATA Inspirational Role Model Award, the Trailblazer Award from the Northern Lights Aero Foundation, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal and the King Charles III Coronation Medal. She has also been named a SHEInnovator by UN Women and a Woman of Inspiration by the Universal Women's Network.

From Backyard Dreams to Lunar Reality | May 5 | 9:10-9:45

In this talk, Dr. Junaid Oosman takes the audience from a simple but urgent question, what happens to garbage in space to a NASA-validated answer built right here in Edmonton, Alberta. He shares the story behind Waste Parrot Technologies, why waste management is one of the most overlooked challenges in long-duration space missions, and how autonomous AI, robotics, and additive manufacturing are turning that problem into a platform. Equal parts founder story and technical vision, this session shows what it looks like when a backyard dream becomes a lunar reality.



Dr. Junaid Oosman, *CEO & Co-Founder*
Waste Parrot Technologies

Dr. Junaid's work explores how autonomous recycling, AI vision, robotics, and additive manufacturing can transform waste from a problem into a resource, whether on an industrial site in Alberta or on the surface of the Moon. Dr. Junaid's vision goes beyond automation. He believes the next era of intelligent systems must be purposeful — designed to support people, regenerate environments, and operate where infrastructure doesn't exist. With active partnerships spanning AMII and NVIDIA, and deep expertise in computer vision, real-time analytics, and drone-based emissions monitoring, he sits at the intersection of mission-critical engineering and human-centered innovation.

Advanced Air Mobility: Unlocking the Sky for Rural Prosperity | May 5 | 10:00-10:45

This panel discusses the critical, near-term barriers—public acceptance and regulatory uncertainty—facing Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), the emerging ecosystem of electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft (air taxis, cargo drones). This is an essential topic for Provincial and Municipal transportation planners, economic development officials, and private sector investors focused on expanding connectivity beyond major metropolitan hubs.

AAM is not a luxury for city commuters; it is a vital utility for rural and underserved communities where traditional infrastructure is costly and limited. In 2026, regulatory ambiguity and community apprehension are freezing billions of dollars in private investment, particularly in regional and rural deployments.

By proactively tackling these social and policy gaps now—establishing clear strategic planning for vertiports and initiating transparent public education campaigns—we can catalyze investment, ensure equitable access, and unlock a projected \$80 billion market by 2034. Failure to act guarantees AAM will remain grounded in the regions that need it most, deepening the rural-urban divide in access to healthcare, emergency services, and economic logistics. The future of equitable, sustainable transportation starts on the ground, not just in the air.



JR Hammond, *Founder & Executive Director*
Canadian Advanced Air Mobility (CAAM)

JR is the Founder and Executive Director of the Canadian Advanced Air Mobility (CAAM), Canada's Federal Industry Association dedicated to operationalizing the country's Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) ecosystem. Co-founded in 2018 with the National Research Council of Canada, CAAM serves as the driving force and unified voice for the AAM industry nationwide.



Bob Bezpalko, *Executive Director*
Alberta HUB

Bob is the executive director of Alberta HUB the regional economic development alliance of northeast Alberta and has worked with many investment projects specific to rural Alberta in the industries of Agriculture, Energy, Manufacturing, Aerospace and UAVS. Bob works closely with all the members of Alberta HUB which includes municipalities, First Nations, Metis Settlements, Colleges/Universities, and business/Industry and has the expertise in enabling investment on a regional scale. In his position as a regional economic development professional, Bob has played a meaningful role in supporting investment which in turn enhances the quality of life in the Alberta HUB region.



Phil Kelly, *SVP Business Development*
Horizon Aircraft

Phil 'Royal' Kelly was born in Dublin and, as a Royal Marines Commando, flew the Sea Harrier FA2, Harrier II, and the F/A-18EF. He closed his military career as Head Carrier Strike and Maritime Aviation, using his extensive VTOL experience to oversee eVTOL aircraft testing, design and development. He also led the strategic team in London, introducing the Lightning F-35B into UK service, and became the Head of Future Aviation as an Aeronautical Engineer MSc, developing, testing and launching the first autonomous aircraft from the UK Super Carriers.



