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## Women in the Canadian Armed Forces: A Comparison to the Australian Defence Forces

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**JCSP 48**

### Exercise Solo Flight

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The Minister of National Defence Advisory Panel on Systemic Racism and Discrimination Report from January 2022 warned, “any progress made to date for inclusion of women, Indigenous, Black, other racialized and ethnic communities, persons with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ2+ community risks reversal.”<sup>1</sup> Despite women having the right to serve in almost every Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) occupation for over thirty years, women comprise less than 16% of the regular force. Based on the advisory panel findings, inclusion efforts are at risk, suggesting the percentage of women in the CAF is unlikely to rise significantly without considerable change to the CAF culture and policies. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) has addressed barriers to women's integration comparable to the CAF and has increased women's representation annually since 2014. The similarities between the two militaries make the policies and programmes the ADF has implemented over the last ten years valuable for CAF’s consideration. Similarly, the CAF is embarking on a significant culture change initiative that will likely benefit the ADF for future analysis.

This paper will compare the CAF and ADF’s historical timeline to full legal participation of women in the armed forces, the national level policies with targets to increase participation of women, and progress to date. ADF programmes that seek to address barriers to the attraction and retention of women comparable to the barriers the CAF faces will be reviewed. Finally, the approach of both nations to addressing sexual misconduct and culture change will be compared.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of National Defence. *Minister of National Defence Advisory Panel on Systemic Racism and Discrimination* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2022), v.

The ADF provides a valuable comparison to the CAF on efforts to increase women's participation in the military. The ADF has a higher percentage of women serving in the military despite Canada having a slightly larger population and gender parity. Australia's population is smaller by about 13 million, but the Australian government does spend more on defence, 2.1% of their gross domestic product compared to Canada's 1.4%.<sup>2</sup> The World Economic Forum ranks Canada 24<sup>th</sup> globally for gender parity and Australia at 54, a difference of about 4%.<sup>3</sup> The CAF has approximately 68,000 permanent members and the ADF 61,000. Both militaries have cultures heavily influenced by predominately-white heterosexual Christian males seeped into the traditions, policies and practices.<sup>4</sup> The CAF allowed full participation of women earlier than the ADF, yet the ADF currently has 5% more women serving than the CAF. This difference in participation calls for a closer examination of the ADF's approach and policies that have led to this level of women's participation.

This paper focuses on the participation of women, with the understanding that women are just one part of the overall CAF Employment Equity Plan 2021-26. The CAF's goal is for better representation from all designated groups, meaning 25.1% women, 3.5% indigenous people, and 11.8% visible minorities, and recognizes LGBTQ2 people, although unofficial, as a designated group.<sup>5</sup> This paper also broadly discusses

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<sup>2</sup> M. Szmigiera. "Military Expenditure as Percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Highest Spending Countries 2020." Accessed 9 April 2022. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/266892/military-expenditure-as-percentage-of-gdp-in-highest-spending-countries/>.

<sup>3</sup> World Economic Forum. *Global Gender Gap Report 2021 Insight Report March 2021*. (Switzerland: World Economic Forum, 2021), 101, 147.

<sup>4</sup> Karen Davis, Nicola Holden. Harassment in the Military: Cross National Comparisons. In *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*. Ed. Franklin C. Pinch, Allister T MacIntyre, Phyllis Browne and Alan C. Okros (Kingston: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, Canadian Defence Academy, 2005), 98.

<sup>5</sup> Department of National Defence. *Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan 2021-2026*. (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2021), 9.

women as a group, but intersectionality must be considered, as women are not a homogenous group. The CAF Diversity Strategy 2017 aims to “foster a culture of respect and inclusion.”<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the ADF strives for a diverse workforce, with the target of 2.7 percent indigenous representation, which the ADF has exceeded with 3.2%.<sup>7</sup> The ADF also strives to recruit members from diverse cultures and tracks second languages. However, the ADF does not have a specific target for languages spoken or visible minorities. Both militaries continue to struggle with the recruitment of diverse peoples. For example, in the ADF, 80% of the men speak English at home, yet only 40% of the Australian population speak English at home, showing a disproportionate representation.<sup>8</sup> The final report from the Minister of National Defence Advisory Panel on Systemic Racism and Discrimination clearly states that the CAF has significant barriers to overcome and, despite 20 years of external and internal reviews, has failed to implement most of the recommendations.<sup>9</sup>

The ADF’s legislature to allow full participation of women in all occupations occurred much later than the CAF. The CAF opened 60% of military occupations to women in 1979. However, it was not until the signing of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom in 1982, followed by the Canadian Human Rights Commission in 1989, that all legal obstacles to women's participation in the CAF were removed, except the

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<sup>6</sup> Department of National Defence. *Canadian Armed Forces Diversity Strategy*. (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2017), 4.

