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## Diversity in the CAF: A Critical Review of the Past and Present

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**DIVERSITY IN THE CAF: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE PAST AND PRESENT**

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## ABSTRACT

The Canadian Armed Forces issued a new Diversity Strategy and Action Plan in 2016 to address the underrepresentation of women and visible minorities in the military. After 5 years, there has been little change in the representation of these groups. This is not the first effort by the CAF to accelerate change, and the effort has also been undertaken by Canada's closest allies. How is this attempt different than other failed efforts? Have allies with similar diversity issues had success? Can the CAF learn from them? Can they learn from the CAF?

The CAF is serious about its diversity and inclusion goals, and has tapped into external research to assist in identifying the real underlying problem. Over time, as Canadian culture and CAF military culture drifted apart. The CAF has long removed all policy restrictions that previously limited women and visible minorities from joining, but they aren't flooding into recruiting centres.

Not only must the military reflect the values and diversity of its population, the CAF has also realized for some time now that its operational effectiveness is enhanced by diversity, and absolutely necessary to meet the challenges of the contemporary operational environment. It must redefine its image and values, and evolve to be a place of service that appeals to all Canadians and welcomes diversity.

Since the Diversity Strategy and Strong, Secure, Engaged were released, the last five years have seen a multitude of programs, policies, and goals to remove barriers and change the CAF culture and demographics, but is it working? Culture change in militaries is a long and arduous journey, requiring enduring effort and relentless pursuit by leadership. The current goals for diversity will not be met by 2026 at their current rates, but sustained culture change is the ultimate goal, which will certainly take more time.

## INTRODUCTION

Will the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) efforts succeed in developing a more diverse and inclusive military? The CAF published the CAF Diversity Program and Action Plan in 2016, which initiated the study and gathering of information. This latest attempt to stimulate diversity is hoped to be the guiding strategy to break the status quo. Its goal of a diverse and inclusive force that reflects the diversity of Canada has seen little demographic progress to date.

The requirements to a successful diversity strategy are an in-depth study and understanding of structural, cultural, and institutional barriers concurrent to targeted outreach and recruitment. The primary impediments to improving diversity are the need to adapt the CAF culture to a more inclusive environment and the propensity for military culture to resist change.<sup>1</sup> Leadership in the military is the most prominent influencer on military culture and needs to reflect diversity themselves to have the most significant impact.

This paper will conduct a critical review of the evolution of military and government policy regarding diversity and inclusion issues in the CAF. As Canada is not the only western nation looking to increase diversity in its military, a brief examination of the United Kingdom and the United States may prove helpful to draw out conclusions based on their relative success or failure.

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<sup>1</sup> Military culture: Change and continuity 539

## DIVERSITY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Diversity has gradually been seen as an increasingly pressing issue in the CAF and many other western militaries, governments, and the private sector. One theory that explains why diversity and inclusion are so prevalent in discussion is the Multiple Streams Theory.<sup>2</sup> The multiple streams framework consists of three elements, or problems, which once converged elevate an issue to prominence in public and government concern.<sup>3</sup> The three streams are the problem, politics, and policy streams. When applying the multiple streams framework to the CAF, the three streams converge, resulting in the issue now under the spotlight and the opportunity for significant change to occur.

The problem stream is the issue that captures the public attention and, in turn, public officials.<sup>4</sup> In the CAF, the problems with incorporating women into the military and addressing sexual misconduct have been prevalent problem streams in the last 50 years. Recently, sexual misconduct in the CAF has preoccupied Canadian media, generating immense public concern for an institution for which there is considerable national pride.<sup>5</sup> The policy stream originates from experts and analysts who study the problems and generate recommendations.<sup>6</sup> In Canada, such sources in the policy stream include organizations such as the Office of the Auditor General, the Deschamps Report on Sexual Misconduct, or the House of Commons Standing Committees. Finally, the political stream comprises influencing factors on governing bodies, such as public

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<sup>2</sup> Examining United States military sexual misconduct policy processes 237

<sup>3</sup> The Role and Impact of the Multiple-Streams Approach in Comparative Policy Analysis 222

<sup>4</sup> IBID 222

<sup>5</sup> <https://search-proquest-com.cfc.idm.oclc.org/docview/2503054118?pq-origsite=summon>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid 222

pressure or advocacy groups. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security also constitutes an output impacting diversity's importance.<sup>7</sup> As applied to the history of diversity effort in the CAF, all three streams have been steadily growing, resulting in the current level of public and institutional interest in addressing diversity in the CAF. Now that the government, CAF senior leadership, and Canadian public show concerted interest in improving diversity, there is more potential for meaningful change.

### **Diversity and the CAF**

The CAF defines diversity as “the respect for and appreciation of differences in ethnicity, language, gender, age, national origin, disabilities, sexual orientation, education, and religion.”<sup>8</sup> It isn't solely focused on physical differences between people and can also include beliefs, thought processes, and ways of thinking. Diversity of thought and individual diversity is more challenging to measure in a population. Hence, governments and corporations typically defer to using the first group when measuring diversity in their organizations.<sup>9</sup> While imperfect, this paper will associate diversity in the same vein. Using demographics and identified categories to classify people to assess how diverse a group does not reflect the true diversity, yet as a simple method, it can provide generalized metrics.

Inclusion, a word commonly juxtaposed with diversity, is the value placed on what makes a group diverse. It is valuing how differences make us stronger and expands

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<sup>7</sup> <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>8</sup> CAFDS 1

<sup>9</sup> Rethinking diversity and security 349



how one can contribute to the group's effort. This is not to be confused with tolerance, which is an ingenuine and reluctant acceptance of differences.

“Diversity is being invited to the party, but inclusion is being asked to dance.”<sup>10</sup>

There has been some debate over whether diversity increases the operational effectiveness of a group. Opponents say that diversity undermines cohesion and unity of thought. A more diverse workplace can also introduce threats to cohesion, such as discrimination or unfair treatment by the non-majority, where minority concerns can be regularly overlooked or dismissed. This is why diversity management is essential to ensure diversity in a workplace becomes an advantage. Diversity management can increase the representation of minority groups, provide support systems and services, and promote equitable and fair treatment.

When looking at the lack of diversity in the CAF, opponents of diversity rely on one of two main ideas. First, that diversity undermines operational effectiveness in that it disrupts and detracts from cohesion.<sup>11</sup> Increasing diversity may be disruptive to the hegemony of the dominant group, but in the end, operation effectiveness is enhanced by a more diverse workforce. The CAF conducts missions around the world in countries of unique cultures and social dimensions. A wider variety of skills and perspectives will be at the disposal of a diverse military force in solving the increasingly more complex international environment.<sup>12</sup> The presence of women in a military force enables the

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<sup>10</sup> Asia McCleary-Gaddy, “Be Explicit: Defining the Difference Between the Office of Diversity & Inclusion and the Office of Diversity & Equity,” *Medical Teacher*, Vol. 41, No. 12, 2019 1443

<sup>11</sup> *Women in Combat RUSI* 4

<sup>12</sup> *Improving diversity and inclusion* 14

opportunity to connect greater efficacy with women amongst the civil population in a foreign country. With the increasing complexity of military operating environments, diverse groups can apply different points of view, experiences, and methods of approaching problems. Diversity is actually a prerequisite to the high performance of militaries.<sup>13</sup>

The second argument diversity critics argue is that women and visible minorities are not interested in joining the military.<sup>14</sup> Simply removing restrictions and allowing women to enter all occupations offered by the military does not automatically create an inclusive workplace. The barriers and military culture present in male-dominated professions are discouraging for women and can reduce their likelihood of enrolling despite their interest in the trade.

As a volunteer force, the CAF should reflect the Canadian population. For a military force to maintain the support of its civil population, it has to share its diversity and values.<sup>15</sup> As this paper will show, the CAF currently does not represent the diversity of Canada's population. Canada is a liberal and multicultural country that values free speech, equal treatment, and fairness. This is not to say that the CAF does not respect these beliefs; instead, it could do better at promoting and protecting them.

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<sup>13</sup>Managing Diversity in the Military : The Value of Inclusion 10

<sup>14</sup> Canadian defence policy in theory and practice 182

<sup>15</sup> Franklin C. Pinch and others, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues* (Winnipeg: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, Canadian Defence Academy, 2004), p. 198.

## CANADA, THE CAF, AND CULTURE

Canada has always been a diverse country and is becoming increasingly so in recent decades. The diversity landscape has changed since the early European settlers began a population explosion witnessed by a relatively small indigenous population.

While Canada's population continues to grow, much of this growth is attributable to immigration. Canada relies on immigration to prevent population decline and counter the effects of an ageing population. The main reason for the population declines stems from people having fewer children. The national birth rate in 2019 was a record low of 1.47, which is not sufficient to maintain a healthy population.<sup>16</sup> Canada's birth rate has been steadily declining over the last 100 years, as has that of many developed Western nations. Since 1971, Canada has had a birth rate below the needed 2.1 to maintain the population. To counter the ageing of a population due to a low birth rate, Canada relies upon a large amount of immigration. The chart below depicts the trends of births, deaths, and the correlation of immigration to Canada's population.

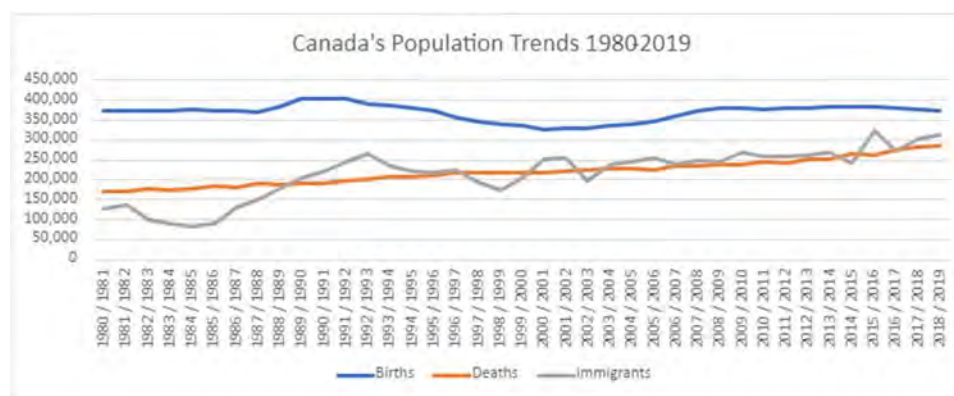


Figure 3.1 – Canada's Population Trends 1980-2019  
Source: Statistics Canada

<sup>16</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200929/dq200929e-eng.htm>

Without immigration to bolster Canada's population, the country could face an economic crisis associated with a smaller pool of working-age Canadians supporting a larger number of older citizens.

The result of increasing reliance on immigration results in an increasingly diverse population. According to Statistics Canada, from 2006 to 2011, the percentage of Canadians that identified as a visible minority rose from 11% to 19% and predicts that by 2036 it will reach 31-36% (low and high-end estimates).<sup>17</sup> Canada is quickly approaching the point where the classification of identifying as a visible minority becomes ambiguous. With this growth comes growing numbers of Canadians that practice non-christian religions and whose mother tongue is neither english nor french.

