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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
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EXERCISE/EXERCICE NEW HORIZONS

TITLE/TITRE
**LEADERSHIP AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT - AREAS TO
IMPROVE RETENTION IN THE RESERVE FORCE**

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ABSTRACT

Through transformation, recognition of the need to bolster the ranks of the CF Reserve emerged in order to meet the new challenges of the 21st century. However, the expansion of the Reserve would prove difficult with high attrition rates and demographic trends. Retention must be improved and this paper examines how it can be done in the Reserve with leadership and effective Human Resource (HR) management. A retention strategy must include reinforcement of the importance of leadership and HR management. The CF Reserve leadership must set up feedback mechanisms to monitor morale and perceived problems before they affect the motivation of the troops. The CF is engaged in a two-way unwritten social contract and meeting expectations is essential. HR Management will address many of the issues raised in this paper but the most fundamental issue is one of leadership. Leaders at all levels must be committed to retaining their personnel and they must be pro-active about finding out why people leave, by conducting attitudinal surveys and by release monitoring.

INTRODUCTION

The last decade of the 20th century was a period of turmoil for the Canadian Forces (CF). Successive budget reductions, downsizing of the establishment, and pay freezes had an impact on the stability of the forces at large. Through transformation, recognition of the need to bolster the ranks of the CF Reserve emerged in order to meet the new challenges of the 21st century. An intensified recruiting campaign began in earnest in 2002. However, the expansion of the Reserve would prove difficult as attrition rates range from 10.5% in the Naval Reserve to upward of 50% annually in some militia units. Furthermore, demographic trends will likely compound already high attrition rates. Although the demographic survey completed by the Delta Partners at the request of ADM HR (MIL) in 2000 did not differentiate between the Reserve and Regular components of the CF, by extrapolation, approximately 15,000 serving members, now between the age of 42 and 47, will reach retirement between 2015 and 2020.¹

In his paper on commitment and leadership, BGen Irwin suggested that: “In return for the willingness of CF members to be placed by their nation at physical risk...the nation and its military leadership must look after its military sons and daughters as a military family.”² In order to retain the services of these sons and daughters, the CF must be an organization capable of supporting its troops in a fair and equitable manner as well as giving them the recognition for their contributions. It should be noted that this

¹ Delta Partners, “Canadian Forces Recruiting Improvement Study” (unpublished paper, September 2000), 17.

² BGen S.M. Irwin, “The CF Human Resource Challenge: Commitment and Leadership.” (Toronto: Canadian Forces College National Security Studies Course Paper, 2001), 2.

dimension of leadership is reflected in the 2005 CF leadership model.³ Furthermore, in today's environment where the operational demands far exceed the human and financial resources available, the CF cannot afford to pay the price of high attrition.⁴ The budgetary allocations in terms of human resources costs have steadily commanded a larger percentage of the defence dollar and will continue to do so in the future. Therefore, "in recognition of the importance of retention for CF's organizational and operational effectiveness, the Armed Forces Council (AFC) provided in 2001 direction for the development of a retention strategy...."⁵

Recruiting alone will not suffice; retention must be improved and this paper will examine how it can be done in the Reserve with leadership and effective Human Resource (HR) management. The analysis will commence with a brief theoretical overview of factors related to retention. Subsequently, the argument will be developed from a practical point of view around four main themes: resources, training, employment and commitment.⁶ Finally, a summary of these areas where leadership and HR management can contribute to improving retention in the CF Reserve will be presented. It should be noted that the data examined in this paper has been collected from the Militia

³ Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-004 Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations. (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005), 48.

⁴ Maj W.J. Carruthers, "To Have and to Hold – Some Thoughts on Motivation, Attitudes and Attrition in a Modern Force" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College Command and Staff Course New Horizons Paper, 1978), 1.

⁵ Department of National Defence, *Canadian Forces Retention Strategy AFC Council 05/01 Record of Decision* (Ottawa: CDS Message Canda, 101930Z Jul 01).

⁶ Resources, training, employment and commitment were chosen as they figured prominently in the most recent attitudinal questionnaire answered by 2014 reservists, representing 57.4% of the Naval Reserve. Although, there were no recent studies conducted in the other components of the CF Reserve available for review, these areas have been historically singled out as major concerns of reservists Forces wide.

and the Naval Reserve. The two components account for more than 80% of the Reserve establishment which was considered representative for the purpose of this analysis.