<sup>7</sup> Government of Australia. *Australian Government Department of Defence Annual Report 20-21*. (Australia: Government of Australia, 2021), 107.

<sup>8</sup> Susan H. Rimmer. The Case of Australia: From “Culture” Reforms to a Culture of Rights. In *Women and Gender Perspectives in the Military: An International Comparison*. Ed. Robert Egnell and Mayesha Alam (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2019), 179

<sup>9</sup> Department of National Defence. *Minister of National Defence Advisory Panel on Systemic Racism and Discrimination* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2022), 1, 24.

participation as submariners or catholic chaplains.<sup>10</sup> The ADF legislation was slower to allow full participation. In 1985, the enactment of Australia's Sex Discrimination Act was an important step in protecting women's rights in Australia, but the act exempted the ADF. The exemption permitted the ADF to exclude women from combat-related roles, which included roles in support of combat.<sup>11</sup> This act caused a reversal in the progress of women's participation, reducing the number of roles open to women to 23.5%<sup>12</sup>. As of 1989, women could only fill 43% of positions in the ADF whereas, at the same point in the CAF's history, women were only excluded from the chaplains and submariner trades.<sup>13</sup> In 2000, there was an amendment to the Sex Discrimination Act, which allowed women into 90% of ADF positions.<sup>14</sup> Finally, in 2011, the Australian Minister of Defence announced the opening of combat occupations to women over the following five years, bringing the ADF to full legal participation of women.<sup>15</sup>

In support of the United Nations Security Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) adopted in 2000, both Canada and Australia produced National Action Plans (NAP). The NAPs for both nations evolved beyond interactions during conflicts internationally to include domestic issues, like women's participation in their national militaries. Canada's first NAP in 2010 committed to the four key pillars of the UNSCR 1325: the prevention of violence and sexual-based violence against women

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<sup>10</sup> Department of National Defence. "Timeline." Accessed 1 April 2022.

<https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/those-who-served/women-veterans/timeline>.

<sup>11</sup> Libby Stewart. "The Encyclopedia of Women & Leadership in 20th Australia: Australian Defence Force." Accessed 1 April 2022. <http://www.womenaustralia.info/leaders/biogs/WLE0338b.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Susan H. Rimmer. *The Case of Australia...*, 193.

<sup>15</sup> Jeremy Thompson. "Women Cleared to Serve in Combat." *ABC News*, 26 September 2011. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-09-27/women-on-the-frontline/2946258>.

and girls in peace operations and conflicts; meaningful participation of women in peace activities; protection of the rights of women and girls; and the promotion of women's equal access during relief and recovery.<sup>16</sup> However, Canada's first NAP was primarily concerned with achieving these goals on peace operations, meaning the focus was on activities external to Canada, not domestically. This resulted in the percentage of female CAF members participating on deployed operations as an indicator and measurement of the CAF's success.<sup>17</sup> The report did not measure the percentage of overall women's participation in the CAF. The External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the CAF conducted by Marie Deschamps in 2015 resulted in the government recognizing the need to focus on the overall recruitment and retention of women in the CAF, not just participation on peace operations and this requirement was reflected in the 2014-15 NAP Progress Report.<sup>18</sup>

Despite national policies, over the last six years, the CAF has made little progress in increasing the representation of women. In 2016, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) declared that the CAF would increase the representation of women by 1% per year, with an initial target of 25% women serving by 2026.<sup>19</sup> The NAP for 2017-2022 and the Strong, Secured, and Engaged (SSE): Canada's Defence Policy in 2017 formally

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<sup>16</sup> Government of Canada. *Canada's Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security - 2010-2016*. (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2010), 2.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>18</sup> Marie Deschamps. *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*. (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2015); Government of Canada. *2014-2015 Progress Report - Canada's Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security*. (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2015).

<sup>19</sup> Bruce Champion-Smith. "Canada's Top General Launches Push to Recruit Women." *Toronto Star*, 19 February 2016. <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/02/19/canadas-top-general-launches-push-to-recruit-women.html>.

announced the target.<sup>20</sup> In 2016, an Auditor General report stated that the percentage of women in the CAF was 14% in the regular force, and the CAF lacked a plan to increase participation in the areas under-represented.<sup>21</sup> The employment equity statistics published in March 2021 show the current representation is 15.8%, significantly under the target of 20% by 2022, showing a growth of only 1.8% over five years.<sup>22</sup>

