ISSUES FACING THE RECRUITING OF LOADMASTERS FOR THE CC-130J

Major Anonymous

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Stop Drop, Red On: The current outdated system of recruiting LMs from the Army-centric Log branch, will result in a systemic failure to meet the Operational Tasking requirements of the RCAF CC130J.

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to explore the persistent and recurring issues facing the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) CC130J Hercules fleet with respect to the recruitment, training and retention of Air Loadmasters (LMs), specifically addressing if this trade needs to be incorporated into the RCAF's bailiwick for all these aspects, and the impact this will have on the greater RCAF operational effectiveness. It has been highlighted time and again, through various studies[1], that the RCAF needs to maintain control of its own destiny with respect to LMs; the requirement to rely on another Service to deliver on this important capability and resource has been impacted by competing priorities. What has previously been described as "apathy and often contempt"[2] continually results in the repeated efforts from the RCAF to resolve this problem, once and for all, going unanswered.

This paper will aim to address the shortcomings pertaining to the CC130J fleet only, however it should be noted that these issues are common to other RCAF platforms that employ LMs and have a much greater operational impact. This paper will conduct a review of relevant historical issues, examine previous recommendations and Courses of Action (COAs) presented from various levels of RCAF leadership, and make comparisons with successful NATO partner Force Generation (FG) methods. Scott's Institutional Policy Analysis model will be utilised to attempt to identify where improvements can be made in a bid to identify a long-term resolution to this recurring issue.

Finally, by way of conclusion, it will offer appropriate recommendations on the evolution of the status quo, specifically focussing on the near to medium term, which require implementation to ensure the RCAF develops reliable LM FG and Force Employment (FE) along with a satisfactory return on investment.

This topic has been discussed on multiple occasions with several acceptable solutions to the problem being proposed, however no action was ever taken on adopting any of those recommendations.

This paper will aim to support the following thesis:

The RCAF needs to modernise the way it recruits individuals for the LM branch and not be reliant upon the Log Branch (Traffic Tech trade) to meet its requirements; the time is right to evolve and emulate other Commonwealth/NATO countries and recruit the best people for the LM role directly from the general public.

What is effectively being experienced at the front line is a shortage of suitably qualified and experienced personnel (SQEP); for the purpose of this paper these SQEP can assumed to be

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[1] These include the Branch led studies, but more importantly the papers generated by the RCAF which are aimed directly at the problem of not having control of the recruitment and training process from end-to-end.
[2] Maclean, N. RCAF Loadmaster Force Generation: New Approaches vs Status Quo.