DISCUSSION

High turnover rates through premature voluntary releases have an impact on the operational capability of the CF. Furthermore, the financial costs and personnel resources required to train new recruits are significant. It takes a minimum of six months for an infantryman and upward of two years for a Maritime Surface (MARS) officer before they reach the level where they can fill an operational position. High turnover rates in a Reserve unit, especially at the more senior level of leadership, often result in only a fraction of reservists receiving the requisite level of training, thus diminishing the unit's combat readiness, and reducing the size of the training cadre. Moreover, the smaller cadre and a more rapid advancement through the ranks in a less competitive environment further compromise the operational readiness.⁷ Retention, availability of personnel and their impact on units' readiness all combine to reduce the effectiveness of the Reserve component in the CF. In order to better understand the variables at play, the analysis will commence with some theoretical concepts on retention.

The Theory

In order to retain people, an organization must be able to keep its members motivated. Pierre Levasseur⁸ simply defined motivation as "*l'état d'une personne qui choisit de faire un effort en vue d'accomplir une certaine tâche, puis choisit de fournir*

⁷ LCdr Kenneth R. Stewart, "Canada's Naval Reserve a New Way Ahead for Total Force" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College Command and Staff Course New Horizons Paper, 1995), 19.

⁸ Pierre Levasseur is a university professor and a recognized subject matter expert on human resources related subjects, often cited as reference by other authors writing in the field.

une certaine quantité d'efforts et, enfin choisit de maintenir ses efforts pendant un certain temps."⁹ Assuming that on enrolment a candidate is motivated by the possibility of pursuing a military career, the element of this definition that is relevant to this discussion is how to keep the individual motivated over time. It is generally accepted that there are two components to motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic component is difficult to influence as it is within the person and relates to his (or her) values, needs and belief. However, Jocelyn Jacques postulated that in a working environment the extrinsic or external component is linked to conditions, rules, regulations and standards in the organization.¹⁰ Figure 1 shows that a need that is not satisfied will lead to tension. If allowed to fester, this unfulfilled need will become a perceived insurmountable obstacle which will detract from the main objective and overall motivation.

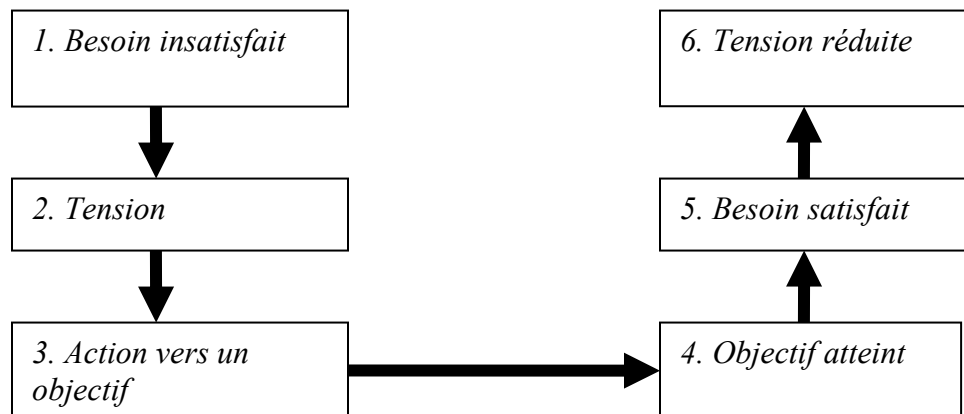


Figure 1 – Processus de Motivation

Source: J.-L. Bergeron, N. Côté, J. Jacques, *Les Aspects Humains de l'Organisation*, 104.

⁹ Nicole Cote, Laurent Bélanger and Jocelyn Jacques. *La Dimension Humaine des Organisations*. (Boucherville : Gaétan Morin Editeur, 1994), 152.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 152.