One notable characteristic of Canada's immigration patterns is that many immigrants settle in the major urban areas.<sup>18</sup> While the growth of visible minorities continues to increase in Canada, rural areas tend to remain less diverse and have a much slower rate of population growth. This fact will be further discussed in the section addressing recruitment trends in the CAF and may partially explain why the diversity of the CAF trails Canadian society.

Concerning Canada's Indigenous population, the 2016 census indicated approximately 4.9% of Canadians self-identify as Indigenous.<sup>19</sup> This section of Canada's population maintains a much higher birth rate than the rest of Canada and is also expected to take a proportionally more significant percentage of the population by 2036.

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<sup>17</sup> Immigration and Diversity: Population Projections for Canada and its Regions, 2011 to 2036, p43

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.p43

<sup>19</sup> Linking Indigenous Communities with Regional Development in Canada 68

At this point, Canada is well outlined as a fast-changing and increasingly diverse population. In the next section, this paper will look at the past and current diversity of the CAF, and reveal the disparity in reflection of Canadian society in its ranks.

### **Comparing CAF Demographics**

There are multiple reasons the CAF needs to increase the representation of different groups, born out of obligation, necessity, and requirement. First, the CAF is a public institution accountable to the Employment Equity Act. It is mandated to comply and demonstrate effort and results towards a workforce representative of the population. Second, the strategic direction to National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, dictated representation targets goals for the CAF to reach by 2026. This is an imperative instruction the CAF must pursue. The third reason is to maintain operational effectiveness and obtain talented citizens. Competition in the labour market and the need to expand the number of serving members necessitates increasing consumption of a wider variety of recruiting pools. With the CAF historically attracting white males from rural areas, the white male recruiting pool has also been shrinking.<sup>20</sup> Coupled with more vigorous competition for talent makes meeting general recruiting targets a challenge. Additionally, the CAF needs to reflect the Canadian public's diversity to maintain trust and confidence.<sup>21</sup> In all these aspects, the CAF needs to maintain a culture that attracts participation from all elements of the Canadian population.

In examining the demographics of the CAF, it's important to note how it has evolved over recent years and how it is trending. In 2001, visible minorities composed a

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<sup>20</sup> Can the CAF reflect canadian society 28

<sup>21</sup> Challenge and Change p 198

mere 6% of the CAF, while the Canadian visible minority working population was 17%.<sup>22</sup> Today's most recent statistic is 9.4% of visible minority CAF members versus 22.3% of the Canadian population.<sup>23</sup> While this shows some improvement, the fact remains that Canada's demographics are changing at a much faster rate than the CAF demographics. If the CAF cannot improve its diversity, the representation of designated groups will never reach a target level.<sup>24</sup> To avoid such a strategic failure, the CAF has set a short-term goal of 11.8% visible minority representation by 2026, although by 2026, this will be inadequate.

Regarding women in the CAF, they currently comprise approximately 16% of the CAF, and one can assume women are roughly 50% of the total population of Canada.<sup>25</sup> This represents the most considerable disparity of representation amongst all groups within the CAF.

As with visible minorities, however, the last twenty years have seen the percentage of women CAF members increasing slowly. In 1970 women accounted for only 1.6% of regular force members.<sup>26</sup> The majority of this small number of women were restricted to administrative, medical, and logistics trades. In 2002, women composed 14.7% of all CAF members. These statistics identify the relatively rapid growth of the participation of women as CAF members following an adjustment of policy that permitted women to enroll in a broader range of occupations. However, the growth plateaued and has been stagnant during the last 20 years.

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<sup>22</sup> Profile of the a Canadian Forces p20

<sup>23</sup> 2019-20 DEPARTMENTAL RESULTS REPORT 52

<sup>24</sup> Canadian Defence Policy in Theory and Practice 180

<sup>25</sup> Ibid 52

<sup>26</sup> Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada p134

There has been much study into women and visible minority representation in the CAF and why their numbers are disproportionately low. Enrollment in the CAF is voluntary, and all trades are equally open to all citizens regardless of gender or race. Hence, the answer is simply that fewer women or ethnic minorities choose to enroll, despite being interested. For those that do enroll, retention rates are lower than the average rate.<sup>27</sup> The under-representation of visible minorities in the CAF can be explained by many theories, including the importance of education, family, and ethnic identity, a relatively low ranking of military service as a career, combined with the negative image provided by their native militaries, and insufficient visible minorities in senior ranks to provide the necessary positive role model.<sup>28</sup> In addition, the presence of barriers or perceived incongruence of the CAF military culture may play a role in discouraging enrollment for visible minorities interested in joining the military. Understanding what is needed to encourage more women or visible minorities to enroll and remain in the CAF is the first critical step in making institutional changes that will help the CAF reflect Canadian diversity.

A study by the Privy Council of Canada's Innovation Hub reported several barriers and misperceptions that reduce women's likelihood of enrolling. The group identified deployments and relocation, leave without pay, childcare support, long-term commitment/ability to resign, and culture/diversity as the main reasons.<sup>29</sup> Some of these barriers, such as the ability to resign, are present in CAF policy. Yet, the misconception persists that a military contract is unbreakable. A second misconception the report

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<sup>27</sup> Profile of the Canadian Forces p19

<sup>28</sup> Profile of the Canadian Forces p22

<sup>29</sup> Behavioral Insights p 6

mentions is that many women believe that the physical demands of basic training will be too difficult, and their likelihood of succeeding is low. In fact, the Innovation Hub researched and concluded that the rates of success between men and women on basic training are equal.<sup>30</sup> These barriers, both real and perceived, continue to reduce the number of women interested in pursuing a career in the CAF.

A second study by Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis questioned civilian women and found 83% of women would not consider a career in the CAF.<sup>31</sup> The study had similar findings regarding barriers such as the requirement to relocate away from family, extended deployments, ill-treatment of women, childcare, and the risk of mental or physical injury. Some of the misconceptions can be addressed by a proactive information campaign. Still, unfortunately, some are an inherent part of service in the armed forces and apply to all members regardless of gender or race.

A common theme when analyzing barriers for women relates to the perceived culture of the CAF and the attitude towards women. This barrier has been under the lens since the Deschamps Report in 2015 reported the CAF as having a highly sexualized culture hostile to women.<sup>32</sup> Many actions and initiatives have been taken by the military institution to address it, and perhaps ground was gained. Unfortunately, the recent allegations of sexual misconduct or inappropriate behaviour against two consecutive Chiefs of Defence Staff and senior male officers have been highly publicized in the media and further damaged public perception.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid. p 6

<sup>31</sup> Diane Riddell, "On the road to greater representation of women in the CAF," Army News Article, Project 17-0095 (Apr 2017): 3

<sup>32</sup> Deschamps Report i



## CAF Recruiting and Retention Barriers

There are two very straightforward ways for the CAF to increase the representation of women: Recruit more, and retain them longer. While the answer seems simple, CAF efforts since 2016 have not achieved the 1% increase annually in the number of serving women needed to reach the goal of 25% by 2026.

In the last five years, the CAF has struggled to meet basic recruiting goals annually, let alone target goals for specific groups such as women and visible minorities. In 2016, 14% of CAF members were women, and in the years of 2014-16, 14% of recruits were women.<sup>33</sup> In the five following years, the number of serving women only increased to 16%, where the desired results should have been closer to 19% to stay on track. Each year that passes sees the target of 25% less and less attainable. Even since all trades had opened to women in 1989 (less submariners, which followed in 1991), very little progress has been made.<sup>34</sup>

Recruitment advertisements produced by the CAF since SSE and the CAF Diversity Strategy were issued a very direct and targeted message. While describing opportunities and information about military life, viewers are shown images of happy young women and visible minority members conducting exciting military tasks. The intent is to appeal to these groups and demonstrate an inclusive and diverse organization. The measure of the effectiveness of these recruitment videos is difficult to quantify, but for women and visible minorities that have been considering enrolling in the CAF, it may

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<sup>33</sup> Report 5 OAG 2016

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/women-in-the-forces/statistics.html><https://forces.ca/en/women-in-the-caf/#:~:text=All%20military%20occupations%20were%20open,by%20about%20100%20per%20cent.>

help overcome concerns for their acceptance based on their gender or race if they are shown an inclusive organization.

The Canadian public generally has limited knowledge of the CAF and the employment opportunities. Women in the CAF are disproportionately represented in the traditional occupations related to administration, medical, and logistical trades.<sup>35</sup> To increase the representation of women in traditionally male professions, they need to be better informed of opportunities there. The CAF has made adjustments to its recruiting websites to more demonstrate all trades are available to both men and women. This method is passive and only reaches citizens who actively seek the information. A public survey by the Earncliffe Strategy group in 2017 indicates the general public has relatively little knowledge of the CAF or the opportunities within the organization.<sup>36</sup> For the CAF to educate the public on employment opportunities in the wide range of occupations and training available, more effort needs to be taken on a proactive approach.

There has been engagement with several external groups to try to improve recruiting efforts. The Privy Council Innovation Hub made two such recommendations in 2017. The first was to study and understand the barriers to women enrolling, and the second was to implement “try before you buy” programs.<sup>37</sup> Such programs could help inform potential enrollees and dispel misinformation.

The CAF went on to develop one such program and ran a pilot serial in 2017 named “Women in Force.” It was a program in line with the “try before you buy”

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<sup>35</sup> Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada.

<sup>36</sup> EARNCLIFFE STRATEGY Group, Recruitment and Employment of Women in the Canadian Armed Forces: Research Report, Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis Contract Report DRDC-RDDC2017-003, Ottawa, Ontario, Defence Research and Development Canada, 2017

<sup>37</sup> Behavioral Insights p3

practice, where women would be exposed to military life through partnering with a serving female member. The program had high expectations that many of the 130 participants would choose to enroll at the end of the program, yet it did not meet expectations. The program has not continued, and it's not clear why. If the program was assessed as a failure due to the low enrollment percentage, it would discount the intangible benefit of educating the public. The women participants may have chosen not to pursue a career in the CAF, but they may still have left the program with a positive impression of the CAF they could share with other potential recruits. While word of mouth is not a reliable advertising method, it is only one method amongst many that could be used concurrently to increase public awareness. With so much of the general public having little knowledge of CAF opportunities, these outreach programs can have more benefits than simply generating enrollees amongst direct participants. Should these outreach programs be redesigned and improved based on the same principle of public outreach, more long-term positive results can be achieved.