Unrestricted Combat Ready LMs. Those LMs who are unrestricted and capable to support Operations (Ops) find themselves encumbered with an ever-increasing workload and burden of the schedule. This is often then exacerbated by the increased instances of illness and ailment, often in the form of burnout due to workload, which itself increases the already significant negative situation, placing greater strain on those individuals who are filling the void.
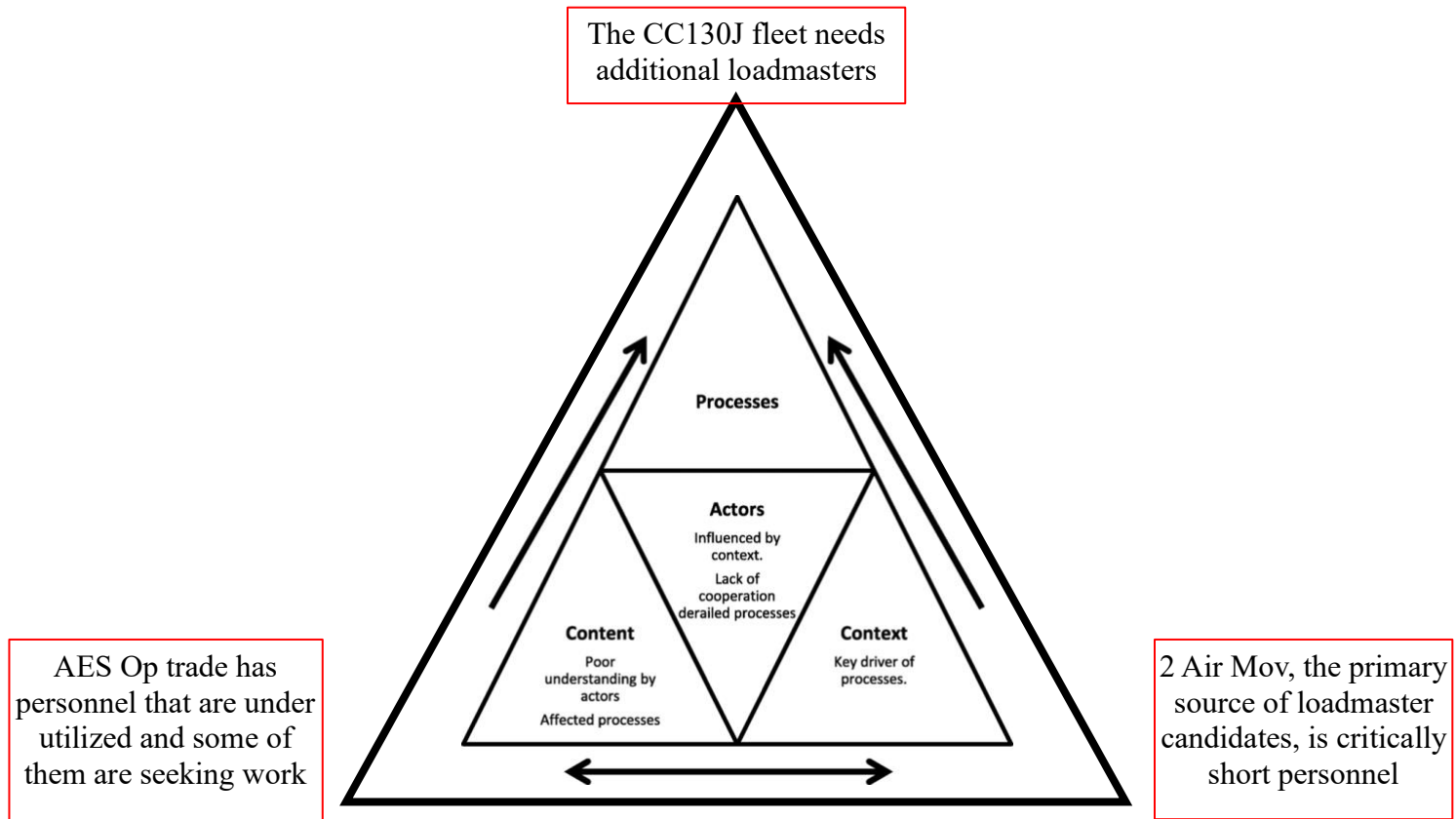
Scott's Institutional Policy Analysis model

To conduct the appropriate analysis of the perceived problem with respect to the recruitment and training of LMs, the Scott's Institutional Policy Analysis model[3] was used. To ensure a good understanding of the model, this paper will provide an overview of the three pillars which form the basis of the model and how these then apply to the problem identified.

Scott's Institutional Policy Analysis Model is a comprehensive framework that provides insights into how institutions influence policy decisions and outcomes. Developed by Richard W. Scott, a prominent sociologist, this model highlights the importance of institutional factors in shaping policy processes and outcomes. Scott's model is widely used in the field of public policy analysis and has been applied in various policy areas such as healthcare, education, environmental policy, social welfare and, of course, the military. This precis will focus on its three key pillars: those being ***regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive*** institutions.

A modified diagram of the Walt and Gilson model, depicted below, shows the interaction between each pillar of the Scott's Institutional Analysis Policy model and how these relationships directly affect the key elements of current situation ie. the actors. This has then been further modified with an overlay of the diagram presented by the CO 436 (T) Sqn during the April 2023 Air Mobility Advisory Group (AMAG) meeting. This ultimately highlights the benefits of the interactions between the pillars whilst simultaneously identifying areas where synergies and efficiencies can be made by pursuing an alternative recruitment and training strategy, ultimately aiding both the LM and Tfc Tech trades into the future ie. this indicates that processes must change (regulatory) if the desired change to the actors is to be achieved.

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[3] W. Richard SCOTT (1995), Institutions and Organizations. Ideas, Interests and Identities. Sage (1995) Language: English ISBN: 978-142242224 W. Richard SCOTT (1995), Institutions and Organizations. Ideas, Interests and Identities. | Cairn.info

The CC130J fleet needs additional loadmasters

AES Op trade has personnel that are under utilized and some of them are seeking work

2 Air Mov, the primary source of loadmaster candidates, is critically short personnel

Processes

Actors
Influenced by context.
Lack of cooperation derailed processes

Content
Poor understanding by actors
Affected processes

Context
Key driver of processes.

*Graphic modified from researchgate.net Walt and Gilson model to reflect the interaction and relationship between the 3 pillars forming part of Scott's Institutional Policy Analysis Model, 2020 and CO 436 (T) Sqn AMAG slide deck, Apr 2023.[4]

Pillar 1 - Regulative:

This pillar refers to formal rules, regulations, and laws that govern behaviour and actions within a society or organization. These institutions are typically created by government bodies or other authoritative entities and are enforced through sanctions and penalties for non-compliance. Regulative institutions, or elements thereof, play a crucial role in shaping policy processes and outcomes by providing a framework for decision-making and action.