Pierre Bergeron stated that an accomplished leader can motivate his subordinates when he “*parvient à combler leur besoins ainsi qu’à or*

employee contributions (i.e. performance and attendance) and lower employer investments (i.e. retention and promotion).”¹⁴

In summary, the theory demonstrates that the CF, specifically the Reserve components, must pay attention to retention as it will potentially have an impact on its ability to fulfill its mission. Motivation is a significant factor when it comes to retention and it can be influenced primarily by addressing extrinsic factors; mostly having to do with the work environment. In order to address them, we must know our people better. The CF Reserve leadership must be proactive; feedback mechanisms have to be set up to level out the “obstacles” before they affect the motivation of the troops. Simply put the theory points out to basic leadership and HR management techniques. In the next section, more light will be shed on ways to improve retention in the Reserve by combining theory and data collected from the field.

The Practice

Over the years, the Naval Reserve Headquarters (NRHQ) has surveyed its sailors with a view to improve recruitment and retention and the latest initiative was launched in 2005. NRHQ mandated the Directorate Human Resources Research and Evaluation (DHRRE) to investigate the most common reasons for people to join and leave its forces, and “to identify major factors encouraging additional service along with major obstacles and dissatisfiers.”¹⁵ Through a series of focus groups held across the country a numbers of key issues were collected to assist with the development of a survey questionnaire.

¹⁴ Denise M. Rousseau, *Psychological Contracts in Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications Inc, 1995), 140.

¹⁵ D.A. Jenkins. *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase One*. Report Prepared for Director Human Resources Research and Evaluation. (Ottawa: Canada Communications Group, 2005), III.

The results of this survey form the foundation of the analysis of this paper. Similar initiatives have been used in the United Kingdom, where “the Department carries out research to understand the reasons why people join and leave the Volunteer Reserves – mainly continuous attitude surveys of Reservists.”¹⁶ It is somewhat concerning to note that based on discussions with various level headquarters, namely NDHQ DG Land Reserve and JTFC, no such approach or methodology have been espoused by the Militia to benchmark its personnel since PMO TASK¹⁷ in 1988. The analysis will now explore the impact that resources from a policy, support staff and HR management point of view as well as training, employment and commitment can have on retention.

Resources (Policies) - Historical dissatisfactions with promotion, administration of pay and general support were well documented in the PMO TASK Final Report.¹⁸ A major conclusion was then made regarding the need to reduce the units’ administrative burden. Years later, in the NRHQ survey it was found that significant numbers of reservists reported “....problems with their pay in recent months....[and] in general, participants reported that they spent far too much time pushing paperwork through the chain of command and asking for updates and answers.”¹⁹ A central theme that emerged was that there was excessive bureaucracy in the CF Reserve and that the rationale behind policies and regulations was often obscure. Excessive bureaucracy diffuses

¹⁶ National Audit Office. *Ministry of Defence Reserve Forces* (London: The Stationery Office, 28 March 2006), 34.

¹⁷ PMO TASK –A Project Management Office was put in place to study through surveys Trade Advancement for Skill and Knowledge (TASK) in the Reserve forces.

¹⁸ OPTIMA, *Attitudes of Non-Commissioned Reservists Towards the Reward System in the Canadian Forces*, Report Prepared for PMO TASK (Ottawa: OPTIMA Consultants in Applied Research, 1989), 12.

¹⁹ Jenkins. *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase One*. 7.

accountability for resolving problems thus allowing them to persist. The net effect is poor service and administration time lost that should have been spent on training or operations. It is clear that something must be done to review policy and eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy. This speaks to “an integrated HR System with a ‘full time’ and ‘part time’ service construct.”²⁰ It is recognized that changing or introducing any new HR policy will usually affect and may conflict with other existing policies. The plan to integrate Reserve and Regular forces policies in the draft *Canadian Forces Doctrine for Human Resources*²¹ is encouraging as the initiative is seen as an essential in order to improve retention in the Reserve.

The CF is not alone in this situation; an audit by the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence of its Reserve found that despite “substantial improvements in the quality of support to the units, its members and their family in recent years, more remains to be done in some areas.”²² Similarities between the UK audit and the most recent NRHQ study are striking. The administrative workload and the overburden support staff are at the forefront of the reports. Too much administration is being conducted on the back of a few using policies that are questionably different from those regulating Regular Force members.

In the early 1990s, a number of software based solutions were identified as key to improve the operational effectiveness of the Reserve by minimizing the time spent on

²⁰ MGen H.M Petras, Reserve Force Transformation (National Defence Headquarters: file 1950-9 (CT), 4 May 2006).

