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## ARE THE PERSONEL OBJECTIVES IN STRONG SECURE ENGAGED ATTAINABLE?

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### JCSP 44

#### *Exercise Solo Flight*

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### PCEMI 44

#### *Exercice Solo Flight*

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By Major Alexandre Forest

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## ARE THE PERSONNEL OBJECTIVES IN STRONG SECURE ENGAGED ATTAINABLE?

### INTRODUCTION

With the introduction of the latest Defence Policy, *Strong Secure Engaged* (SSE), the government has pledged to put the soldiers first and invest in their personnel in an effort to increase recruitment and retention. This is another attempt to resolve a systemic problem which has plagued the organization over the last twenty years and for which there does not seem to be an easy solution. In accordance with the last three Auditor General's reports on the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) recruitment and retention, the CAF has continuously struggled to meet its recruitment targets and has not implemented the majority of its retention strategy, begging the question as to whether they will succeed this time. Over the same period, the gap between the Established Strength and the Trained Effective Strength (TES) has generally increased yearly,<sup>1</sup> compounding the issue of personnel satisfaction and retention.

As the gap furthers, the implementation of new measures become more and more difficult as they all require some level of personnel commitment to implement them. In SSE, the Government announced an increase of 3,500 Regular Force (RegF) personnel, as well as an increased representation of three of the Employment Equity (EE) groups. While the policy mentions the intent to increase the representation of visible minority and indigenous Canadians, the focus has been put on the representation of women. At the time SSE was published, women represented approximately 15% of the total force and the goal was set to increase the percentage by 1% per year until 2026 in order to reach a

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<sup>1</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *Report 5, Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment and Retention - National Defence, of the Fall 2016 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada* (Canada. Parliament. Committee Reports, 2017), 22.

total of 25%. This paper does not intend to analyze whether the increase representation in EE groups is beneficial for the CAF, but rather whether the overall recruitment goals identified for the RegF are achievable. This paper will show that unless drastic recruitment and retention measures are implemented, the CAF will not be able to achieve the goals identified in SSE given the current organizational environment. The paper will start by analyzing the challenge of growing the overall CAF population, including the issue created by a high number of technical occupations being stressed. Then, it will look into the specific problem of increasing women's representation and what retention measures could be implemented. Finally, it will make the case that another way to achieve growth and stop the attrition of technicians, would be to focus on implementing a retention measure called the Lateral Progression System (LPS) as proposed by The Journey.

## **RECRUITING CHALLENGES**

The suggestion that the recruitment and retention of soldiers was now a priority is not the first time that a government has made this commitment in its defence policy. In 2005, this goal was also identified as part of the *Canada First Defence Strategy*<sup>2</sup> and the CAF has had more than a decade to implement changes with little success, as pointed out by the 2016 Auditor General Report on Recruitment and Retention.<sup>3</sup> With the publishing of SSE, the Department of National Defence (DND) not only identified that it was committed to address these issues this time, but that it would also increase the RegF ranks by another 3,500 soldiers starting in 2018-2019.<sup>4</sup> In this section, the paper will present

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<sup>2</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *Report 2, National Defence Military Recruiting and Retention, of the May 2006 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada* (Canada. Parliament. Committee Reports, 2017), 50.

<sup>3</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2016 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 24.

<sup>4</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged - Canada's Defence Policy*, 2017, 16.

some of the historical barriers that have existed and how they still affect the organization today and what could be done to affect change.

To understand some of today's recruiting challenges, it is important to review personnel trends since 2005, as they have a direct impact on the CAF's ability to meet its personnel goals identified in SSE. In 2005, the CAF TES was approximately 87 percent compared to its historical level of 92 percent. After four years of intense recruiting efforts, the CAF had only been able to reverse its attrition by 700 soldiers as a result of a high number of retirements and releases.<sup>5</sup> Already then, the CAF was in the difficult situation of being unable to regain a TES level above 90%, which is the threshold used to categorize the organization as being stressed.<sup>6</sup> In 2016, when the Auditor General reviewed the statistics from 2011-2016, it determined that the trend identified in 2005 was still ongoing and the CAF was unable to recruit more personnel than those retiring. While the CAF met the recruiting targets in certain occupations, 44 of them were still showing negative attrition,<sup>7</sup> creating an imbalance within the CAF. Based on this information, it raises the question of whether this situation is created by the CAF's inability to attract enough applicants or by a troubled recruiting process which underperforms year after year. While the recruiting process has been shown to have systemic flaws which prevent some qualified applicants from being enrolled<sup>8</sup> and cause others to withdraw their application due to delays,<sup>9</sup> these issues did not seem to be the principal cause of failure in increasing the CAF's manning.