Similar to Canada, Australia produced their first NAP in 2012, committing to the main pillars of UNSCR 1325. Unlike Canada, Australia's first NAP did not solely focus on the number of female military personnel deployed on peace operations but more holistically on women's representation in the ADF, acknowledging a low percentage of 13.7%.<sup>23</sup> The difference between Canada and Australia's first NAPs can be attributable to the fact that at the same time, the Australian Government was removing restrictions on women's participation in combat roles, and the Australian Human Rights Council conducted an external review on women's participation in the ADF. The review resulted in a series of reports under the title "Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force," more commonly referred to as the Broderick reports.<sup>24</sup> The first phase of the report focussed on the treatment of women at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA), and the second phase more broadly across the ADF. The second phase report emphasized that equal treatment of men and women will not

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<sup>20</sup> Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. (Ottawa, Ont.: National Defence, 2017), 12.

<sup>21</sup> Office of the Auditor General of Canada. *Report 5—Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment and Retention—National Defence. 2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*. (Ottawa: Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2016).

<sup>22</sup> Department of National Defence. "Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity (EE) Statistics." Accessed 1 April 2022. <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/8fd0f79b-2165-4206-aeda-d1477a97bfbe>.

<sup>23</sup> Government of Australia. *Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012–2018*. (Australia: Government of Australia, 2012).

<sup>24</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Audit Report 2014*. (Australia: Australia Human Rights Commission, 2014).



overcome systematic and cultural barriers when the standards are inadvertently based on male norms and may lead to greater inequality.<sup>25</sup> The report provided five principles for successful culture change: “strong leadership drives reform, diversity of leadership increases capability, increasing numbers requires increasing opportunities, greater flexibility will strengthen the ADF, and gender based harassment ruins lives [...] and damages operational effectiveness”.<sup>26</sup>

The ADF has seen a steady increase in the representation of women since implementing the 21 recommendations from the second Broderick report.<sup>27</sup> Since the main report in 2012, the ADF has produced an annual *Woman in the ADF Report* to supplement the Annual Defence Report. The Government of Australia refers to the steps taken because of the Broderick report in the NAP update reports, demonstrating the synchronization of the initiatives.<sup>28</sup> The ADF targets for women's participation are similar to the CAF: 25% women in the navy and air force and 15% in the army by 2023.<sup>29</sup> Australia's first progress report in 2014 stated that women made up 14.7% of the ADF's permanent force.<sup>30</sup> As of June 2020, 20.1% of the ADF are women, showing a steady increase of about 1% per year and almost 5% ahead of the CAF.<sup>31</sup> Compared to

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<sup>25</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Phase 2 Report*. (Australia: Australia Human Rights Commission, 2012), 22

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>27</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020 A Supplement to the Defence Annual Report 2019-2020*. (Government of Australia, 2020), 1.

<sup>28</sup> Government of Australia. *Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018, Progress Report 2016*. (Australia: Government of Australia, 2016), 26.

<sup>29</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020 ...*, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Government of Australia. *Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018: Progress Report 2014*. (Australia: Government of Australia, 2014).

<sup>31</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020 ...*, 2.

the CAF, the ADF has a higher percentage of women serving and a better annual rate of improvement.

An immediate difference between the two militaries is the detailed reporting. The ADF annual report outlines statistics on recruitment, promotions, deployments, command positions, transfers, and attrition. The report provides an overview of various programs and policies to increase women's participation and provides a way to compare statistics year to year. Unlike the ADF, the CAF lacks one report that provides all the statistics. The Canadian Department of National Defence (DND) provides an annual progress report on the NAP, providing a detailed summary of actions taken each year but lacks consistent statistics and data to compare year to year. The Canadian Standing Committee on National Defence (NDDN) about improving diversity and inclusion explicitly mentions that data collection is lacking about why women join, progress, and leave the forces.<sup>32</sup> Defence scientist, Andrea Lane expressed a similar requirement for more data points to understand better problem areas at the 2022 NDDN session about recruitment and retention.<sup>33</sup> As a result, the ADF has a better understanding of problem areas over time in advancing the participation of women.

Available reports demonstrate that both the ADF and CAF face similar barriers to the recruitment and retention of women in the forces adding to the value of comparing approaches. Secondary analysis in 2021 of data from several defence studies determined

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<sup>32</sup> Standing Committee on National Defence. *Improving Diversity and Inclusion in the Canadian Armed Forces Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence*. (Ottawa: Standing Committee on National Defence, 2019), 54.

