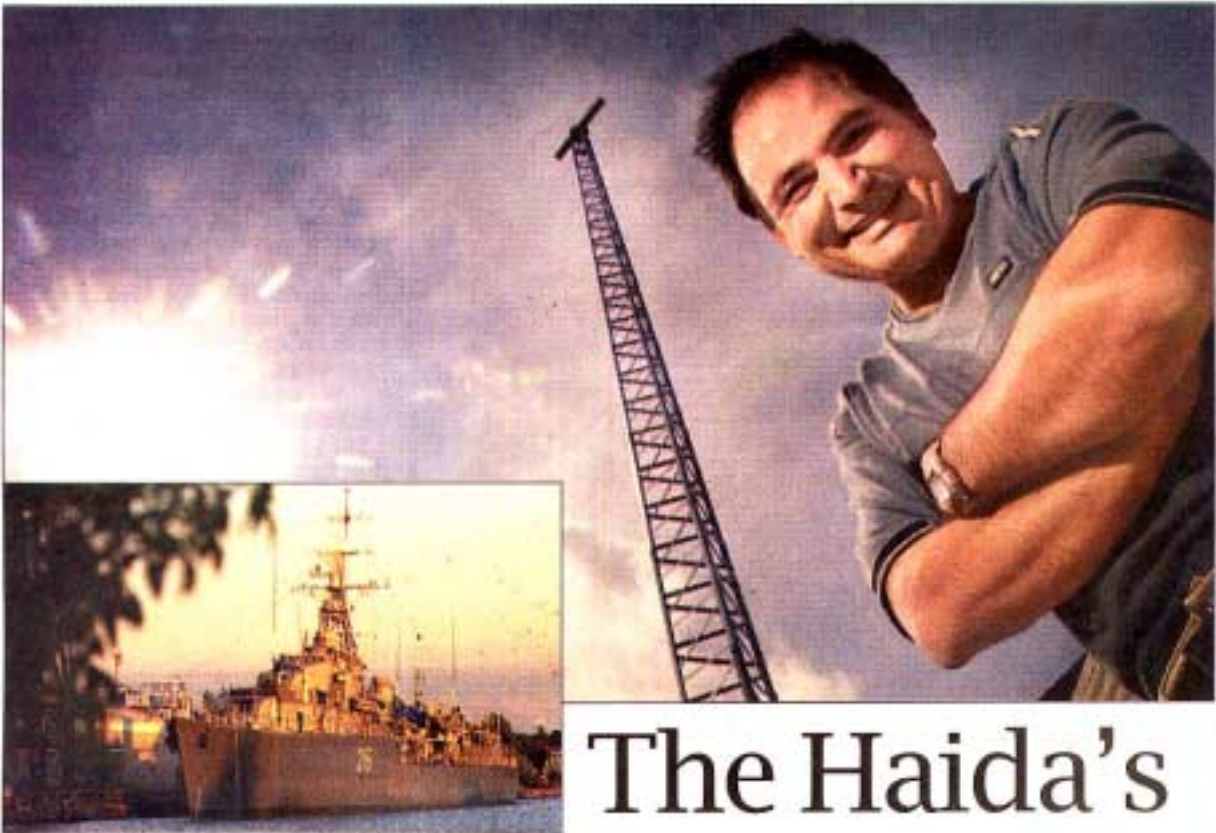


# The Standard

ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2003



Tim Nohara of Sicom Systems Ltd. says the Haida, above, will serve as a "target of opportunity" during a test of his firm's new radar system.

STAFF PHOTOS BY LEONARD LEPAGE AND BOB TYMCZYSZYN

## The Haida's last mission

*As it is towed to Hamilton, the old warship will be used to test a new radar system*

By **BILL CURRIE**  
Standard Staff

Tim Nohara views the HMCS Haida as a target of opportunity, the same way a terrorist might see it.

But Nohara wants to stop terrorist attacks, not cause them. The planned test of his nine-year computer radar project will be part of that solution. It could even be called the Haida's last military mission.

When the historic Tribal class destroyer is moved from Port Weller Dry Docks to Hamilton Thursday morning, Nohara will be sitting in a small trailer in St. Catharines, tracking its every move.

"It's basically a target of opportunity," said Nohara, founder and president of Sicom Systems Ltd.

Sicom's technology combines conventional radar with a typical desktop computer and software developed by the firm that uses military computer language. It's designed to create a low-cost solution to a variety of homeland security problems.

The Fonthill company had been working on developing military software until the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, when it decided to shift the focus to homeland security, said Nohara.

For the test, the Haida will be escorted — and likely approached from all directions — by small pleasure boats as it makes its journey.