One barrier to women enrolling in the armed forces is a lack of women in senior ranks. In 2017, there were only 14 female generals in the CAF.<sup>38</sup> This was a vast improvement from 1987 when the first woman was appointed to Brigadier-General. There are 130 General Officers in today's CAF, which would equate to 10.7% of generals being women. Considering it takes approximately 25 years to reach general officer ranks, the growth in the representation of women in these senior ranks will only reflect the diversity of the past. The goal of having 25% women generals in the CAF by 2026 is not feasible, even if 25% of women in the forces were reached by 2026. Logic dictates it will take

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<sup>38</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/women-in-the-forces.html>

roughly 25 more years for that to occur. What may help skew the representation of women at higher ranks is the proportion of women that enroll as officers is greater than that of non-commissioned members, and 19% of CAF officers in 2020 were women.<sup>39</sup>

A second factor that explains the lower number of women in senior ranks is the concentration of women in administrative, logistic, and medical trades, as previously mentioned. For female-dominated occupations such as Military Social Work Officers, there are few employment opportunities outside of the Social Work Branch which limit their experience and potential for promotion to higher ranks. The CAF structure limits the lateral employment of niche and specialist occupations, mostly because specialist skills are high in demand and short on supply. A physician taken out of the occupational career path and into a staff or command path creates gaps and vacancies that cannot be easily filled. Occupations such as combat arms trades have a much larger pool of senior officers so a vacancy has a less harmful effect or can simply be filled with a junior candidate. Promotion boards also view deployments and command experience as essential criteria, which members belonging to male-dominated trades are more likely to obtain. If the CAF were to increase women's representation in occupations that are more often considered for command positions, these women would have a more diverse occupational experience that would make them more competitive for senior ranks.

### **What is the CAF doing to Increase Diversity?**

The CAF has acknowledged the need to diversify its workforce for decades. In 1999, the government Employment Equity Strategy was designed to make the workforce more equitable for women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and Aboriginal

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<sup>39</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/women-in-the-forces/statistics.html>

peoples. Government departments were required to create specific targets for representation amongst these designated groups and report annually on progress and methods to achieve them.<sup>40</sup> The Auditor-General Report in May 2006 indicated that the CAF had set targets, studied the changing Canadian demographics, and then failed to meet those targets. The number of women, visible minorities, and aboriginal people declined steadily over the preceding four years.<sup>41</sup>

Additionally, in this timeframe, the CAF did not have a specific diversity strategy. Shortly after the Auditor General's report, the CAF issued its 2006 Employment Equity (EE) plan to address diversity issues, reviewed and updated in 2010.<sup>42</sup> In the 2010 version, despite failing to reach recruitment targets again, the CAF updated its EE mandated targets to 25.1% women, 11.8% visible minority, and 3.4% Aboriginal.<sup>43</sup> The annual report for that year applauded the CAF's success in outreach activity and review of policies to identify and remove barriers. Still, it acknowledged more effort would be needed in the future to meet targets.<sup>44</sup>

While a solution was not presented in the 2011 EE Report, one crucial action was undertaken that had the potential to lay the groundwork for significant change in the future. The CAF was designing information-gathering techniques and surveys directed at designated groups.<sup>45</sup> This effort to understand the problem and invest time and resources over the following three years would provide a better understanding of the complex problem and why it cannot be solved simply through more recruiting.

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<sup>40</sup> EEA 10(1)d

<sup>41</sup> Auditor general annual report may 2006 Section 2.28

<sup>42</sup> Canadian forces employment equity report 2010-11. p2

<sup>43</sup> Ibid 2

<sup>44</sup> Ibid

<sup>45</sup> Ibid 6

At this point, the CAF was under pressure from the Employment Equity Act (EEA) to represent Canadian demographics better. The need to meet compliance obligations was not sufficient enough to cause the CAF to allocate the needed resources or take more aggressive action, although the intent and recognition of the problem was reported. Even the next iteration of the National Defence Policy, The Canada First Defence Policy (CFDP), minimally addressed the poor representation of EE designated groups. Released in 2008, the CFDP only made one small reference to the effort to diversify the CAF: “Recognizing the demographic challenges that will be facing the Canadian workforce in the coming decades, Defence will continue to strive for excellence by: Recruiting and retaining quality candidates that reflect the face of Canada.”<sup>46</sup>

In 2016, the Auditor General again reported that the CAD did not have a strategy to meet the recruitment and representation goals it had established.<sup>47</sup> Not only did it fail to meet recruiting targets for EE designated groups, it failed to meet overall recruiting needs for the CAF. This was a critical elevation of the problem stream of the multiple streams framework. The CAF was at a turning point and began a series of programs and policy changes to reorient efforts to produce tangible and enduring results. 2016 saw the beginning of more meaningful action by CAF and DND leadership to address the lack of diversity and minimal gains. Several policies and strategies were issued over the next few years, notably, the CAF Diversity Programme (CAFDP) and *Strong, Secure, Engaged* (SSE).

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<sup>46</sup> CFDP 16

<sup>47</sup> Report 5—Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment and Retention 5.6

## **The CAF Diversity Programme**

The CAFDP represented an evolution from a compliance-based method of meeting EE targets to inspire a value-based vision.<sup>48</sup> It was the first policy that clearly articulated the value of having a diverse workforce and described how operational effectiveness is enhanced. It identified the impetus to change the CAF as not just one of necessity to meet targets, but one of necessity to be more effective and ensure the most qualified and capable members of the Canadian population are recruited in an increasingly competitive environment.

*A CAF that is comprised of members who reflect the rich diversity of Canada and who are recognized and encouraged to maintain and contribute through their unique experiences, abilities, and perspectives within a respectful and inclusive environment. - CAFDP Vision Statement*

The CAFDP acknowledges that culture change within the CAF will be a very challenging undertaking but is one of the key components to enable diversity. The five principles, four goals, and fourteen objectives of the directive are not achievable without total commitment and investment by senior leadership and will take years to achieve.<sup>49</sup> Culture change in the CAF would be the method to increasing recruitment and retention, which would, in turn, contribute to a more diverse and representative workforce.

Before initiating a culture change, it's essential to understand the current culture and to what it needs to evolve. The first two goals of the framework specifically address

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<sup>48</sup> CAFDS 4

<sup>49</sup> CAFDP A-1/1

understanding and changing the culture of the CAF. Goal 1, *Understanding Diversity Culture*, encompasses understanding the dynamic culture of diversity both in Canada and in CAF.<sup>50</sup> Within this goal, the CAF would leverage both internal and external studies to define diversity culture. It would require the CAF to design and implement numerous surveys and improve the quality of data collected from its members. Evidence of the shift of data collection is evident in the annual reports of the CAF since 2016, where more quantitative data pertaining to diversity was available.

The leveraging of external sources of study would also be amplified. Academia, allies, the private sector, and government organizations such as the Standing Committee for National Defence will be actively engaged to define problems and solutions. As promoting diversity and inclusion has also been at the forefront of corporate business plans, the CAF would be remiss to rely solely on its own ingenuity and innovation to identify the solution. Only through leveraging a more comprehensive range of assistance can the CAF understand its own culture without a biased view. Without a thorough understanding of CAF culture as it currently is, efforts to make adjustments to foster inclusion and diversity would be doomed to fail.<sup>51</sup>

Within Goal 2 of the CAFDS, *Inculcate a Culture of Diversity*, it states that “to remain relevant in an increasingly changing Canadian society, we must strive to effectively communicate how [the CAF] values and promotes diversity not only to build the reputation as an employer of choice, but to foster deeper more respectful relationships with all of Canada.”<sup>52</sup> The CAF faces increasing competition from the private sector for

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<sup>50</sup> CAFDP 7

<sup>51</sup> The path to dignity and respect p25

<sup>52</sup> CAFDS 10



talent, an increasing proportion of which are visible minorities and women. It will be necessary for the CAF to continue to communicate progress and changes to the public to demonstrate accountability and make a competitive argument to prospective recruits. If not, the CAF will need to invest more in less talented recruits to train and retrain if higher talent cannot be attracted.

The action plan that later accompanied the CAFDP contained a large number of specific tasks aimed at increasing diversity and inclusion. Each task was assigned to a specific senior leader in the CAF for that member to develop and implement, including suggesting measures of effectiveness. This was a concerted effort to increase accountability and ensure that progress could be meaningfully measured over time. The CAFDP assumed these tasks would be enduring and require years to develop, implement, and adjust to succeed.

### **Strong, Secure, Engaged**

The next iteration of the national defence policy identified that diversity and inclusion would be a higher priority for the Department of National Defence (DND). SSE was the successor to the CFDS, released in 2017. SSE announced massive investment, growth, and restructuring of the CAF over the coming years, but importantly put diversity and inclusion in the spotlight. The first section and a significant portion of the entire strategic directive encompassed diversity and inclusion, improving retention and quality of life, and culture change.<sup>53</sup>

The placement and prominence of diversity initiatives were an important signal from DND. Not only did it reinforce the goals of the CAFDP, but it also made a statement

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<sup>53</sup> SSE 19-33

on the future priority of the CAF. The fact that diversity and inclusion-related initiatives pre-empted the announcement of an increase in annual defence spending of 7.5 billion dollars over ten years highlights the commitment and priority of departmental leadership.<sup>54</sup>

SSE also reinforced the representation targets described in the CAFDS. It identified the ambitious target to increase the representation of women by 1% annually to reach the target of 25% by 2026.<sup>55</sup> As of 2020, the representation of women only grew by 1% overall to 16%.<sup>56</sup> To meet this target by 2026, the CAF would need to increase women's representation by almost 2% per year. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the target may be out of reach, amplified by the disruptive environment of the COVID-19 pandemic through 2020-21. The target of 25% was ambitious and not likely to be reached within the desired timeframe. While missing the mark will likely be criticized in the media as a failure, the CAF has transitioned to implementing meaningful effort and has laid foundations to understand its own culture and change it.

Also included in SSE was applying Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), an analytical tool aimed at applying gender and intersectional perspectives into policy review and decision making. SSE states GBA+ was used in developing the updated national strategy, and that “First and foremost, the Defence team will apply GBA+ analysis to the full range of programs and services that recruit, support and care for Canadian Armed Forces personnel.”<sup>57</sup> The application of gender perspectives into creating SSE may account for the drastic difference in theme from the Canada First

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<sup>54</sup> SSE 43

<sup>55</sup> SSE 12

<sup>56</sup> 2019-20 DEPARTMENTAL RESULTS REPORT

<sup>57</sup> SSE 24

Defense Strategy. The GBA+ enabled review of CAF policy and procedures related to providing support to members has the potential to improve job satisfaction for members of designated groups measurably.

Basic GBA+ plus training is currently mandatory for all CAF members, and specialized training is provided to designated gender advisors at various levels of command where gender considerations can impact decisions. The required training is fundamental and limited in scope but provides a general understanding of the concept. The CAF priority is currently expanding the application of GBA+ at higher levels of the military, where policies are established and updated.<sup>58</sup> This is where the application can have the broadest impact on the CAF.

### **THE CHALLENGE OF CULTURE CHANGE**

The CAF culture and Canadian culture are not identical, despite all members being Canadian citizens. Military culture is typically slower to change than civil society, so when there is a rapid culture change in a country, a military can be slow to adapt.<sup>59</sup> Several initiatives to address culture change in the CAF have been initiated, such as Operation Honour (Op Honour), Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), and Hateful Conduct.