In the context of Scott's model, regulative institutions influence policy processes through their formal authority and power to set the rules and procedures that guide policy development, implementation, and evaluation. For instance, in the military policy context, regulative institutions such as the Government of Canada, the DND or the CAF, set regulations and standards for the approval and the employment of equipment and personnel both domestically and internationally. These regulations influence the availability, accessibility, and affordability of military-based services and products, and consequently, shape future policy outcomes. It should be noted that these institutions can take a long time to enact any proposed changes to the

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[4] Walt and Gilson Model, Apr 2020, modified to demonstrate the interaction between the 3 pillars within the Scott's Institutional Analysis Policy model encompassing the CO 436 (T) Sqn AMAG presentation. triangle of the Walt & Gilson model | Download Scientific Diagram (researchgate.net)

regulatory elements, however this change must be present to ensure that any future evolution is experienced in the latter two pillars.

Furthermore, regulative institutions also influence policy processes by shaping the behaviour of policy actors, such as policymakers, bureaucrats, and other stakeholders. Policymakers often operate within the boundaries set by regulative institutions and are guided by legal and regulatory requirements when formulating said policies. Bureaucrats, on the other hand, are responsible for implementing policies and are constrained by regulative institutions in their day-to-day operations. The behaviour of these actors is shaped by the formal rules and regulations established by regulative institutions, which in turn, influence policy outcomes.

Historical information

Numerous staff papers[5] have been written on the topic of LM selection, training and retention in the RCAF, and a number of common and recurring themes have been identified. These include:

- Reluctance to change from the status quo;

- A significant bottleneck and limitation by having to recruit from the Tfc Tech trade;

- No ability to recruit in a timely manner directly from the street to fill the LM role;

- Not enough willing and/or suitable candidates to fill the role;

- Routinely underachieving the establishment figures; and

- No flexibility to have an individual in the training pipeline ready to replace another leading to a 6-12 month gap in SQEP.

It should be highlighted that the primary Operational user of the CC130J, 436 (T) Sqn, have been monitoring this issue closely since the introduction of that platform into service in 2011, and have submitted Establishment Change Requests (ECRs) into the system on multiple occasions to address the shortcomings due to the lack of increase of LMs as the aircraft reached Final Operational Capability (FOC). The lack of action on this front prompted multiple reviews of LM numbers to ensure the fleet could continue to meet its operational mandate and, most recently, a proposed LM Get-well plan for the CC130J staffing.[6]

It is worthy of note that suggestions have been proposed, several times, to address these ongoing problems within the AM fleet WRT to LM resourcing and opportunities to recruit from alternative trades and/or directly from outside sources to solve the problem, however at no stage have these been adopted.

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[5] This includes a number of staff papers from both the Log Branch in support of the status quo, as well as rebuttals from the RCAF to counter previous assumptions. A number of these documents have been used as references elsewhere in this paper and are included in the bibliography.
[6] Welsh, K. LCol, CO 436 (T) Squadron. (2022). Loadmaster Get-well plan.

Any break from the regulatory elements of an institution can have undesired second and third order effects. One of the most important pre-requisites for any potential LM is the ability to obtain a valid Aircrew Medical.[7] In recent history, there has been instances where LM candidates have been posted to the OTU with relatively short notice without having this major regulatory requirement fulfilled. This created a problem at the school and only left one of two options; allow the student LM to continue on the course under the 'acceptable risk' that they will obtain an aircrew medical in due course, or continue the course without a student LM, thus perpetuating the problem by introducing delays to that and subsequent students. Some individuals have previously been taken 'at risk' due to the short notice and lack of suitable candidates who have passed the stringent medical requirements; this proved problematic when the individuals were subsequently unable to secure a valid medical and withdrew from the process after having undergone a significant amount of training at a greatly wasted expense of time and resources, both financial and personnel.

By introducing a process and/or policy similar to other NATO partner nations, the medical and interview would be taken care of at the outset and the individual would not be offered a contract or allocation on a course without having satisfied all of the requirements, thus ensuring little risk having met an agreed set of recruitment criteria. This option would also free up the requirement to 'poach' from an already depleted Trfc Tech trade at a time of significant reconstitution for the CAF writ large.

Pillar 2 - Normative institutions:

This pillar refers to social norms, values, and beliefs that guide behaviour and shape the expectations and obligations of individuals and groups within a society or organization. Normative institutions provide a sense of shared understanding and collective identity among members of a society, and they play a critical role in shaping policy processes and outcomes. To put this into perspective, this can be considered the everyday running of a Unit within the CAF.