Katherine Ayres,
CEO, CAYRES Inc.
General Counsel, Great North Airlines

Katherine is a municipal and aviation lawyer with over 32 years in aviation and 17 years practicing law in a large firm environment. She is the first lawyer to merge municipal and aviation law into a single practice focused on Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and the integration of drone and VTOL operations into community airspace. Katherine is a glider pilot and commercial fixed-wing pilot, and frequently speaks and writes on aviation and AAM law, aviation law, corporate governance for modern air carriers, and the future governance of airspace.

Multi-Use: Where Civil Innovation Meets Defence Reality | May 5 | 10:00 - 10:45

Multi-use technologies sit at the intersection of civilian innovation and defence capability. From drones and AI to space, cybersecurity, and advanced materials, solutions built for commercial markets are increasingly critical to national security—and defence innovation is driving civilian applications in return.

This session explores what multi-use really looks like in practice, why it matters now, and how companies—especially SMEs—can navigate procurement, regulation, and commercialization to succeed in both markets without stalling growth.



Jeff LaFrenz, *CEO & Co-Founder*
VizworX Inc.

Jeff LaFrenz is the Co-Founder and President of VizworX, a company specializing in advanced decision support, operations, and education software solutions. With over 30 years of experience in technology commercialization, Jeff is a serial entrepreneur, international speaker, and recognized technology leader. He brings a multi-disciplinary, multi-industry perspective, with deep expertise in management, marketing, and technical domains. A dedicated community advocate, Jeff actively volunteers his time as a member of various industry and academic boards and committees.



Julian Mulia, *Co-Founder & CSO*
Nanotess

Julian is a dual-disciplined engineer whose expertise lies at the intersection of chemical engineering and catalytic nanomedicine with expertise in translational science. Holding multiple degrees in engineering from the U of C, he has pioneered the use of nanotechnology to modulate the biochemical biological microenvironments. Julian has successfully led multi-million dollar financings from military, government and private funding to bring complex laboratory breakthroughs into accessible, cost-effective medical technologies for frontline clinicians and patients. Julian won the 2022 Most Promising Startup Entrepreneur at the Start Alberta Tech Awards and a 2025 Innovator of the Year by *Avenue Calgary*.

Under his direction as CSO, his company NanoTess received the 2024 ASTech Award for Medical, Healthcare, and Pharmaceuticals, as well as the federal 2024 Company of the Year distinction from the CAN Health Network.

Industrial and Technological Benefits (ITB) Policy Overview & How to Get Involved in Defence Procurement | May 5 | 10:00 - 10:45

This session will provide participants with an overview of the Industrial and Technological Benefits (ITB) Policy and how it works, and will also offer valuable insights to help participants prepare for business in the defence market by covering topics such as certifications and other defence-specific requirements.



Elliot Hewitt, *Manager, Aerospace & Defence Initiatives, Alberta Region*
Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan)

Elliot has worked in a variety of sectors including tourism, retail sales, social work and even started his own company prior to joining the Government of Canada in 2000. Elliot began his public service career with Service Canada and later Agriculture Canada's Rural and Co-operatives promoting the federal government's role in economic development in rural communities across the prairies. He joined Western Economic Diversification(now PrairiesCan) in 2013 and has been supporting defence procurement activities for the department since 2015, now managing the Regional Defence Investment Initiative funding for Alberta.



Stewart Campbell, *Senior Analyst - Industrial and Technological Benefits (Aerospace)*
Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan)

Based in Ottawa, Stewart joined PrairiesCan in 2015 (then known as Western Economic Diversification) and has participated in the evaluation of numerous major defence procurement projects over the last ten years, spanning the air, land and marine domains.

Stewart began his federal government career at the Department of National Defence, where he served in the Department's Infrastructure and Environment group during Canada's military mission in Afghanistan. He continues to support Canada's defence sector by working to connect defence contractors with to Prairie companies and organizations.