Culture change in the CAF can gradually occur without intervention if a younger and more diverse generation slowly replaces the older. At this point, we have established that the CAF is still not recruiting enough diversity in its members, with the perceived CAF culture as one of the barriers to recruiting.

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<sup>58</sup> CANADA'S NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY 2017-2022 9

<sup>59</sup> Handbook of the Sociology of the Military 237

In this, we see a small paradox: The CAF needs to recruit more diverse members to help change the culture, but the CAF culture has to change to appeal to more diverse members. To succeed, the CAF must place efforts in both areas concurrently.

Public opinion and the CAF Code of Ethics and Values have been motivating factors for more rapid change within the CAF. The first ethical principle in the CAF Code of Ethics and Values is to *Respect the Dignity of All Persons*.<sup>60</sup> This principle encompasses valuing diversity as a strength and creating a safe and happy work environment. Several studies conducted before the CAFDS and Op Honour indicated the CAF was not meeting its ethical mandate in these regards and were widely reported in public media. The CAF is about to experience another increase in the problem stream of the multiple streams framework.

The CAF conducted a workplace harassment survey in 2012, which revealed a large number of members experienced sexual harassment. The media reaction brought CAF credibility into question regarding dealing with harassment, resulting in the Chief of Defence Staff ordering an external review be conducted within six months. The purpose of the evaluation was to study CAF policy, procedures, and support to victims related to sexual assault or harassment, and assess the effectiveness with which these policies were currently being implemented.<sup>61</sup>

The results of the external review on the CAF and sexual misconduct, chaired by former Chief Justice Marie Deschamps, were released in March of 2015. The report was widely reported in the media, and again the CAF was under immense pressure to address the issue adequately.

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<sup>60</sup> CAF Ethics and Values 9

<sup>61</sup> ERA i

One of the key findings of the External Review Authority (the ERA) is that there is an underlying sexualized culture in the CAF that is hostile to women and LGBTQ members, and conducive to more serious incidents of sexual harassment and assault. Cultural change is therefore key. It is not enough to simply revise policies or to repeat the mantra of “zero tolerance”. Leaders must acknowledge that sexual misconduct is a real and serious problem for the organization, one that requires their own direct and sustained attention.<sup>62</sup>

Detailed in the report were many systemic problems with methods the CAF has used in dealing with sexual harassment and assault. First, the policies and definitions pertaining to sexual behaviours were vague, confusing, or misleading. Without a clear and precise policy, incidents could be open to interpretation or dismissal. Military police were also not adequately trained to conduct investigations effectively, and support to victims was adequate. These issues, coupled with a cumbersome and drawn-out resolution process, resulted in many incidents going unreported due to a lack of confidence in the system.<sup>63</sup> Unreported incidents reinforce the negative aspects of a sexualized culture and prevent culture change. It would be a vital task of the CAF to design a system that members had confidence in and provided better support.

The report provided more than criticism of the CAF system in place for dealing with incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour. Included in the report were ten

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<sup>62</sup> ERA i

<sup>63</sup> ERA iii

recommendations based on the study of other militaries, departments, and the civilian sector. Common themes within the recommendations were to update policy, affect culture change, increase the representation of women in higher ranks, and provide an independent reporting center to improve incident reporting and confidence. Independent of the military chain of command, this center would receive complaints, provide victim support, and advise victims should they wish to formalize their complaint. Without this victim-focused centre, members intimidated by or lacking confidence in their chain of command may not feel empowered to take action, and more importantly, would not receive victim services.

The use of an independent reporting and support centre had been implemented in the US previously and resulted in a significant increase in sexual assault and harassment complaints.<sup>64</sup> Additionally, due to the increased reporting, the US centre has been able to collect more accurate statistical data on victims and perpetrators that better inform the military, government, and the public instead of bi-annual surveys. This reporting system not only forces accountability and transparency but gives the information needed to adjust policy and make targeting efforts.

The first recommendation in the review was to acknowledge that inappropriate sexual conduct is a serious problem that exists in the CAF and undertake to address it.<sup>65</sup> In response to the external review and the statement that the CAF has a highly sexualized culture, then CDS General Tom Lawson stated, “I do not accept from any quarter that this type of behaviour is part of our military culture.”<sup>66</sup> His refusal to accept the report's findings indicates that bias is challenging to overcome when analyzing an internal

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<sup>64</sup> Dod SAPRO annual rpt 2013 p5

<sup>65</sup> ERA i

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problem, and review from an external authority can provide insight that may otherwise be difficult to find.

Leadership must be involved in addressing the issue, and it was not until General Jonathan Vance assumed command of the CAF that Op Honour was released. Op Honour intended to eliminate harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour in the CAF.<sup>67</sup> This very ambitious goal was to be implemented in phases, including revision of all policy and procedure related to inappropriate behaviours and an external Sexual Misconduct Response Centre (SMRC) designed relatively in line with the recommendation from the Deschamps Report. Op Honour accepted all recommendations from the Deschamps Report, although they would not implement them all promptly.

In developing changes to policies and establishing training under Op Honour, a team led by then-senior serving female Major General Christine Whitecross was established. The CAF Strategic Response Team - Sexual Misconduct (CSRT-SM) would temporarily assume responsibility for developing Op Honour strategies and training. Upon implementing Op Honour, the narrative from senior leadership was strongly communicated to every member of the CAF. The consequences of violating the updated policies of Op Honour had clear effects. This deterrent factor was plainly articulated in addition to the Op Honour directive, which states “...all CAF members found guilty of sexual misconduct as defined in ref D, either by summary trial, court-martial or civilian court, shall be issued with a notice of intent (NOI) to recommend release if the incident occurred after 01 Jan 16.”<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> OP Honour p3

<sup>68</sup> Op Honour Frago 3 <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/conflict-misconduct/operation-honour/about-operation-honour/frag-o-003-to-cds-op-order.html>

Op Honour training was developed and is mandatory for all serving members. It required leadership engagement and delivery at all levels of command. Its implementation demonstrated a strong commitment and desire to eliminate inappropriate and harmful behaviour, but it was not without criticism. Former Justice Deschamps criticized the implementation of the SMRC, stating that it was not adequately resourced to support members, nor did it assist members in reporting incidents in a manner in line with her recommendations.<sup>69</sup> A Standing Senate Committee report in 2019 had testimony from several witnesses noting problems with military police training, resources and external oversight of the SMRC, and the preoccupation of military leaders with their primary duties when tasked with supporting Op Honour-related tasks.<sup>70</sup> Additionally, data captured by the SMRC lacked the detail required to support knowledge-based decision-making.

Has Op Honour been effective towards its goal? There are two metrics to discuss related to measuring its success: statistical evidence and cultural perception. A 2018 Statistic Canada Survey on Sexual Misconduct indicated that within the CAF, approximately 1.6% of CAF members were victims of sexual assault, which was not a statistically significant decrease the previous survey in 2016, and women were still four times more likely to be the victim than men.<sup>71</sup> The report did note a drop from 80% in 2016 to 70% in 2018 regarding the number of members who witnessed or were targeted by sexual or discriminative behaviour, with sexual jokes remaining the still the most

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<sup>69</sup> Improving diversity and inclusion in the CAF 39

<sup>70</sup> Sexual harassment and violence in the Canadian armed forces - standing senate committee rpt 2019 19-22

<sup>71</sup> Sexual misconduct in teh armed forces 2018 p3



significant proportion.<sup>72</sup> A continuation of these studies by Statistics Canada will accurately measure the success of the CAF's efforts in future, but the results show only a small impact.

In regards to cultural perception, the results are mixed. According to the 2018 Stats Canada survey, CAF members have a higher degree of confidence that Op Honour will positively impact the future than they did in 2016.<sup>73</sup> With additional plans to improve the resources of the SMRC and reinforcing its independence from the military, the CAF can further enhance both its credibility and support to victims.

Unfortunately, the social perception of progress was derailed in 2020 and 2021, with two consecutive CDSs having allegations of sexual misconduct against them. General Vance, who introduced Op Honour, and his successor Admiral Art MacDonald are both currently the subjects of investigations into sexual misconduct.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, the Chief of Military Personnel, Vice-Admiral Haydn Edmundson is also facing investigation for sexual assault of a subordinate dated to 1991.<sup>75</sup> While none of the three investigations have yet concluded or resulted in charges, the damage to the reputation of the CAF and any progress from Op Honour may be immeasurable.

Highly publicized in national and world media, precise measures of the impact to public opinion have not yet been reported, but it is very likely to have adversely affected recruitment of women in the near term. Even within the CAF, it may negatively affect retention in the coming years, further undoing the progress made since the CAF Diversity Strategy was announced. The resignation of Lieutenant-Colonel Elanor Taylor as a result

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid 3

<sup>73</sup> Ibid 51

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/christine-whitecross-military-sexual-misconduct-1.5949195>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/sexual-assault-allegations-vice-admiral-haydn-edmundson-1.5963430>

of the allegations signals frustration within the CAF. In her resignation letter, which she posted online, Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor stated:

I am sickened by ongoing investigations of sexual misconduct among our key leaders... ..Unfortunately, I am not surprised. I am also certain that the scope of the problem has yet to be exposed. Throughout my career, I have observed insidious and inappropriate use of power for sexual exploitation.<sup>76</sup>

As a well-known leader and an inspiration for women in the CAF, her resignation and public comments will have a resounding effect. If the CAF is to retain talented women for long enough to reach the most senior ranks, tangible and measurable results need to be produced in reducing sexual misconduct.

Despite the embarrassment to the CAF and tarnishing its reputation, there are some positive inferences to make on the recent allegations against CAF senior leaders. It is plausible that without the initiation of Op Honour, and the CAF developing improved reporting methods and encouraging members to take action against sexual misconduct, that these allegations may never have materialized. It can indicate a positive trend in that more victims and bystanders are willing to take action. While Op Honour is leadership-driven, it needs buy-in and support from the bottom up.

It's not enough to rely on punishment and deterrence. In addition to policies, orders and training, we are in the process of adopting a significantly different

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<sup>76</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/eleanor-taylor-canadian-forces-sexual-misconduct-1.5952618>

approach that relies on active and engaged leadership at all levels. Leaders need to drive change by providing vision and a consistent personal example that empowers and inspires subordinates to set the conditions for the elimination of sexual misconduct.<sup>77</sup> - General Vance

In this case, it's not General Vance setting the personal example; it's the victim or bystander that reported it. If Op Honour were to be applauded for any success, it might be that it encouraged members to use the system and take action. If there was sexual misconduct involved in the cases with these senior officers, they should be held to the same accountability for their actions as any member of the CAF.

Op Honour did not eliminate sexual misconduct from the CAF, nor would a realist have that expectation after only five years of development. It was a learning experience for the CAF and has established foundations for the program's successor. Acting CDS Lieutenant-General Wayne Eyre recently announced that Op Honour has culminated.<sup>78</sup> While the program will not be cancelled outright, it is time for a new approach. The following program to influence sexual misconduct and culture change needs to be detailed and thorough and should use intellectual resources external to the CAF, with CAF input. Sufficient time should be taken to understand not only what to achieve but how to achieve it.