²¹ Department of National Defense, B-GJ-100/FP-001 *Canadian Forces Doctrine for Human Resources* (Ottawa: DND Canada, draft), 20.

²² National Audit Office. *Ministry of Defence Reserve Forces* (London: The Stationery Office, 28 March 2006), 29.

administrative matters. One such initiative was the Reserve Automated Management System (RAMS) project, a component of the greater Reserve Integrated Information Project (RIIP). RIIP was to deliver a solution to ease personnel administration, logistic support, training, and financial services such as pay and budgeting.²³ The project was cancelled in December 1997 as a result of project mismanagement. However, the stated capability deficiency remains largely unfulfilled to date. BGen Bouchard wrote that the “CF has proven weak in effectively managing Human Resources (HR) issues over the past decades. The battles being lost are...those of attracting, training, motivating and retaining personnel in the CF.”²⁴ Only through leadership and the application of the necessary resources, personnel, financial and tools, can this administrative policy burden be reduced.

Resources (Support staff) – The second aspect of resources to be examined is the adequacy of the level of support staff in the units to meet the need. “Given that units are responsible for dozens of secondary duties in addition to primary functions, it is not surprising that many staff felt overwhelmed with the variety of responsibilities...”²⁵ It should be noted that the level of effort involved with maintaining the mandated security, safety, environmental programs, just to name a few, found on any large base is significant. The difference here in the Reserve units is that very small full time staffs

²³ Department of National Defence, *Reserve Integrated Information Project/Reserve Automated Management System* (Ottawa: Chief of Review Services, 2000), 1.

²⁴ BGen J.J.C. Bouchard, “Improving Human Resource Management in the Canadian Forces – Developing the People Persons.” (Toronto: Canadian Forces College National Security Studies Course Paper, 2001), 2.

²⁵ Jenkins. *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase One*, 8.

share the same workload. This extracurricular workload detracts from the main mandate of the Reserve units, which is training.

The advent of Regular forces personnel in Reserve units in the early 70s was not only aimed to fill a gap of experience but mainly to assist with the administrative workload. “These officers and NCMs assist in unit administration and the preparation of training; freeing the unit members to conduct training.”²⁶ Unfortunately with no more than seven full time members, Regular and Reserve, in a Militia unit of 300 like the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa, this support staff is not sufficient to be effective. This is not a new problem. In 1987, the White Paper on Defence had identified the requirement to increase the support to Reserve units to 10 percent of their establishment. This necessity was reaffirmed in an article written by the then BGen Gordon J. O’Connor.²⁷ It was determined that a mixed of Reserve and Regular Force personnel serving full time was necessary in order to achieve the requisite operational readiness. The only instance found of this level of support is from the personal experience of this author in the early 1990s during an expansion program of the Naval Reserve in the province of Québec. For instance, HMCS JOLLIET, a Naval Reserve Division in Sept-Îles, Québec, had a support staff summarized in Table 1 below.

²⁶ Maj G. Bruce Parks, “The Militia: Getting the Best Bang for the Buck.” (Toronto: Canadian Forces College Command and Staff Course New Horizons Paper, 1995), 17.

²⁷ BGen Gordon J. O’Connor, “Developing a Total Force Army,” Canadian Defence Quarterly, Vol 18, no 2 (Autumn 1988): 14.

Table 1 – Support staff

HMCS JOLLIET (Establishment 92)			CH of Ottawa (Establishment 300)		
Position	Rank	Component	Position	Rank	Component
Commanding Officer *	LCdr	Regular or Reserve Force			
Training Officer	Lt(N)	Regular Force	Adjutant	Capt	Regular Force
Administration Officer	Lt(N)	Reserve Force	A/Ops O	WO	Regular Force
Chief Clerk	PO1	Regular Force	Chief Clerk	Sgt	Regular Force
Administration Clerk 1	MS	Regular Force	Administration Clerk 1	MCpl	Reserve Force
Administration Clerk 2	LS	Reserve Force	Administration Clerk 2	Cpl	Reserve Force
Finance Supervisor	PO2	Regular Force	QM	Sgt	Regular Force
Finance Clerk	LS	Reserve Force	Administration Clerk 3	Cpl	Reserve Force
A/Training Officer & Infrastructure	PO2	Regular Force			
Total :	9	6x Regular Force	Total:	7	4x Regular Force
Note:		3x Reserve Force			3x Reserve Force
* Unique to new units					