In Scott's model, normative institutions influence policy processes through their ability to shape the perceptions, beliefs, and expectations of policy actors. These institutions provide a set of norms and values that guide the behaviour of policymakers, bureaucrats, and other stakeholders involved in the policy process. For example, in the context of the Defence policy, normative institutions, such as the belief in the importance of protecting the freedoms and security of the Nation and the public, can shape the policy agenda, influence policy choices, and determine the level of support or opposition to Defence policies.

Normative institutions also play a role in shaping policy outcomes by influencing the behaviour and actions of individuals and groups affected by policies. Policies that align with societal norms and values are more likely to be accepted and implemented by the public, while policies that contradict social norms may face resistance and opposition. For instance, policies related to social welfare or healthcare that are perceived as violating norms of fairness or equity may face public backlash and resistance, which can influence policy outcomes. This can also be seen in the CAF, where societal norms may evolve at a quicker pace than that of the military

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[7] Loadmaster Structural Study Co-Sponsor Brief 7 Mar 2016 where it clearly identifies the requirement to obtain a valid medical prior to being selected.

institution. It should also be noted that just because something is accepted as the 'norm' does not necessarily mean it is the best option for the institution.

Pillar 3 - Cultural-cognitive institutions:

This third and final pillar is a key component of Scott's Institutional Policy Analysis model and refers to shared mental models, beliefs, and cognitive frameworks that shape the perception, interpretation, and understanding of the social world around us; it emphasizes these elements in helping to shape policy processes and outcomes. These institutions provide a cognitive framework for individuals and groups to make sense of their environment and guide their decision-making. It can be argued that there is a significant overlap between this pillar and that of Normative institutions, often making differentiation between the two difficult.

Cultural-cognitive institutions influence how policymakers, bureaucrats, and other stakeholders perceive, interpret, and understand the social world, and consequently, influence policy decisions and outcomes. If these shared beliefs are at odds between the policymakers or key stakeholders, it may prove difficult to agree upon exactly what the problem set is and the best way to address it.

According to Scott, "cultural-cognitive institutions are shaped by social norms, values, traditions, ideologies, and cognitive frameworks that are collectively shared by individuals and groups within a society or organization."[8] These institutions provide a lens through which policymakers and other actors view and interpret policy issues, and they shape the cognitive processes that guide decision-making.

One key aspect of cultural-cognitive institutions is the role of shared beliefs and mental models in shaping policy processes. For example, policymakers and other actors may hold certain beliefs about the causes and solutions to policy problems, which are shaped by cultural-cognitive institutions. According to Sabatier, these beliefs "can influence policy agenda-setting, policy formulation, and policy implementation processes."[9]

Moreover, cultural-cognitive institutions also influence the interpretation and framing of policy issues. Policymakers and other actors may interpret policy issues differently based on their cultural-cognitive lenses, which can lead to divergent policy choices and outcomes. For instance, a policy issue related to immigration may be framed differently by policymakers who hold different cultural-cognitive perspectives, resulting in different policy responses and outcomes[10]

Cultural-cognitive institutions also influence the social construction of policy problems and policy solutions. Policymakers and other actors draw on cognitive frameworks and mental models shaped by cultural-cognitive institutions to define the nature of policy problems and

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[8] Scott, R. W. (2008). Institutions and organizations: Ideas and interests. Sage Publications.
[9] Sabatier, P. A. (2007). Theories of the policy process. Westview Press.
[10] Vivien A. Schmidt, "Discursive Institutionalism: The Explanatory Power of Ideas and Discourse," Annual Review of Political Science 11, no. 1 (June 2008): 303–26, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.060606.135342.

identify appropriate policy solutions.; Schneider & Ingram identified that these frameworks can influence how policymakers perceive the feasibility, desirability, and effectiveness of policy options.[11]

Furthermore, cultural-cognitive institutions also shape the diffusion and adoption of policy innovations. According to Rogers, innovations that align with existing cultural-cognitive institutions are more likely to be accepted and adopted, while those that challenge existing norms and beliefs may face resistance and opposition.[12] This can impact the implementation and outcomes of policy innovations and is an area of significant overlap with the Normative institution.