The Deschamps Report also mentioned that women need to be represented better in higher ranks. In the CAF, women are underrepresented in senior positions, and still

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<sup>77</sup> Senate standing committee on <https://sencanada.ca/en/Content/Sen/Committee/421/SECD/54156-e>

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/operation-honour-closed-down-1.5962978>

only make 16% of the CAF. Some studies show that the ability for women to advance in a military organization is based on three factors: women's power and status, the ratio of men to women, and sexualization of the work environment.<sup>79</sup> As Deschamps noted the presence of a hyper-masculine and sexualized culture of the CAF, all three categories persist in the CAF to hamper women's ability to advance. Generating more women officers at the highest ranks is not an easy task. Even if the CAF recruiting efforts increased to bring women's representation to 25% by 2026, it would take another 20 years until senior rank representation would be the same.

The next sexual misconduct survey will be very important in assessing the impact of Op Honour. It will be closely examined by media, government, and CAF leaders. Most importantly, it will influence the perception of women and visible minorities that may be considering a future in the CAF.

Op Honour was not the only recent effort by the CAF to change the military culture. A directive named "Hateful Conduct" was also released in 2020. The policy intended to address acts of discrimination or hatred in CAF and eliminate them in the same vein as sexual misconduct. One of the stated goals was to support diversity and inclusion directly.<sup>80</sup> The program clarified the definition of unacceptable conduct, such as racial statements and harassment, but went further to include belonging to organizations associated with hate or discrimination and offensive tattoos.

While not mentioned as a task in the CAFDS to develop a program to address hateful conduct, it supports Goal 2 - *Inculcate a culture of diversity and inclusion*. Hateful conduct significantly affects visible minorities and women in the military, reducing

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<sup>79</sup> The Intertwined Fates of Affirmative Action and the Military 1068

<sup>80</sup> CF Mil Pers Instruction 01/20 – Hateful Conduct 3

operational effectiveness as members are less productive when victims of discrimination. Even more important than maintaining operational effectiveness is the duty of the CAF to provide a safe and healthy work environment for its members. The hateful conduct policy gives mandatory training to all members and importantly educates victims on identifying it.

The processes in Hateful Conduct don't differ from those regarding sexual misconduct. Depending on the severity of a report by a victim, the chain of command has the authority to conduct its own investigation without oversight, which may be a friction point in the future when the integrity of the chain of command and its investigative practices are questioned. The options to victims are to report an incident to their unit, the military police, or a special unit in Ottawa. Regardless, commanding officers are obliged to report all incidents to a central tracking system which in theory will gather information on hateful incidents in the CAF, much like Op Honour. This new policy is still in its infancy, but lessons learned from Op Honour can help to address shortcomings to ensure it had the intended effect.

### **THE CAF COMPARED TO ALLIES**

The CAF and its allies share a common military culture, so comparisons between militaries, diversity strategies, and policy can be easier to make than looking at the private sector. Still, many large corporations and businesses in the private sector are also making efforts to increase the diversity of their workforces and have the potential to reveal effective practices that can benefit the CAF.

The UK, US, and CAF are approaching a shared multiple streams problem with very similar approaches. The key to developing these effective strategies has been incorporating minds from outside of military or government organizations and utilizing

design thinking approaches. The military culture is within a rules-based organization and not necessarily equipped to handle culture change with an unbiased approach. An informed strategy based on research and proven techniques offers hope that the militaries will soon garner more progress in reaching goals for diversity and inclusion. These programs require credible measures of effectiveness, detailed data capture, and informed decisions.

Making comparisons between the CAF and the militaries of similarly diverse nations can introduce some challenges. Not all countries have identical definitions of a visible minority. US military organizations have more prevalent use of the term ethnic minority, and in some cases, the term white includes persons of Hispanic/Latino descent, and in other cases, the Hispanic population is included in its own category. The UK uses the acronym BAME (black, asian, or minority ethnic) to classify visible minorities. This paper will continue to use the term visible minority to describe BAME, and unless expressly noted, will include the Hispanic/Latino population as a visible minority. As it is the fastest-growing segment of the US population, the Hispanic/Latino population becomes an essential factor in measuring diversity.<sup>81</sup>

### **The United Kingdom**

Demographically speaking, the UK is slightly less diverse than Canada, having a more significant proportion of the population being white. Despite this, their population trends are very similar. The UK has a low birth rate and depends on positive net migration to maintain a healthier aged population. Currently, visible minorities represent approximately 13% of the total population in the UK.<sup>82</sup> It is expected that the population

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<sup>81</sup> <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2020/demo/p25-1144.pdf> 7

<sup>82</sup> [https://www.indexmundi.com/united\\_kingdom/demographics\\_profile.html](https://www.indexmundi.com/united_kingdom/demographics_profile.html)

of the UK will increase by 3 million by 2028, with 75% of that growth due to net migration.<sup>83</sup> This equates to an increasingly diverse UK in the future, much like Canada.

The UK military is relatively representative in terms of racial composition, and like Canada, it also suffers from a poor representation of women. According to UK MOD Bi-annual Diversity Statistics in 2020, the UK regular forces were composed of 11% women in the regular force, 15% women in the reserves.<sup>84</sup> Women accounted for 12.6% of all recruits that year. The same report indicated visible minority representation in the regular force was 9.1%, 5.6% in the reserves, and accounted for 11.7% of recruits. This shows slightly positive trends for 2020 towards becoming more diverse, although marginal.

The UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) has set similar goals as the CAF to increase the representation of women and visible minorities, yet have a slightly different approach. Rather than setting a proportion of the force to reach, the UK has set proportional intake goals for recruits. The Armed Forces 2020 target for BAME was 10% and was met at 11.7%. For women recruits, the target was 15% of recruits, but it was not achieved at only 12.6%.<sup>85</sup> The benefit to this alternate target is that it places emphasis on recruitment, as opposed to the CAF target approach to the overall composition of the forces. To reach the 25% goal of women in the CAF, the recruitment target would need to be well over 25% each year. The recruiting elements in the UK have a clear and measurable goal to which

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(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/nationalpopulationprojections/2018based>)

<sup>84</sup> (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-2020/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-1-april-2020#contents>)

<sup>85</sup> *ibid*

they must be accountable. While there is a necessity to improve retention and boost recruitment, the UK has fewer issues with the retention of women.

One notices there is a significant difference between the targets set by MOD and the CAF. The UK military opened all military occupations to women much more recently than the CAF, removing the last restrictions on women in combat roles and special forces between 2016 and 2018.<sup>86</sup> This does not fully account for such a disproportionately low number of serving women but removes a significant barrier to increasing opportunities for women. On announcing the removal of restrictions, the Defence Secretary stated, "For the first time in its history, our armed forces will be determined by ability alone and not gender."<sup>87</sup>

A similarity in UK recruitment policy is that positive discrimination is unlawful. Just as the CAF does not select recruits based on race or gender to make CAF demographics more representative of the population, the UK Employment Equity Act equivalent dictates one cannot recruit targeted applicants from an equal pool based on the desire to improve the representation of specific groups.<sup>88</sup> While the outcome would be advantageous in meeting recruitment goals if the CAF were to establish quotas for women or limits to the acceptance of white male recruits, that policy would be assessed as discriminatory and unfair in terms of equality legislation. Again, as a public institution, the CAF and the UK MOD firmly believe that public career opportunities should remain

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<sup>86</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/oct/25/all-roles-in-uk-military-to-be-open-to-women-williamson-announces>

<sup>87</sup> Bond article

<sup>88</sup> EQUALITY ACT 2010 Section 159.3



equal for all citizens. The elimination of barriers that have caused the current disparity in representation needs to be addressed, rather than creating an unfair employment model.

Before concluding that the UK military has discovered the secret to encouraging visible minorities to enroll, it's essential to understand how their eligibility requirements for service differ from the CAF. A significant contributor to their success was removing restrictions of foreign enrollees by removing a 5-year residency requirement for Commonwealth citizens.<sup>89</sup> Additionally, the UK has increased the maximum permissible intake number from commonwealth members. This effectively permits the UK to recruit members from other countries based on membership in the Commonwealth and gives access to more demographically diverse populations.

Both the UK military and CAF have a higher proportion of women in the reserves. Could the CAF focus on attracting more women to the reserves? The reserve employment model counters some of the perceived barriers to women, such as the need to relocate, spend extended time away from family, and offer a more flexible work schedule. While it may be easier to attract more women to this area, the regular force cannot shirk the responsibility of diversifying and better representing Canadian demographics. Canada has committed to the Women, Peace, and Security Resolution from the United Nations, which seeks to increase women's participation in deployed missions.<sup>90</sup> An employment model that facilitates career transition between regular and reserve forces to fit a member's changing personal circumstances can help reduce these barriers. If a member enrolls and their life circumstances need more flexibility, a transition to the Reserve Force may provide it. This transition is currently possible in today's system, but the transfer to the

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<sup>89</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/armed-forces-to-step-up-commonwealth-recruitment>

<sup>90</sup> Women, Peace, and Security UNSCR – Canadas committment

reserves is much easier than returning to the regular force once a member's circumstances change again.

The draft program in the CAF named "the Journey" in development was alleged to address the career mobility and employment barriers that many members face when challenged with maintaining the work/life/family balance. The Journey, possibly in draft indefinitely, was preached by the CDS as a long-term solution in 2018.<sup>91</sup> Three years later, the program has not been released, and doubts arise whether it has been shelved. Each year that passes without a reformed career path model, the CAF is losing potential enrollees to help reach diversity goals.

### **UK Diversity Strategy**

In 2021, the UK government issued a national vision document entitled "The Integrated Review: Global Britain is a Competitive Age." It provides the framework strategy for the government over the next five-year period, with a focus on foreign policy, defence, national security and international development. A primary focus was to develop capabilities, invest in technology, and adjust to a post-Brexit environment. Of note, the paper made no references to any effort to diversify or be more inclusive to women.<sup>92</sup> This document also informed the next iteration of the Defence Command Paper, which gave specific strategic direction to the military.