Boats from ASI Group, a St. Catharines-based aquatic engineering firm, will also participate to ensure there

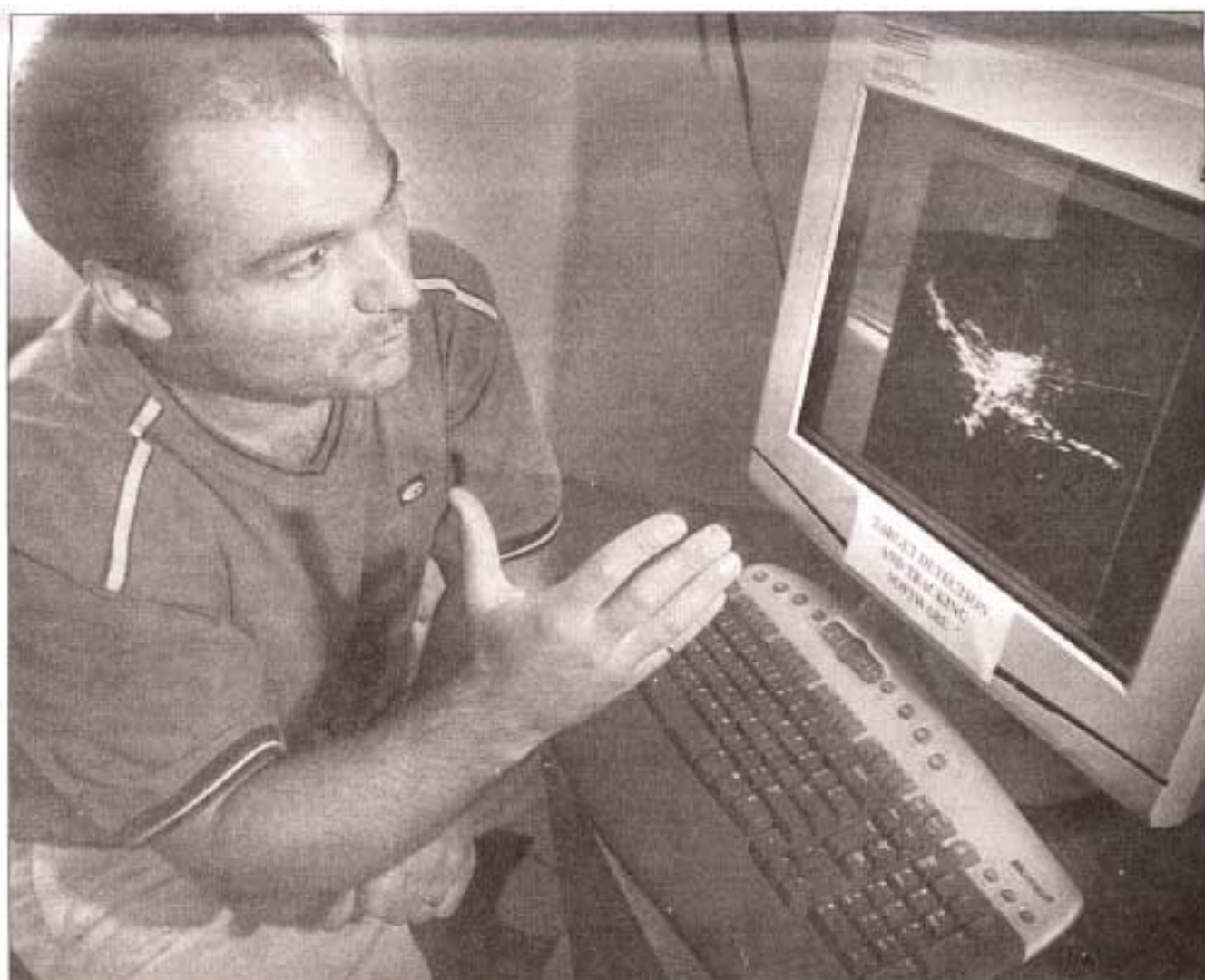
is a good sample for the test.

The ASI boats have permission from Parks Canada, which owns the Haida, to directly approach the ship, creating a tracking target for the new radar system. Several scenarios will be played out during the Haida's voyage.

Nohara said this is the first time owners of a large military vessel have co-operated to allow the test.

The traditional radar signal, transmitted and received through a tower, is processed with more sensitivity and less clutter by the surveillance software. It can track a threat as small as a dinghy, project its expected course and automatically issue alerts to authorities, he said.

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Tim Nohara, founder and president of Sicom Systems Ltd., shows the computer radar unit his firm will use to track the HMCS Haida when it leaves Port Weller Thursday.

STAFF PHOTO BY BOB TYMCZYSHYN

## Radar

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

Once programmed, it is fully automated. Nohara calls it a "machinery rather than bodies" approach to 24-hour surveillance. It would free operators to react to threats instead of manually monitoring radar screens to protect shipping, critical infrastructure such as bridges and nuclear power plants and populated areas, he said.

Nohara is proposing a network of these kinds of surveillance solutions. The firm expects its customers will include agencies involved in homeland security on both sides of the border.

"I hope within a few months to have enough data to optimize the application," Nohara said.

"There's a lot of learning that people are doing in terms of how well this works," said Sicom engineer Carl Krasnor, business and corporate development manager for the company. "It's very important to try this out in as many different situations as possible."

The Haida, which has had a \$3.5-million hull and superstructure restoration at Port Weller Dry Docks, was scheduled to be towed to Hamilton on Friday, but concerns about the weather forced the crossing to be moved ahead to Thursday. The ship is scheduled to leave as early as 8 a.m., depending upon commercial traffic through Lock 1. Officials want to have the ship under way in Lake Ontario

between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m.

Parks Canada is encouraging people to gather along the banks below Lock 1 to watch the ship as it is being towed out. Parks employees will be available to answer questions about the ship.

The Haida will spend two nights docked at the Burlington Canal and then be towed into Hamilton Harbour for a celebration at Bayfront Park Saturday. A variety of events begin at 11 a.m. but official ceremonies start at 1 p.m.

The ship will later be taken to its permanent home at the HMCS Star naval base at Pier 9, where it will serve as a floating museum.