

The Security Professional – Putting Practitioners Back at the Centre of Defence

Dr. Stephanie Carvin

Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

Carleton University

Agenda

- Context
- Methodology
- BLUF
- The New Division of Labour
- What Are Analysts Saying & the Expertise Paradox
- Institutional Issues
- The Future

Context

- Canada is an AI innovator, but major adoption gap
 - 12% businesses use AI to produce goods or services, 8% SMEs
- One of the lowest perceptions of AI trustworthiness in the world
 - Ranked 44/47, KPMG 2025 survey
- Only 24% of Canadians have received AI training
- Only 31% of Canadians believe that AI good for society
- Increasing concerns over sovereignty and infrastructure

If machines
perform more of
the searching,
sorting,
summarizing and
drafting, what is
the analyst for?



Methodology



15 semi-structured, free-flowing interviews



Private sector: 5



Defence: 4



Intelligence: 4

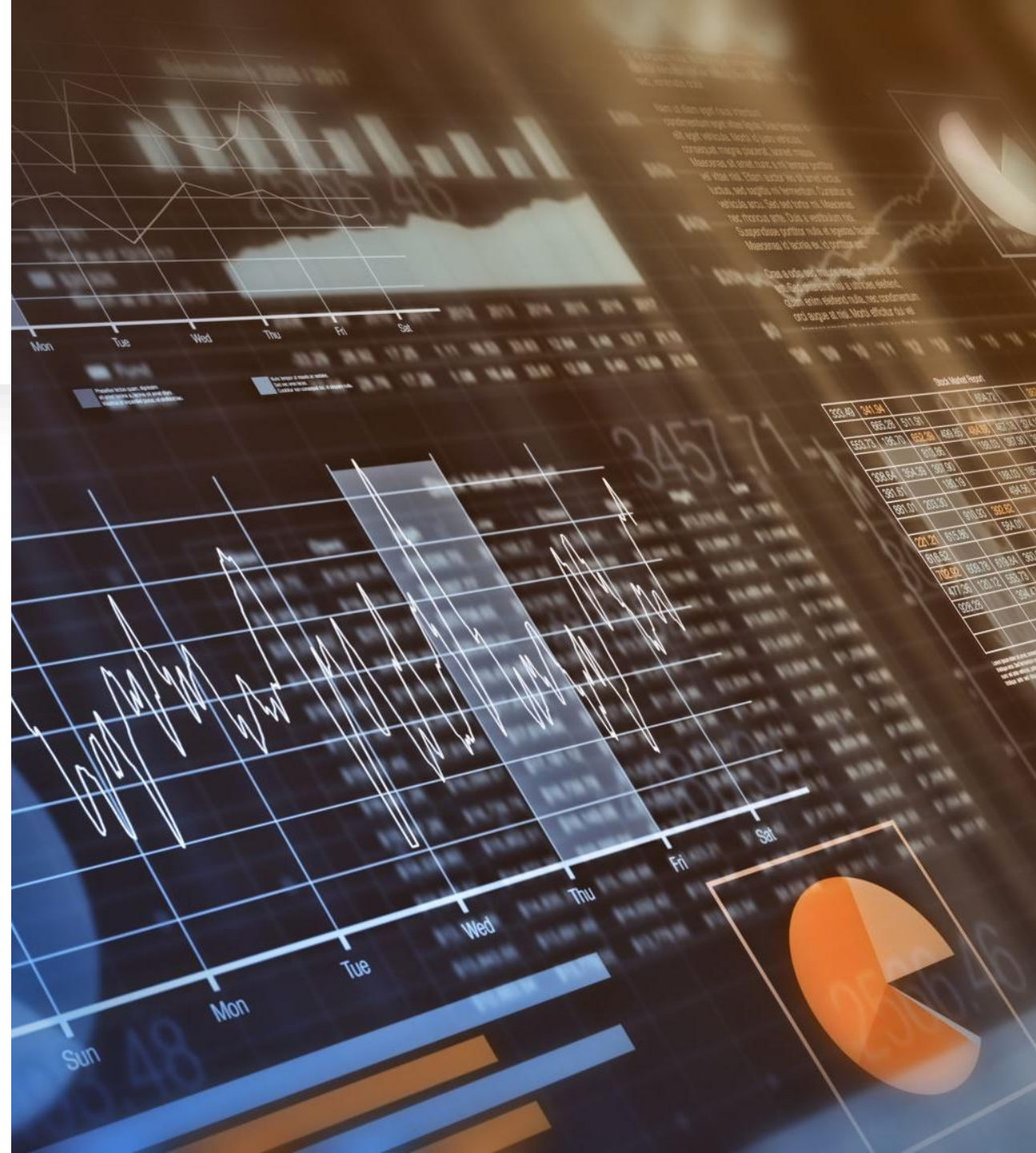


Other government department: 2

Bottom Line Up Front

AI is more likely to redistribute analytical work than eliminate the analyst.