<sup>33</sup> Standing Committee on National Defence. *Recruitment and Retention in the Canadian Armed Forces*. 1st Session, 4 April, 2022. Witness: Andrea Lane, Defence Scientist, Defence Research and Development Canada, Centre for Operational Research and Analysis. Testimony 17:16:00-17:18:00.

key factors that encourage or dissuade women from serving in the CAF.<sup>34</sup> One key finding was that many women are unfamiliar with the military and the available career options. The study also found that most women who serve had previous exposure to the military through cadets or a serving family member.<sup>35</sup> A second finding was that women show more trepidation than men about meeting the physical fitness standards. A third finding was the perception that military service makes it difficult to raise a family and the posting cycle moves one from friends and family.<sup>36</sup> Linking all the factors that dissuade women from serving is the exclusion women face because of the hegemonic masculine culture of the CAF.<sup>37</sup> Overall, the main reasons for voluntary release for most soldiers in the CAF are “job dissatisfaction and lack of meaningful work, postings and geographic stability, impact on family, dissatisfaction with one's occupation, career progression and career management, and dissatisfaction with pay.”<sup>38</sup> There is a lack of specific data by designated group.

The Australian Broderick Report in 2012 highlighted that the key barriers to women's participation are difficulties in gaining a critical mass of women, rigid career structures, poor work and life balance, and a culture permitting poor leadership and sexual misconduct.<sup>39</sup> The primary reasons for voluntary release from the ADF include “wanting to make a career change while still young enough, the impact of job demands

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<sup>34</sup> Barbara Waruszynski *et al.* "Desire to Serve: Insights from Canadian Defence Studies on the Factors that Influence Women to Pursue a Military Career." *Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health*, 78.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 81

<sup>38</sup> Department of National Defence. *2019-2020 Department of National Defence Departmental Progress Report for Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security*. (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2019), Section 2.2.2.

<sup>39</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Phase 2 Report...*, 22.

on family/personal life, and desire to stay in one place.”<sup>40</sup> Overall, both the CAF and ADF face many similar barriers in attracting and recruiting women, primarily overcoming concerns about work/life balance, the impact of military service on family, and cultures permissive to sexual misconduct. The Australian Broderick Report in 2012 made several recommendations on how the ADF could address these key concerns. As a result, the ADF has been running several programs for 6-8 years, specifically the Gap Year Program, Flexible Work Arrangements Framework, and Recruit to Area Program.<sup>41</sup> These programs can provide valuable considerations for CAF policies and programs to increase the participation of women.

The ADF reinstated the Gap Year Program in 2015, which allows high school graduates to try a 12-month program to become familiar with the military without any commitment required. Although the program accounts for a small number of military entrants, 30% of entrants were women versus 15% through regular recruitment programs.<sup>42</sup> In 2019, 30% of participants continued to be women, with higher participation in the navy and air force; for example, women filled 64% of the gap year positions for sailors.<sup>43</sup> In 2016, the Australian Army also initiated an Army Pre-Conditioning Program (APCP) to prepare women for basic training requirements. In 2019, the program conducted a trial to allow women who do not meet the initial entry fitness requirements to commence the program, but the army has not yet released the results. On average, 78% of women pass the APCP, and 61% pass basic training.<sup>44</sup> In

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<sup>40</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020...*, 42.

<sup>41</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Phase 2 Report...*, 30,113.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 30,113.

<sup>43</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020 ...*, A1-A4.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, A4.

2017, the CAF conducted a program similar to the ADF Gap Year Program but on a smaller scale. The Women in Force Program was a one-week course to familiarize women with the military, and 26% of the candidates joined the forces after the program.<sup>45</sup> The Australian programmes provide additional statistics to demonstrate the benefit of larger-scale recruitment programs to inform and prepare designated groups about military service.

Concerns about the ability to maintain a work/life balance and the impacts of postings on the family are not just significant barriers to women joining the CAF but also primary reasons for both men and women leaving the CAF.<sup>46</sup> The ADF has the same issues with work/life balance. As a result, the Broderick Report recommended flexible work arrangements (FWA) to increase the recruitment and retention of both men and women.<sup>47</sup> In 2013, the ADF formalized directives for FWA, allowing for variable work hours, working from home, working from an alternate location, remote overseas work, part-time without pay and job sharing.<sup>48</sup> Job sharing means the ADF can allow more than one person to occupy the same position. Each service strives annually to increase the number of personnel using the program.<sup>49</sup> Each year, there has been an increase in the number of ADF personnel using the FWA program, and consistently more women than men use the program. For example, 18% of women in the air force have an FWA. The

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<sup>45</sup> Lise Bourgon. "The CAF Path Towards its 25.1% Employment Equity Objective: A Look through the Lenses of Attraction and Recruitment." *Canadian Military Journal* 22, no. 1 (2021), 10; Barbara Waruszynski et al. "Desire to Serve...", 6.