Despite these missing elements, the next Defence Command Paper was issued by the Secretary of State, named "Defence in a Competitive Age." It announced significant investment within the MoD towards diversity and inclusion as a necessity for operational

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<sup>91</sup> <https://legionmagazine.com/en/2017/06/caf-needs-to-be-more-diverse-says-general/>

<sup>92</sup> Global Britain in a Competitive Age

effectiveness.<sup>93</sup> The Defence Command Paper officially recognized the need to improve the representation of women and minority groups and indicated a forthcoming Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Much like SSE, directly and publicly announcing the importance of progress in diversity and inclusion was a welcome method of forcing accountability and elevating the political stream pressure. In the executive summary, it stated: "*We recognise that diversity and inclusion is essential to our operational effectiveness and it ensures we can safeguard the security, stability and prosperity of our nation.*"<sup>94</sup>

One other notable component of the Defence Command Paper is the reference to the Wigston Report (described below), a UK counterpart of the Deschamps report. The paper accepts all recommendations from the Wigston report towards inappropriate behavior, just as all of the recommendations from the Deschamps Report were accepted by the CAF.<sup>95</sup> Admitting there is a problem is a first and significant step in fostering change. To support this direction from the MOD, it announced establishing a Diversity and Inclusion Directorate to place focussed effort on driving change within the military.<sup>96</sup> What will be essential for this new directorate to succeed is to be empowered with authority, informed by relevant data, and supported by senior leaders and academics.

### **UK Military Culture Issues**

Following increased public awareness of inappropriate behaviours in the UK Military, The UK Army conducted a sexual harassment survey in 2018. The previous survey conducted in 2015 permitted recent trends to be identified. It reported that 9 in 10

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<sup>93</sup> Defence in a Competitive Age p36

<sup>94</sup> Ibid p

<sup>95</sup> Defence in a Competitive Age p37

<sup>96</sup> Ibid 37

service members experienced general sexualized behaviour, primarily sexual jokes.<sup>97</sup> While the UK Army defines sexual harassment differently than the CAF, it is still relevant to state that in 2018 1% of UK Army servicemen and 15% of servicewomen experienced sexual harassment.<sup>98</sup> For service members that submitted formal complaints, common to both surveys, 70% of victims were dissatisfied with investigations, and 70% were dissatisfied with actions taken against perpetrators.<sup>99</sup> Unsurprisingly, similar conclusions from the UK Army reports and CAF Sexual Misconduct surveys are found: most victims are women, and most perpetrators are men.

Like the CAF, there is a hyper-masculine and sexualized culture in the UK as identified in the Deschamps Report. The UK had a similar internal study conducted named the Wigston Report into Inappropriate Behaviors in 2019. It was commissioned by the MoD and undertaken by Air Marshal Michael Wigston after a 17-year-old female soldier was allegedly sexually assaulted by six male personnel.<sup>100</sup> Given only five weeks to complete the review, Air Marshal Wigston acknowledged the report did not have the scope to develop solutions to change embedded cultures and behaviours and that more study would be required. "...To change embedded cultures and behaviours, a much longer view is necessary; experience among allied armed forces is of a five- to ten-year programme of concerted activity to make a measurable difference and we should be prepared for the same."<sup>101</sup> Despite the short timeframe, the report made a large number of recommendations.

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<sup>97</sup> Army SEXUAL HARASSMENT 2018 REPORT 4

<sup>98</sup> IBD 32

<sup>99</sup> Ibid 5

<sup>100</sup> [independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/army-sexual-assault-soldiers-arrest-attack-mod-military-a8857571.html](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/army-sexual-assault-soldiers-arrest-attack-mod-military-a8857571.html)

<sup>101</sup> Wigston Review 5

The Wigston reports indicated that victims do not have confidence in the systems used to report sexual misconduct. Making references to the Deschamps Report and similar reports from other countries, it identified the following several reasons: fear of adverse consequences on the complainant's career, fear of not being believed, belief that nothing would be done, a lack of transparency in the outcome of a complaint, inadequate or insufficient consequences or disciplinary action, the complaint process not being independent of the chain of command, a lack of anonymity, and the amount time taken to achieve a resolution.<sup>102</sup> The report noted that a complaint of bullying took an average of 53 weeks to resolve. The lack of faith in the system was reinforced by the UK Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey in 2018, which found that approximately 50% of incidents of bullying, harassment, or discrimination were not submitted as formal complaints.<sup>103</sup> If victims are unwilling to seek victim support due to lack of confidence in the system, the military fails to meet its mandate of caring for its soldiers. This also perpetuates inappropriate behaviours and decreases retention. As women are more often the target, the representation in senior ranks will continue to diminish.

Of the 36 recommendations in the Wigston Report, nearly all recommendations are precisely noted in the Deschamps report, indicating both militaries experience the same barriers to supporting victims and having visibility on the extent of the problem. Several of the recommendations pertain to the management of information and reorganization of data collection. Of note, Recommendation 1.1 states:

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<sup>102</sup> Wigston 23

<sup>103</sup> Wigston 8

Defence must improve the level of detail and metadata captured on serious unacceptable behaviour as well as instances of lower severity, to provide a single comprehensive picture of inappropriate behaviours across the organisation.<sup>104</sup>

Having the benefit of reviewing the CAF's and other allies' efforts to eliminate harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour (HISB) over the last five years, the Wigston report had four other recommendations related to the gathering of data through the use of surveys and interviews with its members. At the time, the UK military branches conducted separate surveys, using different definitions for types of sexual misconduct. The CAF has recently used more detailed bi-annual surveys on sexual misconduct, retention, job satisfaction, and family health than in previous years. The data gain has led to a better understanding of the successes and areas to improve policies like Op Honour and enhance job satisfaction. Without more fulsome data to inform the decision-making process and indicate progress or problem areas, the CAF would be pursuing a trial and error approach that would be more harmful than productive.

The CAF has identified the importance of relevant data to enable informed decisions and identifies concrete cultural and behavioural changes in Op Honour, SSE, and the CAFDS. To assess the success of a new policy it is paramount to have measures of effectiveness that can rely on qualitative and quantitative data. It is not only essential to know if there are more or fewer instances of inappropriate behaviour, but knowing more specific details such and types of inappropriate behaviour, by whom, where, and when,

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<sup>104</sup> Wigston 7

and the circumstances can focus efforts where the most significant effect is required. The CAF has much more potential to collect this information and develop alternative methods to measure conduct, climate, and culture.

Several other recommendations identify the need for a central oversight body responsible for cultural oversight and inappropriate behaviour. This external body would manage the overarching strategy, ensure the military branches have a unified approach, handle support services, complaints, and require approximately 50 qualified and experienced people.<sup>105</sup> In the CAF, this has partially been implemented through Op Honour, yet the CSRT-SM and SMRC are not entirely external bodies.

"I am accepting the recommendations of the report in full, including creating a Defence Authority to provide centralised oversight of their implementation. Detailed work on the design of this body and its responsibilities is now under way."<sup>106</sup>

-Penny Mordaunt, Secretary of State for Defence

With the UK embarking on a similar journey as the CAF in addressing sexual misconduct and improving diversity, it will be essential to study their progress. The CAFDS Action Plan assigns the task to senior leaders in the CAF to monitor and study like-minded allies in these efforts.<sup>107</sup> The next stage in the UK's efforts to eliminate sexual misconduct, provide service to victims, and re-evaluate investigations, trials, and

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<sup>105</sup> Wigston 31

<sup>106</sup> <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2019-07-15/HCWS1720>

<sup>107</sup> CAFDS annex B p1

oversight will be of interest to the CAF. Innovative ideas from allies and external institutions can inform the CAFs processes and identify superior methods congruent with the CAF structure.

The UK is a close ally of Canada and shares many of the same demographics and societal values. While both nations seek to meet similar goals of diversity and inclusion, the sharing of strategies and learning from each other's success and failures over the next five years can help goals be reached.

### **THE UNITED STATES**

The United States (US) has a similar history as Canada regarding its population. Both nations are multicultural, with shrinking white majority populations, and have similar birth rates and immigration trends. According to the US Census Bureau, 39.9% of citizens belong to an ethnic minority group.<sup>108</sup> Like Canada, most US visible minorities are concentrated in major urban centres and southern border regions.<sup>109</sup>

Immigration trends in the US are very comparable to Canada. The US has a significant reliance on immigration to maintain a healthy population, and it is projected that immigration will be the most significant contributor to the US population growth over the next 50 years.<sup>110</sup> In 2017, the foreign-born citizen population was 13.7%.<sup>111</sup> The population that identifies as non-Hispanic white is continuing to shrink, while the Hispanic/Latino population continues to grow. By 2060, it is estimated by the US Census Bureau that non-Hispanic whites will be a minority group based on current trends.<sup>112</sup> As

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<sup>108</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045219>

<sup>109</sup> (<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/08/20/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/>)

<sup>110</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/08/20/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/>

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/04/11/6-demographic-trends-shaping-the-u-s-and-the-world-in-2019/>

<sup>112</sup> <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2020/demo/p25-1144.pdf>



Canada has similar trends regarding the diversity of its population, the US Department of Defence (DoD) makes a suitable candidate for comparisons to the CAF in its diversity effort.

Like the CAF, the US military has committed to increasing the inclusion of women and visible minorities progressively since President Truman called for an end to racial segregation in 1948.<sup>113</sup> While the US path has been more tumultuous than Canada, imbued with greater racial and gender inequality, the two militaries are now similar enough to warrant comparison of policies and practices designed to improve diversity.

One significant difference between the CAF and the US Military is the number of members and the immense population difference between the two countries. The CAF has roughly 100,000 regular and reserve force personnel, which is dwarfed by the 1.3 million active-duty and 1 million reserve members in the US military as of 2018.<sup>114</sup> The military is also a much less isolated and obscure component of US society. Service in the armed forces and knowledge of the military is much also more pervasive than in Canada, which can make recruiting easier.

The demographics of visible minorities and women in the US military have some similarities and significant differences. From 2000-2018, the ethnic minority representation in the US military active-duty personnel has remained relatively stable, currently at 47.1% (including 16.1% Hispanic/Latino).<sup>115</sup> The proportion of women serving on active duty also rose from 14.6% to 16.5% over the same time period.<sup>116</sup> The

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<sup>113</sup> Daniel P. McDonald, and Kizzy M. Parks. *Managing Diversity in the Military : The Value of Inclusion in a Culture of Uniformity*. Routledge, 2012.

<sup>114</sup> Demographics p3

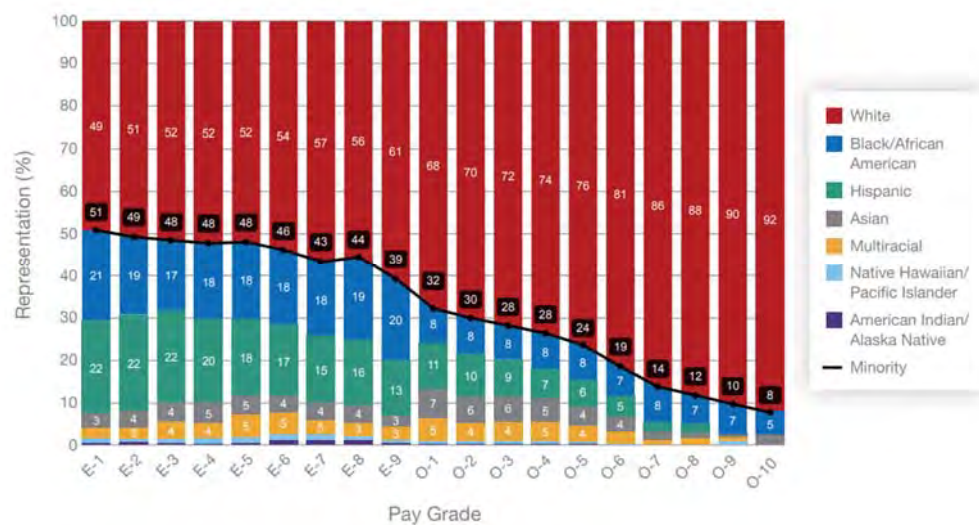
<sup>115</sup> <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2018-demographics-report.pdf> p24

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. 41

US military has had similar challenges in growing the number of women in the US military, and a significant focus of recent efforts has been towards improving the representation of visible minorities.