In addition, cultural-cognitive institutions also play a role in shaping the political dynamics of policy processes. In 1989, Hall identified that different cultural-cognitive perspectives may be associated with different political ideologies or interest groups, which can influence policy outcomes through political mobilization, advocacy, and lobbying efforts.[13] And in a 2012 paper, Stone advocated that "these institutions shape the policy discourse, policy narratives, and policy debates that take place within a society or organization, and can impact the trajectory of policy processes and outcomes."[14]

Discussion

When the CC130J entered service, the original intention was that it would benefit from an incremental rise of LMs as the requirement for Lines of Task (LOTs) increased towards Final Operational Capability (FOC); this has changed several times during the past decade. To address these changes, several Establishment Change Requests (ECRs) have been submitted to address the reality that this increase in LMs had not materialised; in fact, the number of actual LMs physically on Sqn did not even meet the lower number that remained in effect; the branch were not able to meet the lesser of these targets. For example, of those 'on paper' strength of 42, the Sqn was c.6 short. Of those available, another 4-6 were experiencing issues requiring grounding at any one time. This meant that the workload was being carried out by c.32 members, some of whom were still restricted, meaning they could not be employed on the full gamut of Sqn tasks. The timeline to train a LM from start to finish is approximately one year. 6 months on the OTU, followed by another 6 months to achieve Unrestricted status on the Sqn. This further identified another problem; that of no overlap, which exacerbated the problem; even if the branch were indeed able to fill all the allocated slots, no allowance was being made to post someone in 6-12 months ahead of time to allow for this. Therefore, the front-line Units were losing SQEP LMs, due to the annual posting cycle, and having to wait a minimum of 6 months to have those members replaced with restricted LMs fresh off the OTU, who would then take another 6 months to attain Unrestricted status on the Sqn, thus reducing the Sqn operational capability and ultimately the ability to meet the Government of Canada's (GoC) Operational mandate.=

[11] Schneider, A. L., & Ingram, H. (1997). Policy design for democracy. University Press of Kansas.
[12] Rogers, E. M. (2003). Diffusion of innovations. Simon and Schuster.
[13] Hall, P. (1989). Policy paradigms, social learning, and the state: The case of economic policymaking in Britain. Comparative politics, 21(3), 275-296.
[14] Stone, Deborah A. Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making. 3rd ed., New York, W.W. Norton & Co, 2012.

This directly affected the increase in usage of those LMs remaining who were fit and healthy enough to fly, which in turn reduced their work-life balance and subsequently their own mental and physical health and well-being through burn-out which created this self-perpetuating downward cycle.

Although it must be made clear that the factors which inform every member's decision to leave or stay in the military are different, every effort must be made by the Leadership to ensure that the RCAF retains as many of these individuals as possible to meet the enduring commitments and requirements to support the RCAF's Operational Mandate as set by the GoC. There are clearly identified push or pull factors in this equation; the goal is to recruit those individuals who hold the desire to become a LM in the RCAF, provide them with the best training to fulfil that role and ensure that the work-life balance is maintained to positively influence retention and, ultimately, recruitment, through that positive action.

The instances of Voluntary Withdrawal (VW) from the LM OTU course has increased in the past decade with two VWs, one of those coming on the morning of Graduation.

There is an innate reluctance to change the status quo during every study, even when the review has been prompted *because* of the status quo! Evolve or die; perhaps the support to the Op mandate has to fail before the appropriate and diverse consideration will be applied. A committee convened and made up almost singularly by Logisticians does not meet the intent nor the spirit of a fair and balanced review of the issues facing the trade.

The CC130J Loadmaster Get-well plan, prepared by CO 436 (T) Sqn[15], highlights that the current CC130J output is constrained by loadmaster availability and aircraft serviceability rates; to meet the planned CC130J Full Operational Capability (FOC) of 11.5 LoT and 13,800 YFR, a significant increase in establishment was required. To address this issue and allow for reconstitution across the fleet, the LoT and YFR have both been reduced in an effort to reduce the workload and allow regeneration of unrestricted LMs.

LMs should be encouraged to fly as long as possible; current statistics indicate an average of 7-10 years, if healthy. If LMs are recruited directly from the general public, similar to any other role, there is no requirement to meet any other trade requirements, which act as a roadblock to the front-line, and hence they would be able to fly longer (eg. for their entire RCAF career), ultimately with the aim of increasing that 7-10 year timeline.

The Loadmaster Structure Study (LMSS) was formed by the Comd RCAF in 2016 to analyse recurring issues within the LM trade. Within this document there are pre-requisites which clearly identify the requirements to be loaded on to a course on the OTU. It is also interesting to note that these pre-requisites have been ignored, when it suited the circumstances, in an attempt to meet the demands for course loading. This in itself should be a key indicator that there are issues with the process and/or suitable talent pool from which LMs are currently selected.