It should be noted that JOLLIET was a seven-year-old unit and its establishment was set at 92 members. Sitting at approximately 10% of the establishment, the level of support was considered adequate for the task at hand. Although the support staff has decreased somewhat since then, the number of the combined Regular and Reserve support staff in Naval Reserve units is still roughly double the level found in the Militia on a *per capita* basis. It appears that in this case a relatively small investment in support personnel for Reserve units could have a significant impact on a large number of reservists and by extension on retention. Finding the full time personnel to fill these support staff positions may not be easy, however BGen Bouchard indicated that “at the highest level, HRM must be given equal weight with operations and the execution of capital programs. It is first and foremost a leadership issue.”²⁸ It is an HR Management function to determine the return on investment.

Resources (HR Management) - Due to its centralized command in one headquarters in Québec city, Naval Reserve career management is most closely akin to that found in the Regular forces. “In terms of HR management, NavRes [Naval Reserve Headquarters (NRHQ)] is a very complex entity. It is in the position of having to man and manage a great variety of positions with a workforce that is extremely diverse in terms of career goals and availability.”²⁹ Moreover, it is worth commenting on the number of files handled by each of the career managers. A typical workload per career managers in NRHQ amounts to more than 600 files while his Regular force counterpart manages on average 500 files. Moreover, given the diversity and complexity in training

²⁸ Bouchard, “Improving Human Resource Management in the Canadian Forces...”, 12.

²⁹ Jenkins. *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase One*, 1.

scheme and experience necessary to fill a position when compared to Regular force files, the effectiveness of career management in the CF Reserve under these conditions is questionable. Allen Kraut and Abraham Korman postulated that career management is a two-way system but they also argued that “the individual is ultimately responsible for such career management tasks as pursuing career exploration, setting career goals, devising career strategies, and seeking out related feedback.”³⁰ Although a valid argument, in a military context, the need for a responsive career management system is absolutely necessary because if it is not, the CF has the most to lose. MGen Petras commented in his proposal for the Reserve Force Transformation that “the applicability of civilian skill sets and experience....recognized through PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Review) [necessitates] that reservists must be career managed appropriately.”³¹

Along similar lines, it must be recognized that Reserve units supply entrants to the Regular forces and that career management could contribute to the process. Jenkins posits that “in the longer terms it may be wise to blur the distinction between the Regular and Reserve [forces].”³² There exists a need to facilitate further the transition between the two components of the CF. Although much work has been done in some occupations in this regard, more efforts are required to bridge the gap. If the transition is made easy, more part time sailor, soldier, airman and airwoman looking for a career upon graduation from college and university would make the transition and the CF at large would benefit.

³⁰ Allen I. Kraut and Abraham K. Korman, *Evolving Practices in Human resource Management-Responses to a Changing World of Work* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc, 1999), 151.

³¹ Petras, Reserve Force Transformation (National Defence Headquarters: file 1950-9 (CT), 4 May 2006).

³² Jenkins. *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase One*, 16.

More effective HR process would likely contribute not only to retention of Reserve personnel but also to their transition to the Regular forces.

Training – The training of Reserve forces presents many challenges. Naval reservists in the survey indicated that training in general was the second biggest factor for considering leaving the service as it demonstrated a lack of professionalism of the Reserve. Academics in military HR management circles have coined a more encompassing term for training - Human Capital Development (HCD) - which they define as:

Behaviours [of an organization] that maintain or increase an individual's current or future productive capacity. Examples include participating in education programs and individual or unit training activities, gaining experience in key functions, and honing physical skills such as fitness or marksmanship.³³

The single biggest HCD challenge in the CF Reserve context is related to the packaging of the programs so that they can be completed during the varying availability periods of part-time members while preserving the integrity of the training. Some work has been done in this regard; the elimination of some Military Officer Classifications (MOCs)³⁴ that clearly could not be realistically completed in a timely fashion is an acknowledgement of the problem. However, BGen Bouchard argued in 2001 that the

³³ Albert A Robbert, *et al*, *Differentiation in Military Human Resource Management* (Washington: National Defense Research Institute, 1997), 6.