1. Machines will absorb more information-processing work.
2. The remaining human judgement becomes more consequential.
3. Institutional capacity - not model capability - may be the limiting factor.



A New Division of Labour

Increasingly machine supported	Fundamentally human
Search and retrieval	Problem framing
Sorting and structuring	Contextual interpretation
Translation and transcription	Judgement under uncertainty
Pattern and anomaly detection	Evaluation of consequences
Summarization and comparison	Explanation and communication
Preliminary drafting	Accountability

What Are Analysts Saying?



Fear of
replacement is
real



Deepest fear is
loss of expertise
and critical
thinking



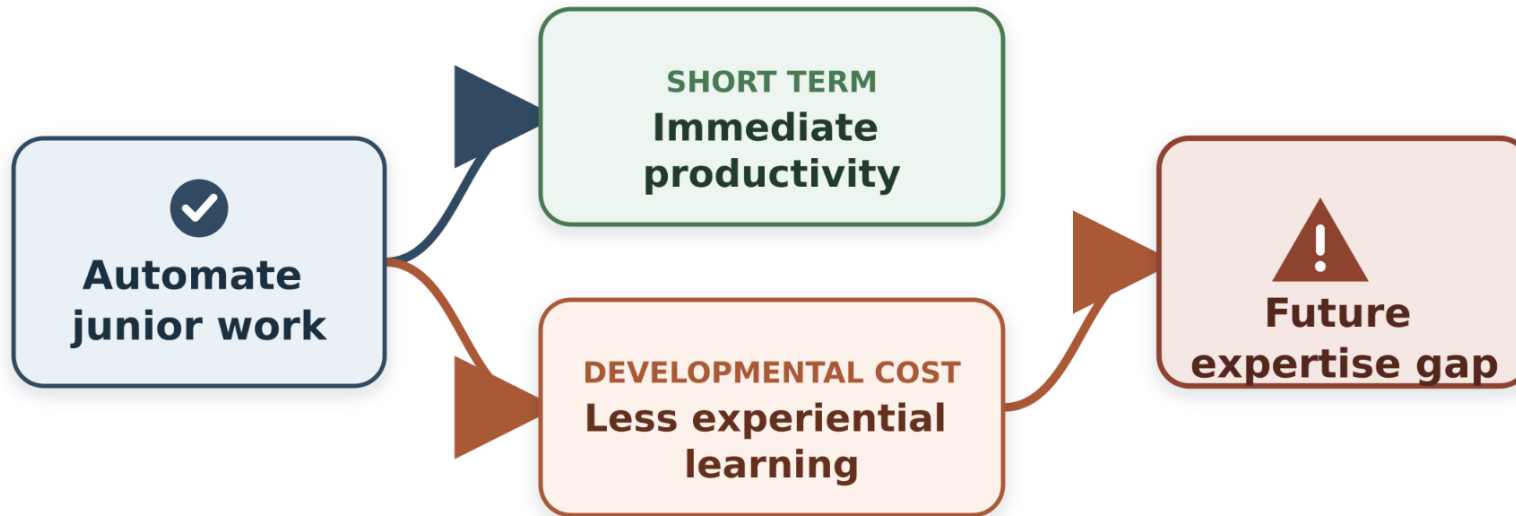
Junior analysts
are the focal point
of that anxiety



Analysts feel
overwhelmed by
low-value work

The Expertise Paradox

AI may make junior analysts more productive while weakening the process through which they become senior analysts.



Productivity rises now while the pipeline for future expertise weakens

What Are Analysts Saying?



Analysts want the technology,
even if they do not fully trust it



Analysts want to experiment,
but organizations are risk
averse



Analysts will need different
skills, but not “learn to code”

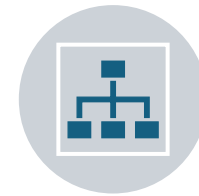
The Institutional Problem



procurement and
onboarding



data access and
architecture



classification and
organizational silos



legal and policy
uncertainty



training and
technical capacity



leadership and risk
tolerance

Different sectors see different risks

Group	Defining concern
Private sector	Can it be adopted and integrated quickly enough?
Civilian Government	Can we responsibly scale up useage?
Intelligence	Can the judgement be defended?
Defence	Can we keep operational advantage?

What does the future look like?

The successful organization of 2035 is not AI-centred; it is people-centred but AI-enabled

- Adaptability
- AI integration, not bolted to old processes
- People remain at the centre
- Speed and agility matter, but not recklessness
- Governance evolved with technology
- Risk taking and experimentation
- Technology as ecosystem, not “one sized fits all”

What does the future of the analyst look like?