<sup>46</sup> Barbara Waruszynski et al. "Desire to Serve...", 6; Department of National Defence. *2019-2020 Department of National Defence Departmental Progress Report for Canada's National...Section 2.2.2.*

<sup>47</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Phase 2 Report...*, 32, 33.

<sup>48</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Audit Report 2014...*, 129, 130.

<sup>49</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020...*, 54.

ADF also promotes FWA throughout their recruiting websites.<sup>50</sup> The statistics are not available to determine the direct impact FWA has on the recruitment and retention of personnel in the ADF. Similar to the CAF, one of the main reasons for attrition in the ADF continues to be the difficulty in maintaining a work/life balance. However, as the ADF FWA program has been in place for almost ten years with constant improvements and the CAF lacks any similar program, it would be valuable for the CAF to investigate.

There are two other ADF programs noteworthy for improving work/life balance and reducing the impact of the posting cycle: Defence Housing Australia (DHA) and the Recruit to Area Program (RTA). The ADF provides subsidized housing with various options, including single or unaccompanied accommodations on base, service residences, rental allowance, and home purchase assistance under DHA.<sup>51</sup> A survey revealed that one of the reasons 60% of ADF members continued to serve was due to subsidized housing.<sup>52</sup> In the CAF, government policy is for defence housing provision only if insufficient private housing is available and defence housing cannot be more affordable than the private market.<sup>53</sup> Based on this policy, the number of units available decreased. The 2015 OAG Audit into CAF housing confirmed a reduction in housing units from 16,000 to 12,000, yet it was still more than operationally required. The units were also primarily built between 1948 and 1960. The Canadian Forces Housing Agency lacked a long-term plan and appropriate funding to modernize the housing portfolio to the needs of current

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<sup>50</sup> Australian Defence Force. "Life in the ADF." Accessed 9 April 2022.

<https://www.defencejobs.gov.au/lifestyle-and-benefits/life-in-the-adf>.

<sup>51</sup> Defence Housing Australia. "Defence Housing Australia." Accessed 9 April 2022.

<https://dha.gov.au/home>.

<sup>52</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Phase 2 Report*....,289.

<sup>53</sup> Office of the Auditor General of Canada. *2015 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada Report 5—Canadian Armed Forces Housing*. (Ottawa: Office of the Auditor General Of Canada, 2015).

demographics.<sup>54</sup> Paired with this, CAF members face record housing price increases in the private market, 20% in 2021 alone.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, the last update of the monthly allowance to assist CAF members with the higher cost of living was in 2009 and no longer matches the inflation at each base location.<sup>56</sup> The CDS acknowledged in April 2022 that the cost of living, lack of defence accommodations, and the current housing market would affect retention.<sup>57</sup> During the Standing Committee on National Defence meeting about recruitment and retention, a defence expert, Dr. Okros, explained that to increase attraction and retention, the CAF should focus on family support, including housing and recommended the ADF system for comparison.<sup>58</sup>

Another noteworthy ADF program is the RTA, which is an option that allows personnel to spend their first 3 to 6 years in the area in which they are recruited, with an option to negotiate additional years.<sup>59</sup> The initiative was recommended based on the analysis that women are more likely than men to be the primary caregivers and would prefer to be close to support networks.<sup>60</sup> Like the ADF, a barrier to women joining the CAF is the movement away from support networks.<sup>61</sup> Overall, the ADF has implemented

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> CBC News. "Average Canadian House Price Hits \$816,720 — Up 20% in Past Year." *CBC News*, 15 March 2022. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/crea-housing-february-1.6385274>

<sup>56</sup> Lee Berthiaume. "Military Members Feeling Bite of Skyrocketing Housing, Living Costs: Defence Chief." *The Canadian Press*, 14 April 2022. <https://leaderpost.com/pmn/news-pmn/canada-news-pmn/top-commander-warns-canadian-military-stretched-thin-amid-growing-threats/wcm/8495ed99-f471-4aaa-8a17-bb2040c56dc1>.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Standing Committee on National Defence. *Recruitment and Retention in the Canadian Armed Forces*. 1st Session, 4 April, 2022. Witness. Alan Okros, Professor, Department of Defence Studies, Royal Military College, testimony from 16:15:51- 16:36:18.

<sup>59</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Phase 2 Report ...*, 31.

<sup>60</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Audit Report 2014...*, 94.

<sup>61</sup> Barbara Waruszynski *et al.* "Desire to Serve...", 6

several approaches that the CAF should investigate to increase the attraction of women and other diverse groups to the forces.