How Technology is Driving Changes in the Aviation and Multimodal Logistics Space | May 5 | 10:45-11:30

As aviation and multimodal logistics evolve, technology is driving major changes across sourcing, procurement, distribution, and infrastructure. This session explores the unique complexities of the aviation supply chain, how digital transformation is improving efficiency and resilience, and the challenges of operating in remote and northern regions. Panelists will also highlight emerging career pathways and the talent needed to support a rapidly changing aviation logistics environment.



Alanna Hnatiw, *Mayor*
Sturgeon County

Mayor Alanna Hnatiw is the Mayor of Sturgeon County, home to Villeneuve Airport and a growing aviation and aerospace corridor just north of Edmonton. A former small business owner in the energy sector, she has been a strong advocate for leveraging Villeneuve Airport, Alberta's Industrial Heartland, and emerging hydrogen and advanced manufacturing projects to attract aerospace, defence, and related supply-chain investment to the region. She currently serves as Vice Chair of Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association, where she works with municipal and industry partners to advance infrastructure, innovation, and workforce opportunities that support Alberta's aviation, aerospace, and defence ecosystem.



Kathryn (Kate) Muhich, *VP, Government Services Supply Chain*
Boeing Global Services

Kate is responsible for the overall forecasting, material management, strategy, contracting, and general procurement for Boeing Global Services. Kate brings a strong background in Supply Chain and government services to this position. Prior to this position, Kate was the senior director of the U.S. Government Commercial Derivative Aircraft Services organization. She was responsible for the profit and loss, program execution, and sales generation of sustainment solutions to The Boeing Company's U.S. government customers. She has also held multiple Supply Chain and Engineering positions within Boeing Defense and Security.



Dr. Rajbir Bhatti, *Associate Professor, Dept. of Int'l Business, Supply Chain Management and Aviation,*
Mount Royal University

Academic Director,
Alberta Logistics Center of Excellence

Dr. Rajbir Bhatti is a former Board Member of the Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council and has served in various advisory roles with Calgary Economic Development (Aviation & Logistics), the Prairies Inland Gateway Project, the City of Calgary, and Supply Chain Canada. He is a subject matter expert supporting the National Science & Engineering Research Council for multi-year strategic projects. His work sits at the intersection of logistics innovation, AI, and digital transformation, with a focus on trucking operations, intermodal systems, inland ports, and energy-related supply chains in Western Canada.



Syed Hussain, *Director, Global Distribution*
De Havilland Aircraft of Canada

Syed holds a M.S. degree in Manufacturing Systems Engineering & Management & a B.E. degree in Electronics Engineering. He currently serves as Director of Global Distribution at De Havilland Aircraft of Canada and remains actively involved with ASCM Western Canada Chapter as a Board Member, Director of Education for the Mentorship Program, and a Recognized Instructor, reflecting his passion for teaching and coaching. He has 18+ years of Supply Chain experience across multiple geographies in South Asia, the Middle East, and North America. He has worked in diverse industries namely Manufacturing, Chemicals, Telecommunication, Courier Operations, E-Commerce, Retail, Oil & Gas, and Aviation. He has worked in multiple fields of Supply Chain Management including Supply & Demand Planning, Forecasting, Inventory Management, Procurement, Warehousing, Logistics & Distribution.

Airline Operations in a Changing Landscape | May 5 | 10:45-11:30

From day-to-day operational realities to long-term strategic planning, airline operators face increasing complexity. This session explores key trends influencing airline operations today and highlights opportunities for collaboration, innovation, and alignment across the aviation ecosystem.



Nancy Paish, CEO
Red Deer Regional Airport

With a prominent role at Red Deer Regional Airport, Nancy has demonstrated exceptional leadership and strategic planning capabilities, significantly contributing to the airport's growth and operational excellence. With a proven ability to develop and execute long-term plans that align with organizational goals, and strong communication and relationship-building skills with diverse groups, from government officials to local businesses and community leaders.



Jeff Morrison, CEO & President
National Airlines Council of Canada

Jeff holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and History and a Master of Arts in science politique canadienne from the University of Ottawa. Prior to his current role, he served as Executive Director of the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association; Director of Government Relations and Public Affairs with the Canadian Pharmacists Association; President of the Association of Canadian Engineering Companies and Director of Government Relations and Director of Environment for the Canadian Construction Association. Jeff has also worked for the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, and several Members of Parliament in the 1990s.