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<sup>5</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2006 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 51.

<sup>6</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2016 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 6.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

As per the 2005 and 2016 Auditor General report, it was assessed that the RegF had a sound process, called the *Strategic Intake Plan* (SIP), to identify its yearly personnel intake requirements. The problem identified was that the process had been routinely handcuffed through budget and personnel restrictions, causing the recruitment targets to be lowered to match the training system capacity and not the actual needs.<sup>10</sup> Although the Recruiting Group has met its target year after year and generally attracted a sufficient number of applicants, the lower intake numbers and the difficulty to recruit qualified applicants for stressed occupations has caused the RegF manning problem to grow.<sup>11</sup> It is therefore clear that in order to regain a positive growth, the CAF needs to find solutions to increase its training capacity in order to enable a greater intake. Additionally, there needs to be a more focussed recruiting campaign for stressed occupations which can also be helped by retention measures. In accordance with the direction in SSE, the 2018-2019 SIP has already set a recruiting target to permit growth, but cautions that its success is dependent on the follow-on trade school's ability to absorb the additional recruits.<sup>12</sup> With the latest commitment in SSE, it is assumed that budget restrictions for the training units will no longer be a concern, but a more challenging issue remains the lack of training staff.

As identified in 2002, the Basic Recruit School was able to adapt quickly to an increase in recruits being enrolled, but the follow-on schools did not show the same capacity, creating delays in the training of recruits.<sup>13</sup> One of the challenges in increasing the training capacity in follow-on schools is the need to augment the permanent staff with

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 10; Auditor General of Canada, *2006 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 53.

<sup>11</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2016 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 15.

<sup>12</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "Strategic Intake Plan FY 18-19," n.d., 2.

<sup>13</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2006 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 63.

soldiers from operational units. With 40 occupations being identified as stressed in 2018,<sup>14</sup> the operational units are already overwhelmed and cannot detach additional soldiers to their respective schools. Faced with this problem, the CAF will have to decide whether it is willing to temporarily reduce the operational tempo to free soldiers for training tasks or take a long-term approach. The long-term approach which would first focus on retention measures and would permit the stabilization of specific trades in order to enable a significant intake increase later on. As demonstrated above, the CAF is faced with a difficult problem which is only made more complex by the CAF's willingness to tackle concurrently its goal to increase female representation to 25% by 2026.

## **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF WOMEN**

Recognizing the need for systemic changes and the benefits this will bring to the organization, the CAF is now determined more than ever to increase its representation of women from 15% to 25% in ten years,<sup>15</sup> a recurring goal which has not been successful in the past.<sup>16</sup> Unlike the issues affecting overall recruitment and training presented above, the real challenge in increasing the women's representation is not in the system's capacity to accept more, but in the number being attracted. This section will show that in order to attract more women, the CAF will have to make significant changes to its recruiting methods and implement organizational changes to promote the retention of women in the CAF. Where this challenge is similar to the one above, is that it will require a significant number of serving women to participate in these efforts. Therefore, the

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<sup>14</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "Strategic Intake Plan FY 18-19 - Annex A - Regular Force Intake Plan Summary," n.d., 2-3.

<sup>15</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, *SSE*, 12.

<sup>16</sup> Auditor General of Canada, "Report 5—Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment and Retention—National Defence," 2016, 5.25, [http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl\\_oag\\_201611\\_05\\_e\\_41834.html](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_201611_05_e_41834.html).

challenge will be to retain a sufficient number to fill the recruiting tasks as well as keep women in operational positions.

If the CAF is serious about increasing the representation of women in the CAF, it must move away from simply establishing a generic goal of 1% increase per year, but instead establish realistic goals per occupation. To have a positive effect, women's representation must be done throughout the organization<sup>17</sup> and not only within the current six occupations where they tend to gravitate towards.<sup>18</sup> Unlike a more generic goal, this option presents a much more difficult challenge to accomplish, but one that will have a greater impact regardless of the overall percentage of women serving. By concentrating women in a few number of trades, the CAF is not only perpetrating stereotypes but it also prevents women's ability to rise through the ranks as they are continuously competing for the same high ranking positions and cannot leverage the abundance available to bigger occupations.<sup>19</sup>

From an institutional perspective, the CAF will need to review many of its personnel policies which were purposefully intended to be gender neutral. While their intent was to promote the integration and retention of women, some have resulted in the discrimination of one of the genders by not taking into account the reality of gender differences. In order to fully integrate and therefore attract and retain women, the CAF must be willing to embrace the difference between men and women.<sup>20</sup> As presented above, the efforts required to increase the women's representation extend far beyond the

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<sup>17</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2016 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 10.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>19</sup> Lynn Bradley, "Research and Evidence-Based Advice to the SOPG Recruiting," August 16, 2017, 2.