However, both militaries struggle with the representation of women in the army, in combat roles or non-traditional roles, and in the senior ranks. In both the CAF and ADF, most women are in the logistical, administrative, and health occupations, ranging from 35-50% of those roles.<sup>62</sup> For the CAF, 13.6% of the army are women, and the ADF is not far ahead with 14.9%.<sup>63</sup> Women fill only approximately 3% of combat and security roles within both nations' armies.<sup>64</sup> The ADF's most recent Women in the ADF Report recognizes that the number of women in senior ranks is not consistent with the number recruited over time, suggesting continued barriers to advancement.<sup>65</sup> In the ADF, women in senior officer ranks have increased 1% per year from an average of 12% to 15% since 2017. However, the number of women in the senior non-commissioned ranks has decreased.<sup>66</sup> For the CAF, the percentage of women promoted to the senior officers and senior non-commissioned ranks has increased annually by at least 1%.<sup>67</sup> However, the CAF faces the issue that attrition rates are higher for women than men after 20 years of service, which is the same period when members start to reach the senior rank levels.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020*..., 50, 51; Lise Bourgon. "The CAF Path Towards its 25.1% ...", 8.

<sup>63</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020*..., 2; Department of National Defence. "Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity (EE) Statistics." Accessed 1 April 2022. <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/8fd0f79b-2165-4206-aeda-d1477a97bfbe>.

<sup>64</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020* ..., 51; Standing Committee on National Defence. *Improving Diversity and Inclusion*..., 9

<sup>65</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020* ..., 2.

<sup>66</sup> Government of Australia. *Women in the ADF Report 2019-2020*..., 30, 31.

<sup>67</sup> Department of National Defence. *2019-2020 Department of National Defence Departmental Progress Report for Canada's National* ..., Section 2.3.4.

<sup>68</sup> Michelle Straver. *Annual Update of Regular Force Attrition, April 2021*. (Ottawa: Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis, Department of National Defence, 2021), 6.



The statistics for both armed forces demonstrate that there are still barriers to the full participation of women, despite previous efforts to effect change.

For the CAF, the sexual misconduct scandals in 2020-21 demonstrated that a barrier to women's participation continues to be sexual misconduct but, more extensively, systemic cultural issues ranging from abuse of power to discrimination. As a result, the CAF's focus continues to be on reducing sexual misconduct and, more recently, providing "a better, diverse and more inclusive culture in which professional conduct surely aligns with the core values and principles of the institution."<sup>69</sup> The ADF and CAF have a comparable history of events and actions on sexual misconduct. However, the reports and descriptions therein suggest that the CAF has more widespread sexual misconduct and hyper-masculine culture than the ADF. As a result, the CAF appears to be taking more significant steps towards culture change than the ADF. As shown by the above examples, the ADF took early steps to change their culture by implementing policies for a more inclusive environment for women without emphasizing a sexualized or hyper-masculine culture.

In 2002, Davis and Holden analyzed harassment surveys in Canada, Australia, the U.S, and New Zealand. Their results suggested a similar history of sexual harassment in the ADF and CAF. All the nations conducted surveys for at least ten years; and implemented new policies and programmes to address harassment within their militaries.<sup>70</sup> The study results were that the ADF and CAF had similar levels of harassment. The study showed that up to 86% of personnel reported harassment in the

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<sup>69</sup> Department of National Defence. *Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces 2022-23 Departmental Plan*. (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2022).

<sup>70</sup> Karen Davis, Nicola Holden. *Harassment in the Military: ...*, 98.

form of sexual teasing and stories, and 1-3% reported sexual assault and violence.<sup>71</sup> Interestingly, all the nations had a reduction in reporting of sexual harassment between 1989 and 2000. The researchers proposed that this could be due to the success of harassment programs or fear of reporting consequences.<sup>72</sup> The results to follow with the Australian Broderick Reports in 2012 and the Canadian Deschamps Report in 2015 suggests the latter may have been the reason for less reporting.

In 2011, the ADF faced intense criticism over the handling of a sexual misconduct case at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA), where a male cadet filmed and, using Skype, broadcasted himself having sex with a female cadet.<sup>73</sup> This pivotal incident led to several external reviews of the ADF about sexual misconduct. The first was a Report of the Review of Allegations of Sexual and Other Forms of Abuse in Defence conducted by three DLA Piper law firm lawyers. This report reviewed over 1,100 allegations and provided the findings and recommendations to the Defence Abuse Response Task Force (DART). The DART subsequently received thousands of additional complaints dating back to 1951, resulting in reparation payments of 46.7 million AUD to 1,159 cases and a formal apology from the Minister of Defence in 2012.<sup>74</sup>

As the Skype incident sparked changes in the ADF, the 2014 investigation completed by *l'Actualite* and *MacLean's* magazines brought to public view the culture of

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>73</sup> Deborah Snow and Dan Oakes. "Sex, Skype and Ridicule: An Isolated Incident Or an Ingrained Problem?" *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 April 2011. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/sex-skype-and-ridicule-an-isolated-incident-or-an-ingrained-problem-20110408-1d7wb.html?msclkid=db3ff282c66111ecba2bc14331eb5b9e>.