Technology Partnership to Advance Alberta: Unifying Our Voices for Arctic Security & Sovereignty | May 5 | 10:45-11:30

Innovating in a defence ecosystem: doing more together. Discussion of the various perspectives on innovation and how the ecosystem can work together to do more for Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces.



Ian Smith, *Director of Business Development, Faculty of Engineering & Founding Member, CARDD-TECH*
University of Alberta

Ian Smith is a key contributor to Canada's defence innovation landscape, building meaningful connections between academic research and national security priorities. As the Director of Business Development in the University of Alberta's Faculty of Engineering and a founding member of the Centre for Applied Research in Defence and Dual Use Technologies (CARDD Tech), Ian is helping position the University of Alberta as a national leader in defence and dual-use technology development.



Jamie Fitzpatrick, *Business Development Lead, Unmanned Systems C2 Software,*
Lockheed Martin Skunkworks Canada

Jamie Fitzpatrick, Business Development Lead Unmanned Systems and C2 Software spent 20 years in the Royal Canadian Air Force working in NORAD and as a Tactical Air Control Party member. He specialized in digital integration to support Joint Fires, airspace C2, and Situational Awareness (ATAK). He supported training missions abroad where he taught TTPs to foreign military members on drone employment for ISR and Combined Joint Fires concepts.



Geoff Roth, *Managing Director*
Guardian Chemicals

Geoff is the Managing Director of Guardian Chemicals, a specialty chemical supplier based in Sturgeon County, Alberta providing chemistry, technology, and service solutions across North America in three core business areas: Water Treatment, Industrial, and Wood Products. Before joining Guardian, Geoff was Vice President at Siguler Guff, a multi-strategy private equity firm in New York. He also held various roles at Aberdeen Asset Management earlier in his career. Geoff holds a B.A. in Political Economy from the University of California, Berkeley, an M.A. Land Economy from the University of Cambridge, and is a CFA charterholder.



James Hogan, *Professor, Faculty of Engineering & Founder, CARDD-TECH*
University of Alberta

Dr. James Hogan is a Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Alberta, where he holds the George Ford Chair in Materials Engineering and the Engineering Research Chair in Development and Advanced Manufacturing of Next-Generation Materials. He is also the founding Director of the Centre for Applied Research in Defence and Dual-Use Technologies (CARDD-Tech), leading national initiatives in defence, space, aerospace, and energy. Through CARDD-Tech, he has partnered with more than 30 Alberta-based businesses to advance technology development and commercialization, helping position Alberta as a national hub for sovereign innovation, future-ready talent development, and stronger collaboration across industry, government, and academia.



Chris Pogue, *President, Defence & Space*
Calian

Chris is an accomplished leader with over 20 years of senior executive experience in defence and space innovation. He most recently served as President and CEO of Thales Canada, where he expanded naval support services, re-established land-forces capabilities, and guided key AI and digital transformation initiatives. Prior to Thales, he led MDA Government's Defence Space portfolio and held leadership roles at General Dynamics Mission Systems Canada and CAE Professional Services. Throughout his career, Chris has championed the development of innovation ecosystems by connecting Canadian small- and medium-sized businesses to national defence and space priorities. A retired Royal Canadian Air Force officer with more than 3,500 flight hours on the C-130 Hercules.



LCol James Legendre, *Commanding Officer of 1st Service Battalion*
Canadian Armed Forces

LCol Legendre was born and raised in Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia and joined the Canadian Army as an officer in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Corps in 2002. He attended the Royal Military College of Canada and attained a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. He served in multiple command and staff positions within the Canadian Army and ADM (Materiel), with deployments to Afghanistan in 2009 and to South Sudan on Op SOPRANO in 2018. He has attained two master's degrees, first in engineering management from the University of Alberta in 2015, and following completion of the Joint Command and Staff Program in 2020, attained his second in defence studies. He is currently the Commanding Officer of 1 Service Battalion here in Edmonton responsible for providing combat service support to 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group.