The diagram below identifies common areas affecting RCAF LM training as well as any areas of overlap. It can also be used as the basis for the creation of any delta course should LMs

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[15] Welsh, Kyle LCol. Nov 2022. CO 436 (T) Sqn. CC130J Loadmaster Get-well Plan.

be recruited directly from the general public for the role, to allow them to cross over to Tfc Tech in the future should that pathway be required and/or desired:
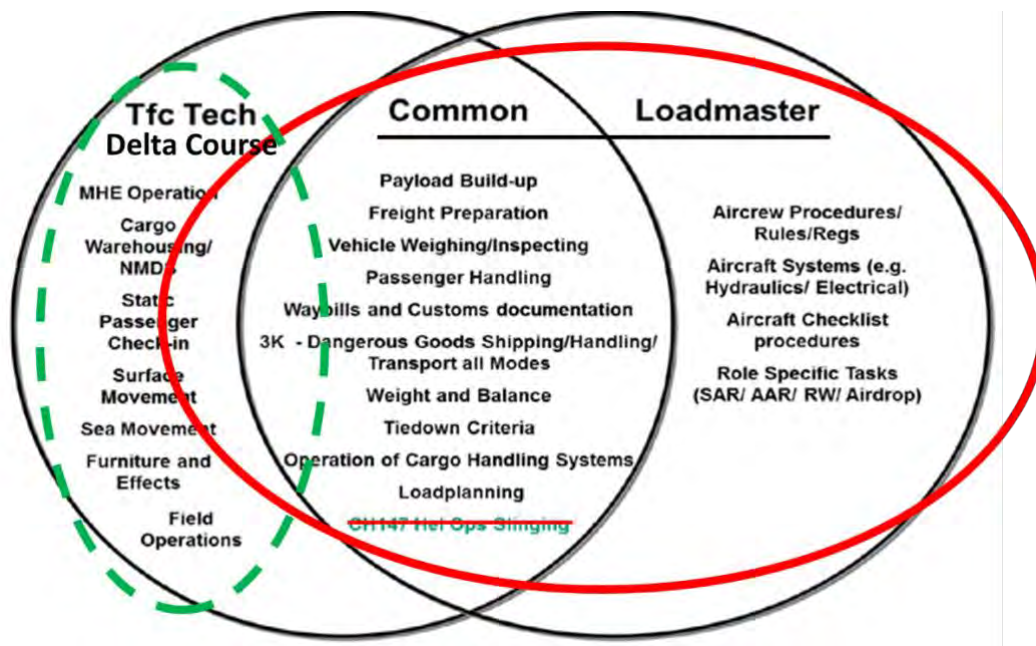
*Graphic modified from Loadmaster Structural Study Co-Sponsor Brief, Mar 2016. Air Mobility in the RCAF of 2030 to reflect proposed Common LM Course and Tfc Tech Delta Course.[16]

In the past, there have been instances whereby some members, already flying as LMs, were posted without consultation with their immediate Chain of Command (CoC); this was due to branch succession planning, however it effectively led to gaps at the front-line and blind-sided the Sqn leadership. Whilst it could be argued that no consultation was required with the Sqn CoC, this in itself highlights the greater problem of relinquishing control of your key assets to another Service/branch and creating skills gaps, a second order effect of this practice.

Numerous acceptable get-well plans have been developed, however none seem to have been introduced into service or finalised, even when the Comd RCAF endorsed their implementation.[17]

So how do these pillars pertain to the issue of lack of control of LM recruitment and training by the RCAF? Often it is easier to avoid change as things have always been done that way, ie. normative behaviour. It takes a brave and bold move to initiate any change. From experience, the military, and by dint, the CAF, is traditionally resistant to change, ie. cultural/cognitive pillar.

The RCAF recently created the role of the Air Ops specialist; any LM who ceases to fly, for whatever reason, could be considered for one of these roles. The airmanship gained through

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[16] Maisonneuve LCol and Mills LCol. 7 Mar 2016. Loadmaster Structural Study Co-Sponsor Brief; Air Mobility in the RCAF of 2030.
[17] RCAF elements of LM Structure Sudy endorsed by LGen Hood, Comd RCAF (22 Feb 2016).

the LM trade could easily be utilised in this role, opening future opportunities for career advancement. Alternatively, an option to pursue a follow-on career/role as a Tfc Tech could also be explored and easily attained. Due to the commonality of pre-employment requirements, minimal additional training would be required to switch to this role. This would yield two primary benefits:

- Recruiting directly from the general public for the LM role eases any pressure on the Tfc Tech trade, allowing it to regenerate at this time of reconstitution; and

- Having a potential additional source of air-minded and experienced members could ease any future personnel issue.

Commonly identified 'pull-in' factors include the following:

- financial security (enhanced by any potential financial incentive);

- job security;

- job variety;

- the opportunity for trade training or professional development; and

- an area often overlooked, Service life; Service life is more difficult to describe but includes elements such as cohesion, teamwork and loyalty to the Service.