### Diversity Efforts

At first glance, one immediately notices that the US military has exceeded having a visible minority population representing the civilian population. While it is true that the overall numbers support this, a more detailed look shows significant disparity. In the officer corps, visible minorities are underrepresented, while enlisted ranks represent the US civilian population more closely.<sup>117</sup> When analyzing the visible minority representation of both enlisted and officers by rank, there is a clear trend of increasingly disparate representation in higher ranks as shown in Figure 6.1. DoD acknowledges it has much work to do to foster a diverse and inclusive military across all ranks, despite success in having diverse enlisted personnel.



**Figure 6.1 - Racial and Ethnic Representation of Active Component Enlisted and Officer Personnel, by Pay Grade, 2020**

Source: DMCC, updated (2020 data)

<sup>117</sup> DOD-DIVERSITY-AND-INCLUSION-FINAL-BOARD-REPORT viii

The US military has put in significant effort over the last decades to increase diversity. Diversity issues continue to rise in prominence in problem and policy streams, and attention to the subject is growing. In 2009, the US Congress tasked the Military Leadership and Diversity Commission (MDLC) to conduct a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of policies that provide opportunities for the promotion and advancement of minority members of the Armed Forces, including minority members who are senior officers.<sup>118</sup> The MDLC was composed of serving and retired members across all services, academics, and corporate leaders.

The MDLC released its final report in 2011, which gave four explanations as to why visible minorities and females were poorly represented in senior officer ranks. It indicated lower numbers of the designated groups at enrollment, lower representation of designated groups in occupations that typically advance to senior positions, lower retention rates, and lower advancement rates.<sup>119</sup> These explanations did little to explain the factors that caused them, such as potentially biased promotion processes, but identified the problem areas that would require further investigation.

The report investigated the promotion process to explain why women and visible minorities did not advance at the same rate through senior officer ranks. It concluded there were adequate regulations and measures in place by the selection board process to eliminate bias towards individuals.<sup>120</sup> This is notable as several years later, the Secretary of Defence would have a different perspective on bias in promotion boards.

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<sup>118</sup> From Diversity to Inclusion Final Report 2012 xiii

<sup>119</sup> MDLC Final rpt

<sup>120</sup> 77 MDLC final report

The Commission examined corporate industry practice and concluded that the personal engagement of top leadership is the single most crucial factor in achieving diversity and inclusion across any organization.<sup>121</sup> For a new strategic policy to have the most significant effect, it would require the senior leadership be committed to ensuring it is effective. The primary office responsible for diversity management at that time had become ineffective and isolated through a series of reorganizations.<sup>122</sup> Without an empowered office to manage diversity efforts, there was a lack of a strategic plan.

To supplement the MLDC final report, the DoD issued a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy plan in 2012. It contained three goals:

- Ensure Leadership Commitment to an Accountable and Sustained Diversity Effort
- Employ an Aligned Strategic Outreach Effort to Identify, Attract, and Recruit from a Broad Talent Pool Reflective of the best of the Nation We Serve
- Develop, Mentor, and Retain Top Talent from Across the Total Force.<sup>123</sup>

Much Like the CAF Diversity Programme, the 2012 plan did not dictate specific methods to the military branches but instead issued problems for leaders to solve. This gave appreciation for the differences between the services and their unique challenges. A key aspect of Goal 1 is that it places accountability on the service leadership. Each service must formulate its action plan and communicate the processes and both short and long goals to achieve across DoD and external stakeholders. This enables sharing best practices, standardizes metrics, and critically places responsibility on leadership to make

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<sup>121</sup> 96 MDLC Final report

<sup>122</sup> MDLC 96

<sup>123</sup> MDLC

positive changes. To credit the CAFDS, it also included suggested metrics in its action plan regarding all tasks contain within it,

Goal 2 focuses on recruiting underrepresented groups, which is a necessary investment to make diversity progress. In a study of the 2012 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Plan, the Rand Corporation suggested targeted outreach as an effective method.<sup>124</sup> While the US military is also restricted from selecting recruits based on gender, race, or disability according to equal opportunity regulations, outreach targets advertising and attraction that conforms to the rules. The CAF practices this in recruiting from Canada's Aboriginal population but has not been significantly applied to other designated groups.

Goal 3 has implications regarding the training and retention of skilled members. It outlines plans to adjust the work environment to meet generational changes and appeal to younger generations. DoD admits a mindset difference between baby boomers and millennials, and its workplace needs to adapt to continue to retain skilled and diverse individuals.<sup>125</sup> Eventually, millennials will be the senior leaders in the military, and it's essential to retain the most talented individuals. An additional component of Goal 3 is if a member lacks education, qualification, or experience to progress, that member should be trained and mentored. Mentoring also avoids conflict with equal opportunity restrictions in that it invests in talent and diversity to make members more competitive for promotion but still selects them fairly based on performance and ability. The CAFDS identifies the need to develop a mentoring plan similarly, but transparency on its progress remains elusive.

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<sup>124</sup> Rand Implementation of the DoD Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan p37

<sup>125</sup> 2012 Diversity Strategy p 9

Unfortunately, the US diversity strategy was overdue to be updated by 2017, and the momentum for change stalled. This may represent a temporary reduction in policy stream pressure. In 2020, the Secretary of defence issued a memo to reinvigorate the process and assess success to date.<sup>126</sup> Essentially, this action restarted the process of conducting a study, followed by the formulation of a strategy to implement a new diversity plan. The memo requested the service branches to identify barriers to diversity for which immediate actions could be taken. It also announced the forming of a DoD Board of Diversity and Inclusion to conduct an in-depth assessment of policies, processes, and progress of improving racial diversity in the services. Lastly, it announces the forming of an enduring Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Services that would be empowered to perform constant study, evaluation, and make recommendations regarding improving diversity.

The response from the services on immediate actions resulted in a swift response to make small adjustments and a review of policy and effectiveness. The Secretary of Defence directed that promotion board material would no longer have personnel photos, or any racially or ethnically identifying components.<sup>127</sup> This was an effort to remove bias towards promotion selection and eradicate a clear barrier to equitable treatment. The action did not go further to remove names, which can still introduce bias based on gender or ethnic background. CAF promotion boards also do not include photos, but this has been standard practice and not a recent adjustment.

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<sup>126</sup> Actions for Improving Diversity and Inclusion in the Department of Defense 2020

<sup>127</sup> Immediate Actions to Address Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the Military Services 2020 p 2

The Secretary's direction also ordered hairstyle and facial hair restrictions to be reviewed to remove racial or religious bias. The CAF recently reduced similar grooming restrictions for both men and women and has long permitted cultural and religious grooming practices for Sikh and Indigenous members. This action can prevent the de-feminizing of women and promote the inclusion of feminine qualities in a male-dominated environment. It may seem like a minimal gesture, but it was very significant for women who were forced to hide their physical characteristics by the previous restrictions.

Also, key in the Secretary's direction was the inclusion of bystander intervention training and increased data collection through surveys. In the CAF, bystander training was developed and implemented under the auspices of Op HONOUR four years earlier.<sup>128</sup> To help stop negative behaviours and encourage retention, this was an important and quick-fix step to empower service members to impact culture change.

The Board of Diversity and Inclusion had six months to generate its final report following direction from the Defence Secretary. In preparation, the board solicited input from all serving members on the subject of fostering diversity and inclusion through crowdsourcing and survey initiatives.<sup>129</sup> This final report was very comprehensive, drawing on years of academic work and informed by leaders in diversity and inclusion, senior military and DoD leaders, and input from approximately 60,000 service members. In the final report were 15 recommendations under the six focus areas.

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<sup>128</sup> Missing the Point: A Critical Reflection on Operation HONOUR and Reactions to Military Sexual Misconduct by Veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces, p83

<sup>129</sup> Vergun, David. *Diversity, Inclusion Board Seeks Input from all DOD Personnel*. District of Columbia: Newstex, 2020. <https://search-proquest-com.cfc.idm.oclc.org/blogs-podcasts-websites/diversity-inclusion-board-seeks-input-all-dod/docview/2443531878/se-2?accountid=9867>.

The Final Report was structured to address diversity and inclusion on racial and ethnic origins primarily. It makes one observation comparing the male and female promotion rates for different racial and ethnic groups, which shows both women and minority groups are promoted at a proportionally lower rate than non-Hispanic white officers.<sup>130</sup> There was little focus on improving female representation and inclusion. However, the value in such a comprehensive study can undoubtedly be applied to the CAF in many regards.

In seeking a comparison between the DoD and CAF diversity strategies, the current US strategy from 2012 is outdated and well overdue to be updated. If we compare the 2012 strategy to the CAFDP, the similarities are strong. The critical areas of recruitment, retention, and leadership-driven change resound through both documents. The need for detailed data collection and appropriate metrics will be needed to gauge success. The anticipated new diversity plan will be of great interest to the CAF, seeing how their previous strategy preceded the CAF and captured such similarity.

The problems the US military has with diversity versus those in the CAF are different. The US has a good overall representation of visible minorities, except in officer ranks. The participation of women in the military is roughly on par with the CAF, well below desired levels. In the CAF, women and visible minorities are underrepresented overall across all ranks. Both nations have conducted studies that identify the military culture as being a key component that needs to be changed.

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<sup>130</sup> DoD report on inclusion and diversity P 11



## **Sexual Misconduct in the US Military**

Just as the CAF has made efforts to eliminate sexual misconduct in the workplace through Op Honour, the US military has been making similar efforts. Following highly publicized sexual misconduct incidents involving the US military in the 1990s and 2000s, DoD increased efforts to identify the problem. In 2004, DoD ordered a study to recommend changes required to improve prevention, promote reporting, and enhance support to victims.<sup>131</sup> The recommendations identified similar shortcomings in how DoD handled sexual misconduct. Similar to the finding of the Deschamps report, it noted many cases were not reported, policies and data management across services were inconsistent, and support to victims was not sufficient. The report highlighted the need for an independent, external authority to handle reporting, policies, and training. As a result, the organization now known as the Sexual Assault Prevention Response Office (SAPRO) was formed.