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Building the Future Workforce: Aligning Industry Needs with Talent Development | May 5 | 10:45-11:30

As Alberta's aviation, aerospace, and defence sectors evolve, workforce development must shift from what is currently offered to what industry truly needs. This session brings together industry leaders, labour market forecasters, and funding representatives to discuss current and future talent demands — and the actions required to meet them.

This session will explore workforce gaps, skill alignment, and emerging opportunities. Educators and industry representatives will collaborate to identify specific training needs, supported by on-site data collection and surveys to inform future planning and policy recommendations.



Elizabeth Evans, *Senior Strategist, Aviation*
Mount Royal University

Dr. Elizabeth Evans joined Mount Royal University (MRU) in August 2016 as the Founding Dean of the Faculty of Business and Communication Studies. From June 2020 to January 2023 she served as Provost and Vice-President Academic (Interim). Returning from administrative sabbatical in 2024 Dr. Evans is currently a Senior Strategist for Aviation, Business and Communication Studies.



Jacoby Holder, *Manager, Data & Operations, TalentED*
Calgary Economic Development

Jacoby currently manages the data infrastructure, systems and tools for TalentED, one of Calgary Economic Development's large-scale workforce development initiatives. With his knack for problem solving and meticulous approach to analyzing complex data, Jacoby has played a key role over the past several years in developing sector knowledge, building high-impact data tools, conducting applied workforce research, and supporting local workforce development programs. In his current role with TalentED, Jacoby focuses on connecting Calgary region employers with future-ready youth talent through a purpose-built talent platform, customized services and foundational AI training. More recently, Jacoby led CED's collection of regional talent studies which explored skills supply and demand and jobseeker perceptions of key growth sectors, including Aerospace & Defence.



Jeff Griffiths, Program Director, Alberta Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Initiative


Alberta Chamber of Commerce

Jeff is the Program Director for the Alberta Talent Pipeline Management Initiative, and a seasoned veteran in workforce development who specializes in competency-based methods. He has worked in construction, manufacturing, aerospace, defence, and other core industries to develop occupational standards, competency-based training and certification programs, and apprenticeships.



Nova Andrews, CEO
Elevate Aviation

Nova brings extensive experience in aviation and operations management, previously holding key leadership roles at Canada 3000 Airlines, Edmonton Airports, and Edmonton Economic Development. Passionate about empowering women, Nova moved on to Women Building Futures, where she honed her skills in supporting women entering non-traditional careers. Next, at the Bredin Centre for Learning, she managed employment programs that provided crucial resources and training to job seekers. These experiences deepened her understanding of workforce development and reinforced her commitment to creating inclusive opportunities.

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Transport Canada | May 5 | 11:30-12:15

As part of the Government's Comprehensive Expenditure Review (CER) Transport Canada has recently restructured its regional operations. Alberta will now be supported by the newly formed Western and Yukon Region. This session will discuss these changes, as well as some of the challenges facing the aviation industry in the region.



Jamie Johnson, *Executive Director, Western and Yukon Region*
Civil Aviation, Transport Canada

British-born Jamie gained his bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering, before joining the Royal Air Force as an Engineering Officer. He spent the first few years in front-line operations with a Tornado fast-jet squadron including combat deployments. He spent subsequent tours managing maintenance and logistics for the Lockheed C-130 Hercules fleet. After completing a master's degree in Air Vehicle Design, Jamie became a structural integrity specialist competing successive tours in both the UK and Canada, before once again returning to front-line operations.



Edgar Simard, *Technical Team Lead, Flight Operations (Fixed-Wing and Rotary-Wing)*
Transport Canada

Edgar is a Technical Team Lead, Flight Operations (Fixed-Wing and Rotary-Wing), based in the Edmonton Office, and has been employed with Transport Canada since 2018. He has 41 years of experience in aviation, with 26 years of flying experience as a commercial pilot. Edgar began his career as an Avionics Technician with the Canadian Forces and was the owner and Chief Flight Instructor of a Flight Training Unit for 11 years.