Also, it must be stated that previous research indicates that LMs, ultimately, joined or transferred occupation to fly[18]; the less flying and more extraneous tasks a LM undertakes, the more likely they are to seek fulfillment elsewhere. Likewise, having them overfly due to a shortage of SQEP will also lead to dissatisfaction and ultimately, a desire to leave the role.

There are less 'push-in' factors, however they do still exist and include:

- Ambition;

- ability to undertake a specific role (ie. pilot/LM); and

- inability to secure a job that is as financially secure 'outside' the Service.

When it comes to 'push-out' factors, the same areas are being highlighted within the Armed Forces of multiple nations and includes:

- Lack of promotion prospects, whether perceived or reality, is a significant factor, one which can be mitigated by utilising appropriate and timely communication skills;

- Mobility or the requirement to have to move every 3 years (on average); and

- Family-centric reasons such as spousal employment, schooling, stability.

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[18] 436 (T) Sqn Loadmaster Survey, CO Info Brief (11 Feb 2021).

The 'pull-out' factor of greatest concern to any Air Force has to be that of having their personnel lured by the civilian aviation sector; this is of less of a concern for LMs than for say, Pilots, however, it remains a threat to retention.

To reduce the outflow and improve retention within the RCAF, these factors must be addressed and countered to achieve the desired results. This paper will incorporate the attempts, thus far, to address this issue within the RCAF and the impact they have had/are having and potential impact of failing to achieve their aims.

As previously stated in a paper submitted as part of DS556, "members priorities change over time; individuals get married, start families, spouses embark on their own careers, and, in some cases these careers are not easily transferable across Provincial borders."[19] This was written with respect to Pilots, however it is no different for LMs within the RCAF and every effort should be made to recruit the best, young individuals who have fewer of these ties and are eager and willing to see the world and benefit from everything that the LM trade can offer a young person.[20]

In time, this failure to be provided with enough suitable and medically fit candidates could prevent the RCAF from conducting missions in support of the mandates set by the GoC. This could include mission sets as varied as domestic search and rescue to global strategic air mobility, both domestically and overseas. On top of this there remains the requirement to continue the training pipeline and ensure the wheels on the machine can continue to turn through regular FG. Furthermore, lifestyle, or rather the current inability to achieve the best work-life balance, is also proving to be a major dissatisfier amongst the LM fraternity and hence more needs to be done.

Conclusion

In conclusion, to support the thesis and address this problem, the RCAF needs to evolve and emulate other Commonwealth and partner Nations and recruit LMs directly from the street for the role, effectively cutting out the bureaucracy. Failure to evolve, and the continuance of the status quo, effectively an outdated system of recruiting LMs from the Army centric Log branch, namely the Traffic Tech trade, will result in a systemic failure to meet the tasking requirements of the RCAF.

As has been highlighted in multiple previous papers on the subject of Aircrew retention and FG, the training of personnel can be both expensive and lengthy; it is the ultimately the best option to recruit the right person for the role and then retain the experience you have invested time, effort and money in without burning them out in the process of conducting their everyday role.

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[19] Canadian Forces College. Jackson, G. A. (2022). "Ready for Departure: The RCAF Leadership needs to do more to stop pilots releasing." Submitted as part of DS555, JCSP 49.

[20] It must be highlighted that this does not discriminate against older members joining the RCAF, but merely identifies the increased mobility of members earlier in their careers at which time they have fewer of the geo-location ties that come with an expanding family and commitments.

The thesis statement was:

The RCAF needs to modernise the way it recruits individuals for the LM branch and not be reliant upon the Log Branch (Traffic Tech trade) to meet its requirements; the time is right to evolve and emulate other Commonwealth/NATO countries and recruit the best people for the LM role directly from the general public.

Even though the RCAF leadership has made continuous efforts to positively influence and address this issue during the past decades, the LM structural studies have been predominantly run and administered by the Log Branch with little in the way of participation from the RCAF; this has effectively resulted in the consequence of situating the estimate at every turn, whether intended or otherwise. How can a COA be supported as the optimised solution when it was that exact COA which was the driving force behind the reason to conduct a study into the problem in the first instance?

The delays in the CC130J reaching FOC have been linked directly to the lack of unrestricted LMs in the guise of ILMs and line LMs. This problem is exacerbated by the regular loss of experience from the front-line and OTU, often without consultation with the COs of those Units.

Some occupations within the RCAF, identified as being under-resourced in terms of personnel, have attracted signing bonuses or equivalent; given the obvious issues with recruiting and retaining the best individuals as LMs, perhaps now is the time to consider a restructuring of the LM pay scale to make this role more attractive to not only those currently serving, but also to new recruits directly from the general population. Now is the time for affirmative action if the RCAF is to continue to meet its operational mandate.