<sup>74</sup> Susan H. Rimmer. *The Case of Australia...*, 185

sexual violence in the CAF and sparked action by the government.<sup>75</sup> The public pressure led to the External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the CAF by Marie Deschamps. Subsequently, similar to the Australian settlements, in 2016, former Canadian military members initiated a class action lawsuit, the Heyder and Beattie Class Actions, for those who experienced sexual misconduct in relation to military service or employment in DND. The class action resulted in over 17,000 claimants and over 9,000 approved payments.<sup>76</sup> In December 2021, the Canadian Minister of National Defence also issued a formal apology to all current and former members.<sup>77</sup> Comparing the number of claimants paid between the CAF and ADF, the CAF had nine times that of the ADF, suggesting a more widespread issue of sexual misconduct in the CAF.

The Australian Skype incident also led to Phase 1 of the Broderick Reports. The Phase 1 Report, which focuses on the ADFA, recommended the integration of equity, diversity and inclusion into all ADFA values and policies as the ADFA only addressed equity and diversity primarily through disciplinary processes. The report also called for the ADFA to provide education about gender relations and the impact of sexualized behaviour. Overall, the report determined widespread low-level sexual harassment and isolated incidents of sexual assault. The culture was indisputably male-dominated, with the male standard as the norm, and women felt the need to act more masculine to meet

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<sup>75</sup> Alex Castonguay and Noémi Mercier. "From 2014: An Investigation Uncovers the Sexual Violence Plaguing our Soldiers—and a Military Hierarchy with its Own Justice System, and its Own Rules." *Maclean's*, 16 May 2014. <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/our-militarys-disgrace/>.

<sup>76</sup> Epiq Class Action Services Canada Inc. "CAF-DND Sexual Misconduct Class Action Settlement." Accessed 27 April 2022. <https://www.caf-dndsexualmisconductclassaction.ca/?msclkid=5739d8c8c69a11eca248d9542c265a06>.

<sup>77</sup> Government of Canada. "DND/CAF Sexual Misconduct Apology." Accessed 27 April 2022. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/campaigns/conduct-and-culture/sexual-misconduct-apology.html?msclkid=8dfe2602c69811ec98bd31944028c69b>.

the cultural expectations.<sup>78</sup> The Australian Phase 1 Broderick Report, limited to the ADFA, was the most similar to the Canadian Deschamps Report, highlighting the institutionalized sexual culture that required change. Two key recommendations in the Deschamps Report were acknowledging a severe sexual misconduct problem and initiating culture change to eliminate the sexualized environment.<sup>79</sup> However, the Phase 1 Broderick Report's severe criticism of the military culture was limited to the ADFA and not all of the ADF.

Phase 2 of the Broderick Reports on the ADF addresses sexual misconduct, but it is only one part of the overall recommendations to integrate women better. In the portion on sexual misconduct, the report found that 25.9% of women and 10.5% of men experienced sexual harassment in highly sexualized workplaces. However, the rates were similar to the rest of the Australian workforce.<sup>80</sup> The ADF lacked consistency in the enforcement of policies, insufficient sexual misconduct reporting data, and inadequate education about sexual misconduct. A key recommendation was to establish a Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Office (SMPRO) to "coordinate timely responses, victim support, education, policy, practice and reporting for any misconduct of a sexual nature, including sexual harassment and sexual abuse in the ADF."<sup>81</sup> Similarly, the Deschamps report highlighted the need to establish a sexual misconduct centre

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<sup>78</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission. *Report on the Review into the Treatment of Women at the Australian Defence Force Academy: Phase 1 of the Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force.* (Sydney: Australian Human Rights Commission, 2011), xxii, xxiv, xxv, 2, 3.

<sup>79</sup> Marie Deschamps. *External Review into Sexual Misconduct ...*, ix.

<sup>80</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Phase 2 Report...*, 34-37.

