



Gaming Challenges to Canada #1: Arctic Security



OBJECTIVE

Climate change and a changing international order are transforming the Arctic into a contested strategic theatre, posing serious challenges to Canada's sovereignty and security in the North. Diminishing sea ice will increase access for shipping, extraction, and military activity. Russia continues to expand its Arctic military presence through modernized bases, advanced air and missile systems, icebreakers, and hybrid activities against NATO states. China, which calls itself a "near-Arctic state," has increased polar research missions and interest in sea routes and resources. The United States rejects Canada's claim that the Northwest Passage constitutes internal waters and has demonstrated a growing willingness to use economic pressure, coercive diplomacy, and veiled threats of force to advance its Arctic ambitions.

The proposed game should examine Arctic security challenges confronting Canada, primarily at the operational level, while also incorporating selected strategic drivers and tactical capabilities and decision points. It should also reflect an all-of-government response. Scenarios that the game might address could include:

- Russian probes in the Arctic by crewed or uncrewed air, surface, subsurface, or space-enabled platforms testing detection thresholds and response times.
- A Chinese "scientific" vessel conducting research activities within Canada's claimed waters while suspected of hydrographic mapping or signals intelligence collection.
- A United States Navy or Coast Guard freedom-of-navigation transit through the Northwest Passage intended to directly challenge Canadian sovereignty claims.
- Sabotage or cyber disruption affecting northern communications, satellite ground stations, or energy infrastructure.

CLIENT/USERS

The game is primarily intended to raise awareness across DND and other (federal and territorial) government departments of emerging Arctic threats, existing Canadian capabilities and capability gaps, and possible response options. Conducted with multiple stakeholders, a series of game iterations might also generate momentum for further research, planning, and capability development.

PITCH

You will have only three minutes to pitch your proposal, followed by a very brief Q&A. Try to address the following elements:

OVERALL APPROACH

Describe the overall approach your project will adopt, and why. In doing so, consider your primary and any secondary users, as well as the level of resources that would likely be available to support the game.

KEY COMPONENTS AND MECHANICS

Identify some of the key components and mechanics of your game.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Identify some of the issues and challenges you will need to address during game development

OTHER COMMENTS

Provide any other comments relevant to your proposal. Remember you only have three minutes!



Gaming Challenges to Canada #2: Influence Operations and Societal Resilience in the Era of AI and Social Media



OBJECTIVE

The ubiquity of social media and the rapid advance of artificial intelligence have created powerful new tools for malign actors to influence Canadian attitudes, political outcomes, and social cohesion. Highly targeted disinformation, synthetic media, automated amplification, and covert financing can shape public debate while remaining difficult to detect or attribute. At the same time, digital platforms cannot be assumed to be neutral: algorithms, moderation policies, commercial incentives, political ideologies, and potential alignment with foreign interests may amplify polarizing or misleading content.

The proposed game may explore this challenge at any level—from national strategy to operational and technical response. Possible scenario areas could include:

- **Electoral interference:** Foreign involvement in federal or provincial elections, or during a sovereignty referendum, including covert support from outside states for separatist movements.
- **Social polarization and extremism:** Malign campaigns that inflame hostility toward multicultural liberal democracy, amplify hate speech, or mobilize extremist networks around immigration, identity, or public health issues.

- **Information warfare and disinformation:** Coordinated false narratives during crises, or manipulation of diaspora communities to erode trust in government and institutions.
- **Digital regulation wars:** Canadian attempts to counter hostile disinformation or online hate-speech face resistance from social media companies and their powerful state ally, provoking counterattacks designed to weaken Canadian digital sovereignty, governance, and social cohesion.

The game should enable participants to examine detection, attribution, resilience, legal authorities, intergovernmental coordination, and the balance between countering malign influence and protecting civil liberties.

CLIENT/USERS

Identify which particular users would most benefit from your game, and how much time, effort, and specialist knowledge their participation would require.

PITCH

You will have only three minutes to pitch your game, followed by a very brief Q&A. Try to address the following elements:

OVERALL APPROACH

Describe the overall approach your project will adopt, and why. In doing so, consider your primary and any secondary users, as well as the level of resources that would likely be available to support the wargame.

KEY COMPONENTS AND MECHANICS

Identify some of the key components and mechanics of your game.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Identify some of the issues and challenges you will need to address during game development

OTHER COMMENTS

Provide any other comments relevant to your proposal. Remember you only have three minutes!



Gaming Challenges to Canada #3: Climate Change and Canadian Domestic Emergency Response



OBJECTIVE

Canada is entering an era of heightened climate risk as global warming drives sharp increases in weather and wildfire extremes. Modelling suggests that annual area burned could rise by 75–140% by mid-century, with longer fire seasons and more frequent extreme fire-weather conditions. At the same time, a warmer atmosphere will intensify precipitation extremes, with 20–40% increases in the intensity of heavy rainfall events in many parts of Canada, elevating inland flood risk. Paradoxically, while global warming will reduce the frequency and severity of extreme cold weather, it could result in more volatile winter conditions, including heavy snow, freezing rain, and ice storms—hazards that often produce greater economic and infrastructure impacts than steady cold alone.

For the Canadian Armed Forces, domestic emergencies are becoming a persistent operational demand rather than episodic contingency. Annual deployments under civil-assistance operations (such as wildfire suppression support, evacuations, flood response) are increasing in frequency, duration, and geographic scope, straining personnel readiness, equipment availability, and training cycles while competing with primary defence, expeditionary and deterrence tasks.

The game should explore how the federal (or federal and provincial) governments might best address this challenge, including investments in alternative civilian capacities, an expanded Reserve Force, capital investments and acquisitions, remote sensing and modelling, and societal resilience. The timeframe should be long enough to address both climate change and the impact of investments. It may be intended either to spark discussion or for more substantial analysis.

CLIENTS/USERS

The game may be intended either for the Department of National Defence (focusing primarily on CAF contributions) or more broadly (focusing on all-of-government and federal/provincial/territorial response).

PITCH

You will have only three minutes to pitch your game, followed by a very brief Q&A. Try to address the following elements:

OVERALL APPROACH

Describe the overall approach your project will adopt, and why. In doing so, consider your primary and any secondary users, as well as the level of resources that would likely be available to support the wargame.

KEY COMPONENTS AND MECHANICS

Identify some of the key components and mechanics of your game.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Identify some of the issues and challenges you will need to address during game development

OTHER COMMENTS

Provide any other comments relevant to your proposal. Remember you only have three minutes!