³⁴ As one example, the Maritime Engineering MOC in Naval Reserve was abolished in 1996 as it was determined that the training duration post-engineering degree of 3.5 years was simply not achievable for most part-time naval officers.

lack of HR influence in the Reserve training process was to blame for slow advancement in this regard.³⁵

The advent of technology has brought new options to resolve some of the HCD challenges. Distributed interactive in-unit training initiatives are growing. However, in the Naval Reserve survey of 2005 it was found that still too much “old-style” PowerPoint presentation was used to instruct. The availability of distributed computer-based training packages was considered inconsistent and unreliable which made it difficult for part-time sailors to attain the requisite qualifications.³⁶ By all accounts however, e-learning is recognized as part of the HCD solution for the Reserve individual training. The other aspect of HCD is team and unit training.

Team training is where HCD all comes together, or not. Respondents to the most recent Naval Reserve survey were particularly concerned with the lack of opportunities for at-sea team deployment and they indicated that:

....there was little possibility of sending more than a few personnel from a single unit to train together out of unit. Indeed they saw that team training activities had largely been replaced by classroom lectures and independent study; a far cry from the exciting and challenging work members join for.³⁷

Further, the training and administrative burdens often collide. Respondents of the survey reported that too much time was spent on administration and too little on training, it was

³⁵ Bouchard, “Improving Human Resource Management in the Canadian Forces...”, 8.

³⁶ D.A Jenkins, *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase Two*. Report Prepared for Director Human Resources Research and Evaluation. (Ottawa: Canada Communications Group, 2005), Survey Summary 4.

³⁷ Jenkins, *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase One*, 8.

suggested that more training could be accomplished if the administration was streamlined. According to some senior officers in the survey, time spent on administrative matters could be cut by as much as 50%. Conversely, if administration cannot be decreased then additional evenings and weekends should be added to the training schedule. In the UK Auditor General report, equally applicable to Canada, it was found that the “level of turnover [as a result of attrition] brings significant challenges because the number of trained and deployable Reservists is reduced, while the Department’s training burden increases.”³⁸ More hands on training and more realistic team training are required. In order to move ahead in the area, leadership will be necessary in order to secure the necessary financial resources and better HR management tools must be used in order to accurately track operational competency of each individual.

Employment and Commitment – With regard to employment of Naval Reservists, the “most common complaint at the units was that participants waited too long to hear whether or not they were awarded a Class B or C contract.”³⁹ Several participants were offered contracts just days before they were to begin work...⁴⁰ As a large number of members of the CF Reserve are students, securing employment in the summer months is of primary importance. Failing in this regard causes significant anxiety to the members and as a result is detrimental to their motivation regarding their future in the CF.

³⁸ National Audit Office. *Ministry of Defence Reserve Forces* (London: The Stationery Office, 28 March 2006), 30.

³⁹ Reserve service is divided in three categories, classes A, B and C. Class A is used for part time service in garrison. Class B is full time service in Reserve positions in garrison while Class C is for service in deployed Reserve positions or service by Reserve member as a backfill in a Regular force position.

⁴⁰ Jenkins, *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase One*, 7.

The Reserve Force in Canada was historically a strategic CF resource, a base for mobilization. Today the Reserve also represents an increasingly important operational capability. It is generally accepted that over the last 15-20 years the geopolitical and security environment has changed and even more so rapidly in the post 911 period; so has the role and employment of reservists. MGen Petras documented the need “....to bring a CF focus to Reserves and a greater emphasis on support to current Ops both domestic and international.”⁴¹ Similarly, it was discovered in the UK surveys that the reservists have emphasized the importance of clearly defined roles in which their unit can be called upon to perform when it is required. Otherwise, “their morale and motivation suffer and they are more likely to leave the organization.”⁴² It can be argued that the employment of a pre-determined capped percentage of reservists in a large regular force unit does little for the sense of belonging and the credibility of the men and women who serve in the Reserve.⁴³ This approach is widely used in the Army where the ratio of Regular/Reserve members in a battalion is regulated. In contrast, the advent of the Maritime Coastal Vessels (MCDV) in the mid 1990s crewed for the most part by reservists with a much focussed mandate has been a turning point in the utilization of the Naval Reserve within the Navy. A sense of belonging emerged and morale improved; consequently retention has improved. A similar operational capability must be developed across all of the environmental Reserve components.