<sup>81</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Phase 2 Report...*, 34-37.

responsible for data collection, victim support, and training coordination, receiving reports of sexual misconduct, and assisting the CAF with policy development.<sup>82</sup>

The Deschamps Report was direct and firm that the CAF had a significant problem: “there is an undeniable problem of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the CAF, which requires direct and sustained action.”<sup>83</sup> Whereas the Broderick report stated there was an issue with sexual misconduct but followed with facts and comments that reduced the urgency and severity of the issue. For example, Elizabeth Broderick’s speech stated, “the reality is that sexual harassment and abuse exists today in the ADF.”<sup>84</sup> However, she then comments, “of course, this was not the experience of all members we met. Many members said that they had never been subjected to discrimination or harassment, and described the ADF as a supportive and inclusive employer.”<sup>85</sup> Despite under-reporting, she states the statistics are similar to other Australian workplaces. These follow-on comments do not imply a widespread systemic issue of sexual misconduct.

The CAF's response to the Deschamps report was Operation HONOUR in 2016, an attempt to eliminate sexual misconduct. However, over eight months in 2021, thirteen general officers were accused of sexual misconduct.<sup>86</sup> These public scandals highlighted that Operation HONOUR had failed to eliminate the permissive culture of sexual

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<sup>82</sup> Marie Deschamps. *External Review into Sexual Misconduct...*, ix.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>84</sup> Elizabeth Broderick. "Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Speech by Elizabeth Broderick Sex Discrimination Commissioner Australian Human Rights Commission." Accessed 27 April 2022.

<https://humanrights.gov.au/about/news/speeches/review-treatment-women-australian-defence-force>.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ashely Burke and Murray Brewster. "A Military in Crisis: Here are the Senior Leaders Embroiled in Sexual Misconduct Cases." *CBC News*, 21 October 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/sexual-misconduct-military-senior-leaders-dnd-caf-1.6218683>.

misconduct.<sup>87</sup> As a result, DND initiated a new Independent Comprehensive Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the CAF and DND, led by Louise Arbour, which is still ongoing. The CAF also created a new level one organization, Chief Professional Conduct and Culture, to lead the new changes required to “dismantle systemic barriers in order to create a truly diverse and inclusive work force and culture.”<sup>88</sup> The CAF is now forced to look beyond solely punitive measures to end sexual misconduct. As described by Brown and Okros, the CAF must now address the elements of militarized masculinity that have toxic and destructive elements.<sup>89</sup>

In comparison, the ADF has not had recent sexual misconduct scandals. Despite the ADF’s continued struggle to recruit women into specific combat specific roles, the participation of women is growing each year, suggesting that the ADF’s broader focus on changing policies focused on inclusiveness may have been successful. However, Rimmer proposes the ADF has the bad apple syndrome. She suggests that instead of acknowledging “structural or systematic gender exclusion, violation of rights, and the prevalence of factors that suggest a high risk of abuse happening,” isolated people or events were blamed, like the ADFA Skype incident.<sup>90</sup> Recent Australian news articles have also suggested that despite the culture change of the last ten years in the ADF, the under-reporting of sexual misconduct has increased.<sup>91</sup> The CAF is just starting to

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<sup>87</sup> Murray Brewster. "Military Recorded More than 500 Sexual Assault Reports during Five-Year Effort to Stamp Out Misconduct." *CBC News*, 29 April 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canadian-forces-sexual-assault-misconduct-operation-honour-1.6006290>.

<sup>88</sup> Department of National Defence. *CDS/DM Initiating Directive for Professional Conduct and Culture*. (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2021), 1.

<sup>89</sup> Vanessa Brown and Alan Okros. Dancing around Gender: Changing Identity in Canada’s Post-Deschamps Military. In *Culture and the Soldier: Identities, Values, and Norms in Military Engagements*. Ed. Christian Breede. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2019), 32, 42, 44.

<sup>90</sup> Susan H. Rimmer. The Case of Australia..., 191.

<sup>91</sup> Harley Dennett. "ADF Victims of Sexual Assault Rising, Not Told of Military Justice Outcomes: Report." *Hawkesbury Gazette*, 29 March

consider recommendations that the ADF received in 2012, such as the idea that identical treatment of men and women could lead to inequality when the male norm is used.<sup>92</sup>

Further investigation is required to understand if the ADF has overcome the barriers of a hyper-masculine culture or if the recruitment of women and other groups will plateau due to continued cultural barriers. If it is the latter, then the ADF may be able to learn and benefit from current CAF efforts.

The overall similarities between the two militaries are suitable for continued analysis to determine best practices. So while the CAF should learn from policies and programmes the ADF has implemented in the last ten years to improve integration, the ADF in the future may be able to learn from the CAF's upcoming initiatives.

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2022. <https://www.macarthuradvertiser.com.au/story/7676819/defence-chiefs-warned-of-rising-sexual-misconduct-as-victims-lose-faith/>.

<sup>92</sup> Australia Human Rights Commission. *Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Phase 2 Report...*,5.

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