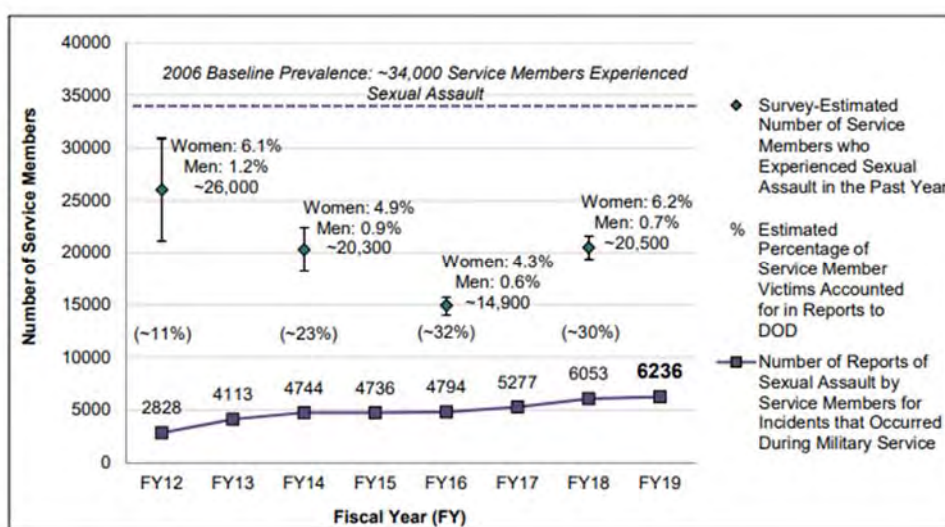
SAPRO is more in line with the organization that the Deschamps report envisioned implemented through Op Honour. Adequately resourced and victim-oriented, SAPRO can provide an external location that victims can report to, get advice on making an informed decision whether to make an official complaint and most importantly, access victim services with confidentiality. In 2017, all victims indicated that they would not have reported sexual misconduct if the only means had been through a formal report, which only 24% of them did.<sup>132</sup> One organization that receives reports, gathers information, and controls policy and procedures for the military is better informed on trends and progress in reducing incidents of sexual misconduct.

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<sup>131</sup> Task force report on victims of sexual assault vii

<sup>132</sup> Wigston report 24

Sexual misconduct reports and estimates are higher in the US military than in the CAF, but this does not mean it is less of a problem. Both militaries report a higher rate of sexual misconduct than civilian rates. A survey conducted by the Rand Corporation in 2014 indicated approximately 4.7% of active-duty women and 1% of men experienced sexual assault in that year.<sup>133</sup> In the annual report from SAPRO in 2019, the previous ten years of reported sexual misconduct versus estimated unreported incidents are shown in Figure 6.2.



**Figure 6.2 – Active Duty Estimated Biennial Prevalence Compared to Annual Reporting of Sexual Assault**

Source: DoD FY2019 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military, 6.

This figure shows a gradual increase in reports over time, but not necessarily an increase in estimated unreported incidents. The variation in the estimates makes it difficult to make inferences of the success SAPRO has had in reducing sexual misconduct, but the increase in reports is promising. According to the International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, SAPRO's efforts resulted in little change to the

<sup>133</sup> Rand sexual assault in the military 2014 9

military culture surrounding sexual misconduct since it was first created.<sup>134</sup> What it has done, however, is establish a common understanding of definitions of sexual misconduct across all services and standardized information gathering. This leads to better qualitative and quantitative data for analysis. Additionally, according to focus groups run annually by SAPRO, victims that access its services are satisfied with the service they receive.<sup>135</sup> Victims are also not required to make a formal report to access victim services. If victims have more confidence in the system to provide support and not fear negative consequences, they are more likely to seek it. While SAPRO did not eliminate sexual misconduct, it has provided valuable victim-oriented support to members that need it.

SAPRO conducts a Workplace Gender Relations Assessment each year, surveying active-duty and reserve force members on workplace climate issues, sexual misconduct, gender integration, barriers, and many other metrics that can assist in developing future policies. While the CAF SMRC does not currently implement a similar information gathering system, it would benefit from studying the US assessments to make inferences on actions the CAF may undertake. While not identical, US and Canadian military culture do have similarities, specifically when it comes to social and integration trends.

Is it fair to compare the CAFs SMRC with SAPRO? The US military has much more resources and time at its disposal to build the capacity of SAPRO, and currently has the authority to make adjustments to military policy and training regarding sexual misconduct. Currently, this responsibility in the CAF is still retained by the military

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<sup>134</sup> Examining United States military sexual misconduct policy processes 242

<sup>135</sup> [https://www.sapr.mil/sites/default/files/1\\_Department\\_of\\_Defense\\_Fiscal\\_Year\\_2019\\_Annual\\_Report\\_on\\_Sexual\\_Assault\\_in\\_the\\_Military.pdf](https://www.sapr.mil/sites/default/files/1_Department_of_Defense_Fiscal_Year_2019_Annual_Report_on_Sexual_Assault_in_the_Military.pdf) 17

SRMT-SM. The SMRC is still in its infancy, but needs to be empowered, conduct its own research, and expand its mandate.

As the US DoD has immense intellectual resources at its disposal, it will be necessary for the CAF to examine the next strategy it releases closely. While the US and Canada have cultural differences, the challenge of changing military culture is shared. That which works in the US may not necessarily work in Canada, but any success the US has in increasing diversity, eliminating sexual misconduct, and changing military culture merits examination.

### **REACHING CRITICAL MASS**

The CAF has a monumental problem in addressing its need for culture change, and it can't solely rely on a leadership-driven top-down method. The CAF culture is a significant impediment to expanding diversity and can be augmented by a bottom-up approach. Not discounting the valuable efforts and progress the CAF has made in establishing more inclusive policies and understanding that culture change is a long-term commitment, the last five years have seen only margin improvement. Admittedly, culture change requires time and effort to change the structure, processes, and military work environment. To facilitate culture change, the CAF must make a more substantial approach to recruiting while continuing to develop strategies to boost retention and diversity.

Critical mass theory in nuclear physics refers to the amount of a substance to enable a continuous chain reaction. When applied to cultural dynamics, critical mass refers to the amount of representation that minority groups need in order to accelerate or

sustain cultural changes, approximately 30%.<sup>136</sup> Dr. Grazia Scoppio is a nationally recognized leader in military diversity and organizational culture. For years she has published articles and conducted research on promoting women and visible minority representation in the CAF. When speaking to the Standing Committee on National Defence, she stated: "As long as we don't have a critical mass of women or visible minorities or indigenous members, it's very hard to change a culture. Once that critical mass is achieved, I think it will be a lot easier to change the culture of the organization."<sup>137</sup>

Meeting the representation goals the CAF has set for women, visible minorities, and aboriginals is critical to reaching this critical mass and accelerate the culture change being enacted by strategic direction like CAFDS and SSE. What is lacking is proper investment in recruiting systems, targeted outreach, and efficient use of existing opportunities.

The CAFDS Action Plan listed over 80 tasks to senior leaders to promote diversity in the CAF, yet there was no announcement of additional resources to support them. The CAF is a high-tempo organization with many operational commitments and competing priorities. While the strategy's intent is clear, resources allocated towards achieving the goals have not been augmented. A number of these tasks will require additional resources applied to them to generate the focus and attention in a resource-constrained organization.

The Canadian Forces Recruiting Group (CFRG) is responsible for recruiting efforts across Canada, operating in small detachments in major urban

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<sup>136</sup> The Story of the Theory of Critical Mass 494

<sup>137</sup> Improving Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Forces 48

centers. It will be key for the CAF to attract talented and diverse recruiters to these locations. Working at a recruiting center currently offers no career benefit, and lacking the opportunity for deployment or high range employment generally equates to a stalling of career progression. If the CAF were to incentivize recruiting positions like training cadre positions or operational deployments, it would attract more talented personnel while still advancing their careers. Secondly, if women and visible minorities were employed in these positions, it would make outreach to these groups more effective in addition to enhancing their competitiveness at promotion boards.

Targeting outreach methods have successfully been conducted by the CAF for years. Aboriginal youth programs such as Bold Eagle are well known in aboriginal communities, have strong participation, and contribute to the representation of aboriginals in the CAF. This method of outreach should be expanded to visible minority communities and women in general. Women's outreach programs similar to the Women In Force Programme can be tailored to operate in community and academic institutions across the country and educate women on the CAF opportunities with a personal experience.

Since CFRG is responsible for the recruiting effort, countless missed opportunities can be taken advantage of with very little investment. For example, regular and reserve force units conduct community relations activities year-round, with no emphasis on recruiting or outreach to designated groups. These events are often tasked to "whoever is available" and not assigned in a manner to support strategic goals. If CFRG were to have oversight of these activities, it could greatly assist in messaging and encourage more women and visible minorities to be tasked

to engage with the public. Ultimately, this would portray a positive image of a diverse and inclusive military. This is not to suggest the CAF try to deceive the public and create a false impression of the diversity in the CAF, but it would be in line with recruiting advertisements currently produced. With CFRG resources inadequate to conduct this wide range of activities on their own, utilizing and shaping the efforts of other units is an efficient method to multiply their effect.

### **CONCLUSION**

Changing policies, educating personnel on diversity, inclusion, and applying gender-based analysis methods contribute to changing the military culture to a culture more attractive to a diverse Canada. While the vision is evident in SSE and the CAFDS, resources to meet these goals will also need to be allocated.

External reviews have been a driving force in accountability in the CAF and its allies. Often the most important lessons have come from external sources that do not hold the same bias present when the CAF is self-reflective. The CAF, like most militaries, is not well equipped to identify its problems with an internal lens but has been very proactive in accepting criticism and taking corrective action upon its receipt. The CAF must continue to seek out criticism. Additionally, the CAF must be accountable for its efforts. Transparency must be a priority in the progress of the goals of the diversity strategy. Updates on the progress of the action plan need to be published to demonstrate momentum is maintained and soothe the problem stream. Leaders must be accountable, or the program risks failing like efforts in the past by the CAF and allies.

If the CAF is serious about reaching target goals of representation, more resources must be allocated to outreach and targeted recruitment. This is not solely relying on the diffusion of women and visible minorities into the CAF by treating symptoms of a non-

inclusive culture, but must include actively seeking them out, which will accelerate culture change.

Understanding that the CAF only recently initiated efforts towards the goals in the CAF diversity strategy, patience must be maintained as progress will be slow. Goal 1 of understanding the military culture is one that should never be considered as *accomplished*. It is a goal that must be continually assessed, as culture is not static and will continue changing as demographics and generations change. The CAF must develop a culture that doesn't reach an end state, one that can remain flexible and enduring while reflecting the values of the population it serves

It is apparent that time and effort was expended on developing the CAF Diversity Strategy Action Plan, as the tasks assigned within it may have a combined impact of long-term diversity in the CAF. There is a clear aim to address barriers, evolve the CAF culture, and improve equity for all members. As it is expected for the multiple streams framework to keep the issue of diversity in the CAF in the spotlight, the strategy will require continuous assessment and study that external entities are well suited to provide. The upcoming criticism for failure to meet current diversity goals should only strengthen the CAF resolve.



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