⁴¹ MGen H.M Petras, Reserve Force Transformation (National Defence Headquarters: file 1950-9 (CT), 4 May 2006).

⁴² National Audit Office. *Ministry of Defence Reserve Forces* (London: The Stationery Office, 28 March 2006), 36.

⁴³ Lt(N) J. Nadeau, *Presentation on Naval Reserve Review and Validation Study Survey Leadership and Divisional Issues* (NAVRESHQ, 2006), slide 4.

The operational tempo was reported as a concern for reservists working full time. “Participants’ estimates of the average number of days the MCDVs [Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels] spent away from homeport per year ranged from 200 to 240.”⁴⁴ Although these estimates may be inflated slightly, it is widely acknowledge in the Navy that the MCDVs are the workhorse of the fleet and as such, spent more days at sea than most capital ships in Halifax and Esquimalt. It should be noted that it is Maritime Command policy that ships will not normally spent more than 150 days away from homeport. Similarly, in the Militia, the limited number of personnel available for full time service may find themselves spending more time away on international missions than their Regular forces counterparts. “The popular statement that prevention is better than curing definitely applies to burnout, because it has high human and economic costs.”⁴⁵ The CF must meet its commitment to its members. Adequate HR management is needed to track individual deployment periods to prevent or reduce incidence of burn-out which might result in pre-mature voluntary releases. Indeed, high operational tempo requires a huge commitment.

Elaborating on the theme of commitment, reservists often perceive that they are required to give more to the force than the CF gives in return, yet it should be “a two-way street”. There must be an employer-employee commitment, often referred to as an unwritten social contract.⁴⁶ On the side of the members, there is a requirement to submit

⁴⁴ Jenkins, *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase One*, 9.

⁴⁵ Hermann F. Schwind, Hari Das and Terry H. Wagar, *Canadian Human Resource Management – A Strategic Approach* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1999), 605.

⁴⁶ Denise M. Rousseau, *Psychological Contracts in Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications Inc, 1995), 140.

a report of availability during which a member is available to progress training, to enhance operational readiness level or to deploy. While, from the organizational point of view, there must be a commitment to provide opportunities to a member to progress with his or her career. It was reported that “....participants were also concerned about the lack of job security, the prospect of serving full-time for a decade or more and then, quite suddenly, being unable to secure another contract.”⁴⁷

Leadership and HR Management

One of the necessary elements of a military force is leadership. General Hillier stated that:

CF leadership is a values-based concept, evoking the attributes of duty and honour and defined as: *directing, motivating and enabling others to accomplish the mission professionally and ethically, while developing or improving capabilities that contribute to mission success.*⁵⁰

Latest directions proposed to the CDS by the Chief of Reserve Transformation are promising in this regard, MGen Petras wrote: “The capabilities and leadership demanded of Reservists are much different today than in the past and continue to evolve as part of CF Transformation. A robust Reserve leadership is vital to the maintenance of a sustainable volunteer organization.”⁵¹ In the CF Naval Reserve as well as in the UK for all of its Reserve, the senior leadership is carrying out research to better understand why people join and leave the volunteer Reserve force, mainly through continuous attitude surveys of its members. It is particularly interesting to note that, in both the NRHQ and UK surveys, the quality of the leadership at the national level was raised as a concern.⁵² It seems intuitive to state that in order to improve retention, one must first identify why

⁵⁰ Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-004 Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations. (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005), i.

⁵¹ MGen H.M Petras, Reserve Force Transformation (National Defence Headquarters: file 1950-9 (CT), 4 May 2006).

⁵² National Audit Office. *Ministry of Defence Reserve Forces* (London: The Stationery Office, 28 March 2006), 35.

people are leaving. The Reserve could benefit from a more proactive approach to retention by combining leadership and fundamental HR management techniques across components.

