



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION NO.: **421-01986**

BY: **MR. ARYA (NEPEAN)**

DATE: **DECEMBER 13, 2017**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **HONOURABLE HARJIT S. SAJJAN**

Response by the Minister of National Defence

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

National historic sites

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

This Government values its military naval heritage and has taken many initiatives to honour and promote it.

The great naval history of Canada is highlighted in museums all across Canada including in the five Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) naval museums. Through their innovative physical displays, compelling artifacts and documents, and social-media presence, these museums give many Canadians a firsthand look at Canada's storied naval heritage.

In addition, each year on the first Sunday of May, the RCN holds a ceremony at the National War Memorial located in Ottawa to commemorate those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the Battle of the Atlantic, the longest battle of the Second World War, and one that made Allied victory possible.

In the same way, the Naval Monument, located at Richmond Landing near downtown Ottawa, features the recently-completed Navy Wake, an impressive stone monument displaying the names of every commissioned ship and unit in the century-long history of the Royal Canadian Navy—more than 500 names in all.

The Government thanks the supporters of the petition for their interest in the naval history of Canada and recognizes the great contribution of the HMCS HAIDA to the war efforts during the Second World War, the Korean War and the

Cold War. Indeed, the spirit of the HMCS HAIDA will be honoured with the designation of the new Arctic Offshore Patrol Ship as the HMCS HARRY DEWOLF, the first commander of the HMCS HAIDA during the Second World War. In addition, in 2018, HMCS HAIDA National Historic Site will celebrate the 75th anniversary of its commission. To mark the occasion, Parks Canada will be providing enhanced programming to complement the current range of visitor experience opportunities. Canadians will engage in real and inspiring discovery which will create a sense of personal connection to this unique protected heritage site.

While the Government does not support the recommissioning of the HMCS HAIDA, it will designate the HMCS HAIDA as the Flagship of the RCN for ceremonial purposes. From a technical perspective, HMCS HAIDA can no longer be sailed and moving it even short distances is challenging, costly and difficult.

While the RCN will not provide the crew, funding or any official unit designation that are usually provided for a commissioned warship in the RCN, and all responsibility for care, custody, maintenance, crewing and any other issue will remain with Parks Canada, this option will allow Canadians to honour the spirit of the HMCS HAIDA at no additional cost.

As such, RCN will designate an Honorary Commanding Officer for the HMCS HAIDA from an existing RCN unit such as the Naval Reserve unit HMCS STAR in Hamilton, where HMCS HAIDA is located or the Commanding Officer of the new Arctic Offshore Patrol Ship HMCS HARRY DEWOLF. The honorary Commanding Officer will be the liaison with Parks Canada for ceremonial activities and linkage to the Navy.

As the ceremonial Flagship of the RCN, HMCS HAIDA will fly the new Canadian Naval Ensign instead of the White Ensign the ship flew while in commission up until 1963. In addition, formal naval marks of respect will be paid by those crossing HMCS HAIDA's gangway and the ship will observe the traditional sunrise and sunset ceremonies for a commissioned warship during the national historic site operational season from May to October.

The RCN will work with Parks Canada to have everything in place for the commencement of the operational season in 2018.