Strengthening Defence and Security in Canada: The Risk of The North, Current Landscape and Future Directions | May 5 | 11:30-12:15

Join us for an in-depth session exploring the current state of defence and security in the Arctic and why Alberta is so critical to the sovereignty of the North. This presentation will provide an overview of existing supports and resources, identify gaps and priorities for growth, and highlight the pivotal role Alberta, and Western Canada, plays.



Arjun Grewal, *Founder & CEO*
Arctic Training Centre

Arjun Grewal is a husband, father, and 20-year veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces, including 13 years in Canadian Special Operations with extensive battlefield experience. He has held enterprise leadership roles at IBM across Cloud and Business Analytics. Today, Arjun is the CEO and founder of the Arctic Training Centre, a Yukon-based private facility focused on Northern, Arctic, and sub-Arctic technology validation, community building, and delivering training for Northern operational readiness. Arjun also serves as Defence Innovation and Military Engagement lead with IMT Group, a Director with ConvergeX Xpand and Ari & Co, and as a Board member at Liberty Defence and Burnpits 360.



Patrick Duxbury, *Executive Director*
Inuit Development Corporation Association

Patrick advocates for nation building through Inuit-led economic development efforts. He has over 24 years of experience providing strategic advice and operational support to Indigenous and northern organizations and businesses. His sectoral experience includes mining, defence, contaminated sites and infrastructure. Patrick currently serves as Executive Director of the Inuit Development Corporation Association (IDCA), a post that he has held since 2018. In this capacity, he helps the association to champion prosperity in the Arctic by executing its mission to create business development opportunities for IDCA's seven development corporation members.



Jim Landon, *President*
ATCO Frontec

Jim Landon leads ATCO Frontec, the Operational Support Services Division of ATCO which delivers Facilities Operations and Maintenance and Workforce Housing Camp Services to government and commercial clients across North America, as well as for NATO in Europe. Frontec has many Indigenous business partners including Nasittuq which operates and maintains the North Warning System and Inuvialuit Frontec Services who are building a Polar Over The Horizon Radar for DRDC. A former British Army officer with multiple operational deployments worldwide, he was educated at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and has a Bachelor's degree in Law and a Masters in International Liaison and Communication.



Christine Hanson, *Regional Director, North America*
NATO DIANA

Christine has had a distinguished public service career over two decades in Canada and internationally. As an international lawyer, diplomat, and senior executive, she has experience shaping policy, negotiating agreements, and fostering collaboration among leaders.

Christine's career with Global Affairs Canada (GAC), provided her with experience serving in senior diplomatic roles in Ottawa, Canada's Mission to the United Nations, and the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., where she worked to advance Canadian interests on key foreign policy, trade and defence matters. Most recently, she served as the Regional Director of International Trade for Atlantic Canada.



Major Andrew (Eddie) Brown, *Commanding Officer, 417 Domestic Response Squadron*
Royal Canadian Air Force

Christine has had a distinguished public service career over two decades in Canada and internationally. As an international lawyer, diplomat, and senior executive, she has experience shaping policy, negotiating agreements, and fostering collaboration among leaders.

Christine's career with Global Affairs Canada (GAC), provided her with experience serving in senior diplomatic roles in Ottawa, Canada's Mission to the United Nations, and the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., where she worked to advance Canadian interests on key foreign policy, trade and defence matters. Most recently, she served as the Regional Director of International Trade for Atlantic Canada.



Major Jose Areekadan, *Deputy Commanding Officer of 4 Canadian Range Patrol Group*
Canadian Armed Forces

Major Jose Areekadan was born and raised in Edmonton and has dedicated much of his professional life to public service, leadership, and education. He joined the Canadian Armed Forces as a reserve infantry soldier while attending high school and currently serves as the Deputy Commanding Officer for the 4th Canadian Ranger Patrol Group. Major Areekadan has an extensive background in academia, having taught at post-secondary institutions in Canada, Bahrain, China, and Russia. He has also held senior academic leadership roles, including Associate Dean positions at Coast Mountain College, the College of New Caledonia, and Kwantlen Polytechnic University in British Columbia.