The CF Leadership model articulates individual's leadership through two major functions: leading people and leading the institution.⁵³ Examining the functional responsibilities of CF leaders revealed that two of the five effectiveness dimensions speak volumes to the very issues discussed earlier in this analysis. A summary is included in the following table:

Table 2 - Summary of Responsibilities of CF Leaders Impacting on Attrition

Effectiveness Dimensions	Major Leadership Functions	
	Leading People	Leading the Institution
Internal Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor; inspect; correct; evaluate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a coherent body of policy. - Develop and maintain effective information and administrative systems.
Member Well-Being and Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentor, educate and develop subordinates. - Consult subordinates on matters that affect them. - Monitor morale and ensure Subordinate well-being. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accommodate personal needs in professional development / career system. - Honour the social contract and member-support systems.

⁵³ Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-004 Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations. (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005), 48.

In May 1997 at The Technical Cooperation Programme, an international programme on Reserve forces issues, the senior Canadian representative spoke to the need for monitoring voluntary attrition patterns as part of a continuous improvement initiative of CF human resources.⁵⁴ Ten years later, it proved impossible to get accurate numbers on attrition in the Militia, other than some individual unit statistics. This fact leaves little doubt that monitoring attrition is not a priority for the senior leadership of the CF Land Reserve. This speaks to the *Internal Integration* dimension of the CF leadership model.

A number of items have been raised in this analysis that leadership can address to curtail attrition. As a testimony of what leadership can do, a study commissioned by Chief of Reserve and Cadets of all Reserve components in Canada in 1988 triggered a reversal of attrition trend in the Naval Reserve. At that time, the Naval Reserve had the highest rates of attrition.⁵⁵ From that point on within what could be characterized as an overarching continuous improvement program a number of studies and surveys were conducted to identify the irritants that contributed to early releases in the Naval Reserve. The latest of these studies, the Jenkins' study, showed that the Naval Reserve voluntary release rate accounted for only 5% of the overall establishment attrition of 10.5% annually.⁵⁶ This indicates that through the initiation of studies, using professionally developed questionnaires and the will to make the organization a better place to serve

⁵⁴ The Technical Cooperation Programme. *Proceedings of the Technical Panel HUM-TP3* (TTCP/SGU/97/010, May 1997), 13.

⁵⁵ T. Popoff and S. Truscott, *A Sociological Study of the Reserves: Phase Two Trends and Implications for the Future*, Operational Research and Analysis Establishment Project report No. PR440 (Ottawa: 1988), 17.

⁵⁶ Jenkins, *Naval Reserve Recruiting and Retention Project Phase Two*, 1.

attrition can be brought to a reasonable level. Unfortunately, a similar dedicated and proactive approach in the land forces Reserve component is not in place. Again, this speaks to the *Member Well-Being and Commitment* dimension of the CF leadership model.

CONCLUSION

If left unchecked, high attrition will continue to be a drain on the limited resources of the CF Reserve. As demonstrated in this paper, a retention strategy must include reinforcement of the importance of leadership and HR management.

It was shown that retention issues will affect the contribution of the Reserve in the CF. Leaders at all levels of the CF have responsibilities to their subordinates that will affect their motivation. Hence leader performance will have an impact on attrition. The CF Reserve leadership must be proactive and feedback mechanisms have to be set up to monitor morale and perceived problems before they affect the motivation of the troops. The integration and streamlining of policies, increasing effort in the management of careers, and increasing the level of full time support staff are areas of HR management that must be addressed. Administrative duties have historically subsumed the limited time for in-unit training. Improvement in HR management will increase the time dedicated to training and its quality.

Much like in the private sector, in the CF Reserve there must be an employer-employee commitment. The CF is engaged in a two-way unwritten social contract and meeting the expectations is essential. Doing a better job of the closely related issues of managing careers will help maintain commitment by demonstrating the CF acts on its responsibilities to members. Securing training and finding meaningful employment are of primary importance for reservists. Reserve units must be deployed as entities regularly; doing so will nurture a sense of belonging

and improve morale. Failing in these regards erode confidence in the CF leadership and promotes premature releases.

Attrition can be curtailed by practicing the fundamentals of leadership and human resource management. “Trust in leadership is positively related to individual and group performance,the ability to withstand stress, job satisfaction, and commitment to continued service.”⁵⁷ HR Management will address many of the issues raised in this paper but the most fundamental issue is one of leadership. Leaders at all levels must be committed to retaining their personnel and they must be pro-active about finding out why people leave by conducting attitudinal surveys and release monitoring.

⁵⁷ Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-003 Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Doctrine. (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy – Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005), 5.

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