



Paul Smith, OMM, MSM, CD

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Commander Paul Smith is an accomplished leader in the Royal Canadian Navy and a decorated officer whose operational experience, leadership acumen and dedication to service have distinguished him across the Canadian Armed Forces. He currently serves as the Commanding Officer of HMCS YORK, the largest Naval Reserve Division in Canada, where he is responsible for the leadership, mentorship and operational readiness of a diverse and dynamic unit. Commander Smith is widely respected across the Canadian Armed Forces for his strategic thinking, calm under pressure and ability to lead teams through complex operational challenges. A career naval officer, he previously commanded HMCS KINGSTON and HMCS SUMMERSIDE, two of Canada's Kingston-class maritime coastal defence vessels. Under Commander Smith's leadership, these ships deployed on critical international missions, including Operation CARIBBE—Canada's contribution to the multinational effort against drug trafficking in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific—and Operation PROJECTION, strengthening maritime security and international cooperation in West Africa and beyond. His leadership during these missions underscored his ability to deliver operational success while navigating complex international environments and fostering multinational collaboration.

Commander Smith's dedication and performance have been recognized through several prestigious honours. He is a recipient of the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM), awarded for exceptional professionalism and leadership. Commander Smith has also been invested as an Officer of the Order of Military Merit (OMM), one of Canada's highest military honours, recognizing outstanding dedication and devotion to duty. His service medals include the Operational Service Medal, Special Service Medal and the Canadian Forces Decoration (CD) for long and loyal service.

Beyond his deployments and honours, Commander Smith is a passionate advocate for leadership development, inclusive service and operational excellence. He is known for his dynamic and engaging speaking style, drawing on lived experience in high-stakes environments to deliver powerful lessons on leadership, resilience and teamwork. As a keynote speaker, Commander Smith brings authenticity, strategic insight and an inspiring message to audiences ranging from corporate leaders to youth, veterans and public servants. His compelling stories and leadership philosophy resonate with anyone striving to lead with purpose, adapt to change and build high-performing teams in today's complex world.