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Space Superiority and Why it Matters | May 5 | 13:45-14:30

Space has become a critical domain for economic resilience, national security, and technological leadership. Space superiority—the ability to access, operate in, and protect space-based assets—directly impacts aviation, defence, communications, navigation, and logistics here on Earth. This session will explore why space superiority matters to Canada and Alberta, highlighting how emerging space technologies, in-situ manufacturing, and space logistics are shaping the future of exploration, defence, and industrial capability. Speakers will discuss Alberta's growing role in advanced aerospace and space-based manufacturing, and how innovation developed locally is contributing to global space infrastructure and next-generation supply chains.

Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of how space capabilities support sovereignty, security, and economic growth, and why space is no longer a distant frontier, but a critical part of our industrial and defence ecosystem.



Kendra Kincade, *President & CEO, Chair*
Alberta Aviation, Aerospace & Defence (Alberta AAD)

Kendra Kincade is an accomplished Air Traffic Controller and a former Honorary Colonel with the RCAF's 417 Helicopter Squadron. As the current Chair of the Alberta AAD, Kendra is driving forward a bold vision to grow Alberta's aviation, aerospace and defence sectors. With over 25 years in the industry, She is committed to positioning Alberta as a national leader in innovation, investment, and opportunity.

Kendra's work has earned widespread recognition, including the IATA Inspirational Role Model Award, the Trailblazer Award from the Northern Lights Aero Foundation, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal and the King Charles III Coronation Medal. She has also been named a SHEInnovator by UN Women and a Woman of Inspiration by the Universal Women's Network.



Chris Pogue, *President, Defence & Space*
Calian

Chris is an accomplished leader with over 20 years of senior executive experience in defence and space innovation. He most recently served as President and CEO of Thales Canada, where he expanded naval support services, re-established land-forces capabilities, and guided key AI and digital transformation initiatives. Prior to Thales, he led MDA Government's Defence Space portfolio and held leadership roles at General Dynamics Mission Systems Canada and CAE Professional Services. Throughout his career, Chris has championed the development of innovation ecosystems by connecting Canadian small- and medium-sized businesses to national defence and space priorities. A retired Royal Canadian Air Force officer with more than 3,500 flight hours on the C-130 Hercules.



Callie Lissinna, *VP, Strategic Relations & Co-Founder*
Wyvern

Callie Lissinna co-founded Wyvern, the first company to sell hyperspectral imagery from space. She graduated from the Y Combinator startup accelerator with her co-founders in 2022 and from Creative Destruction Lab (Toronto, space stream) in 2019. She has held various roles in business operations, leadership, engineering, and sales, and has helped the company raise over \$24MM in funding to date. Previously she managed the AlbertaSat student satellite program at the University of Alberta.



Dr. Emma Spanswick, *Co-lead of Space and Defence Technologies Alberta,*
Canada Research Chair Tier II in Geospace Dynamics and Space Plasma
Physics & Associate Professor, Physics and Astronomy
University of Calgary

Dr. Emma Spanswick is an award-winning space physicist, Associate Professor and Tier II Canada Research Chair at the University of Calgary, where she directs the Space Remote Sensing Lab and co-leads Space and Defence Technologies Alberta. Her research drives the innovation and development of next-generation dual-use sensing capabilities for the Arctic space environment, operating a network of over 120 sensors across northern Canada engaging partners across NASA, ESA, the Canadian Space Agency, and DRDC. The instrumentation, foundational knowledge and inversion methods her program develops serve a dual purpose: advancing space environment characterization while enabling the detection and attribution of natural and man-made threats in the HF domain — contributing to multi-domain awareness and resilience across the Arctic.



Col Alfred Maynard, *Deputy Commander, 3 Canadian Space Division (3 CSD), Deputy Joint Force Space Component Commander*
Royal Canadian Air Force

Col Maynard entered the Air Force in June 2004 as a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy and transferred to the Space Force in October 2020. His career has included multiple space operations, staff, and command positions spanning the globe. From 2009 to 2010, he was deployed to Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. He is a graduate and former instructor of the United States Air Force Weapons School. Prior to his current position, he was the Space Delta 13 Deputy Commander. Col Maynard married his wife, Mary, in June 2004; they have two sons, Steven and William.

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