



SME DAY 2016

Opening Remarks

February 23rd, 2016 08:05, Governor General Ballroom, Westin Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario

Check Against Delivery

Thank you Tim for your welcoming remarks and for your leadership of CADSI's SME Committee. I know our SME members will be energized by your new vision and direction for the committee and what we can do for our SME members.

Au nom de l'AICDS et de notre conseil d'administration, j'aimerais aussi remercier tous nos participants à notre journée PME 2016.

This morning I thought I would take the few minutes I have to update you on some of what CADSI has been doing on your behalf.

Just last week, CADSI and our Board of Directors hosted a reception for Ministers, MPs, Senators and political staff on Parliament Hill.

Avec près de 200 nouveaux députés fédéraux, nous voulions établir et élargir les liens avec la nouvelle génération de parlementaires, qui jouera un rôle important dans l'avenir de notre industrie au cours des quatre prochaines années.

The results were pretty impressive. Among our guests we welcomed the Honourable Judy Foote, Minister of Public Services and Procurement and the Honourable Dominic Leblanc, Government House Leader, along with 4 Parliamentary Secretaries as well as 38 parliamentarians. But what really matters for you as SME members is that we took our capabilities database, which all of you are in, and we turned it into an interactive map so that MPs could find you in their ridings. Not even 24 hours had passed before we were getting e-mails from MPs asking if we could send them a list of the companies we had told them about. Now is the time for you to reach out and invite them in to your facilities.

We of course also remain focussed on NSPS, in particular the Canadian Surface Combatant and the Next Generation Fighter programs, which, if leveraged strategically, can define the future of our industry for a generation.

As you know, these very large platform projects are important for SMEs because they can provide opportunities for you to enter into global value chains which can get you swept up into greater export markets--or as one of our Board members Ray Castelli calls it the "sherpa" approach.

We have been working diligently for over a year now with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada or ISED (formerly Industry Canada) on the survey of the defence sector that they have been

conducting with Statistics Canada; we're doing this so that you don't get left out as positioning happens at the platform level. We want to make sure that politicians and decision-makers have the full picture of the Canadian landscape's possibilities when we get into debates over buying things off the shelf or investing in Canada. When those debates happens we will have the ability to point to data and say "we should be investing in capabilities that we already have here in Canada".

L'AICDS a établi un protocole d'entente avec ISDE afin de faciliter cette collaboration de recherche. Nous avons mis sur pied un comité consultatif formé de membres de l'AICDS qui communiquera régulièrement avec les responsables à ISDE.

The next few months will be important for the defence industry to be heard in the context of the government's Defence Review, an exercise that only comes along once every ten or twenty years. We expect to be part of those consultations. We think that our industry has a lot to offer the Defence Review, especially on how to improve and streamline the process of defence procurement which for all of us simply boils down to tangible business opportunities in realistic time frames which will provide us with "cash flow". We will be also making the point that Canada needs to get more in line with our allies and that a strong domestic defence industrial base is a key dimension of sovereignty and national security.

We are also encouraging the government to hold fast to its commitment not to lapse DND funding year over year--this hurts industry because programs are delayed and capability that we have can atrophy. We recently made a pre-Budget submission to the Finance Minister on this critical issue for our industry.

While this is not an exhaustive list of our advocacy efforts on your behalf, it gives you a sense of some of the big files we are pursuing these days.

If this were not enough, we have CANSEC 2016 around the corner, on May 25 and 26 and for those of you who have been there you know it's quite a show. I have often been asked by SMEs "how do I get DND to see what I am doing?" Well, come to CANSEC - 4200 DND and Government individuals walk our show, not to mention 52 countries if you are in the export business.

We will have some surprises this year to make CANSEC better too and one of those surprises is a new, stronger, more assertive brand because your success is CANSEC's success. We'll be unveiling the new CANSEC brand at CADSI's AGM on March 31. And you are all invited to attend.

Thank you again for participating and have a profitable time here today.