The list of push and pull factors for LMs within the RCAF is not exhaustive, however, and although it includes topics such as spousal employment, housing, mobility, additional duties and commitments, more work needs to be done to ensure the maximum retention of SQEP within the Service. It is recommended that other areas be investigated as a package of future work in the area, including, but not limited to the following areas:

- Adopt regulatory change, within the Regulative Pillar, to *force* normative and cultural-cognitive change with regard to the LM trade.

- Why does a LM need to be a Tfc Tech at any stage of their career? If they join to fly, let them fly.

    - Based on the successful models in place around the globe with other foreign and Commonwealth Nations[21], there is no justifiable reason why a LM on the CC130J must have prior experience as a Tfc Tech; any delta in training can be adequately captured in a suitably designed course akin to our NATO partners.

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[21] Maclean, N. RCAF Loadmaster Force Generation: New Approaches vs Status Quo; This includes countries such as the Royal Danish Air Force, the Royal Air Force, the Royal Australian Air Force, the Royal New Zealand Air Force and the United States Air Force.

- Introduce a dedicated and rigorous recruitment path to allow individuals to join straight from the street; the argument that the RCAF will lose control of selection criteria does not hold water as has been capably demonstrated by other NATO and Commonwealth Nations.
  - Introduce a robust and well considered set of selection criteria for CFRG/CFRC to follow and conduct the elements that will preclude joining early to eradicate any wasted time (ie. Aircrew medicals etc) should any doubts remain.

- Continue to offer the ability for LMs to be employed on an individual platform should they choose, or alternatively, allow them to transfer between aircraft but remain in a flying role to retain that air expertise; this will allow more stability and geo-location for a better work-life balance.

- Should a LM choose to step away from the flying role for a while, either through career progression or for family/medical reasons, the opportunity should be made available to allow them to fill a flying related role such as Operations, where their airmanship and experience can be leveraged.
  - Alternatively, create a short course to allow them to backfill and assist in the Tfc Tech role as required, aiding any retention/resourcing deficits present in that trade.
  - This course will include any deltas identified as part of a completely independent and unbiased study conducted as a follow-on body of work.

- Geo stability allows families to remain in a specific geographical location for an extended period of time and may yield longer term benefits if the member subsequently decides to remain in the military or extend their career;

- Allow SQEP to transfer to the reserves to allow longer geo-location and maximise the utilisation of all assets as applicable;

- Reduce the burden of additional duties not specifically related to flying, especially for those LMs who find themselves over-employed due to the shortage of personnel in other areas; although this has been addressed with the creation of an Air Ops Officer trade, more work can be done during the implementation phase.

- Full consideration should be given to allowing LMs to progress in their careers whilst serving within the AM fleet (ie. Allowing career progression and promotion either on the same fleet or across multiple Sqns within a fleet, or even across different fleets within AM).

- No LM should be moved without full consultation of the appropriate COs; this can be fully controlled should the RCAF obtain control and will eradicate any animosity due to lack of communication.

It must be understood, however, that there will be no negative ramifications for any LM remaining in a certain geo-location for an extended period of time; they must not be negatively

affected on the SCRIT[22] and hence will remain competitive during the annual promotion process. This in turn will allow LMs to progress in their careers whilst at the same time remain flying. Continuing to follow the old school model of having to post individuals, who are excelling in their present role, to a ground role for development, must be now viewed as an obsolete process. Similar to that of Pilots within the RCAF, an option to remain flying should be made available as a valid career path for any LM who chooses to do so.

In summary, Scott's Institutional Policy Analysis model is a useful tool to analyse the issues currently facing the dated system of recruiting, training and ultimately retaining the best as a LM. By its application, it has been seen that a **regulative** change must be actioned to ensure the system remains fit for purpose for future generations and to prevent the ***"Stop Drop, Red On!"**[23]* This will, in turn, drive the **normative** and **cultural** change needed to ensure the RCAF can continue to meet its operational mandate in the future. To quote the writer Eckhart Tolle, *"Humanity* (read LM recruitment) *is now faced with a stark choice: Evolve or die. ... If the structures of the human mind remain unchanged, we will always end up re-creating the same world, the same evils, the same dysfunction."*[24] Now is the time to evolve.

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[22] SCRIT – Scoring Criteria; a tool used by supervisors to allocate additional points to individuals, where applicable, within a specific reporting period.
[23] "Stop Drop, Red On" is a term used within the aircraft when a drop has gone wrong/a malfunction has taken place and immediate action must be taken to stop the problem followed by appropriate corrective action as required.
[24] Tolle, E. Quote by Eckhart Tolle: "Humanity is now faced with a stark choice: Evol..." (goodreads.com)

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