<sup>20</sup> Victoria Fraser, "Work-Family Decision-Making Processes in Dual-Income Couples: A Look at the Male Dominated Work Environment" n.d., 10.

problem of recruitment. As these initiatives can take a number of years to implement, it is fair to state that the CAF will not be able to achieve its 1% goal per year at least until other measures are put in place.

When the issue of increasing the women's representation is brought up within the CAF, one of the main questions raised is the intake requirement to meet the goal and whether it is realistic. In 2006, the Auditor General found that while the CAF had attempted to set a recruiting goal of 30% women over the previous four years, it had repeatedly fallen short with numbers varying from 14 to 16%.<sup>21</sup> Recently, Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) initiated a study to determine the women's intake requirement to meet the goal identified in SSE.<sup>22</sup> In accordance with this latest analysis, the CAF must recruit approximately 2,199 women or 29.2% of its SIP quota in fiscal year 2018-2019.<sup>23</sup> Understanding that the historical average has been of 14.8%,<sup>24</sup> this is not a small objective and that extraordinary measures will have to be implemented to meet it.

Since 2017, the CAF has already invested in this initiative and has stood up a full-time team to analyze and champion the recruitment of diversity groups with one of their main focus being the recruitment of women.<sup>25</sup> The team has already delivered trial programs such as a women focussed recruiting outreach<sup>26</sup> and Women in Force program. Both of these have been implemented in an effort to attract more women as well as

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<sup>21</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2006 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 56.

<sup>22</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "Employment Equity Strategic Planning Model: Overview and Results," n.d., 1.

<sup>23</sup> Michelle Straver, "Gmail - FW\_ Research Connections.Pdf," April 10, 2018, 1.

<sup>24</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "Employment Equity External Intake Goal Calculator," n.d., 4.

<sup>25</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2016 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 10.

<sup>26</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "Women in the Canadian Armed Forces," *Defence News*, n.d., <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/news/article.page?doc=women-in-the-canadian-armed-forces/hie8w7rm>.

change the public view to one where the CAF is an employer of choice for women in Canada.<sup>27</sup> While these programs have shown positive results, they are resource intensive and are dependent on having sufficient women to champion them. This is due to the fact that when civilian and serving women were asked about their opinion on the best recruiting method for women, the majority identified that they preferred face-to-face interaction with another female.<sup>28</sup> They identified that potential applicants did not feel at ease to discuss women-related concerns with male recruiters and felt more trust in the answers provided by women.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, additional efforts must be made to retain serving women so that both operational and recruitment needs can be met. A short-term option to bridge the manning gap could be to reach out to recently retired RegF women for help. Through a Reserve Force contract, the CAF could leverage their experience to connect with potential candidates without affecting the overall manning in the RegF. To make these new recruiting campaigns sustainable, the CAF will have to first address its manning problems through innovative solutions as well as retention initiative targeting women.

When DRDC questioned serving women about potential recruitment and retention concerns, one of the points identified was that retention strategies should be given as much priority as recruitment efforts. If the CAF were to focus too much on recruitment quotas, it will run the risk of degrading the status of serving women, therefore causing

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<sup>27</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "A New Program Well-Suited for Women Considering Joining the Forces," *The Maple Leaf*, n.d., <https://ml-fd.caf-fac.ca/en/2017/08/5755>.

<sup>28</sup> Earncliffe Strategy Group, "The Recruitment and Employment of Women in the Canadian Armed Forces: Research Report," January 2017, 4; Clinical Trials Administrator, "When Recruiting Women, Targeted Methods Work Best," *AHC Media LLC*, no. Journal Article (2008): 2.

<sup>29</sup> Barbara T. Waruszynski and DRDC, "Perceptions of Women in Reg F on Recruitment & Employment Top Line Findings - Cover Letter," July 2017, 3.

many to leave.<sup>30</sup> In order to promote the retention of women, the CAF will have to look beyond financial compensation and instead address barriers that women face from the time they enter recruit school. Not only should the CAF implement initiative to better support the member's family while they go through basic training and therefore stay in,<sup>31</sup> but it should also look at initiative to ensure women feel supported through their careers.<sup>32</sup> Without this support, women will continue to leave the service before their male counterparts, further aggravating the issue of female representation.

When the US Army studied this question, it identified a link between the attrition of women following their first contract and their lack of support network compared to male soldiers.<sup>33</sup> Recognizing the reality of its demographics, the CAF should steer away from gender neutral policies and implement a formal support and mentoring program for women in order to promote greater retention. Other non-traditional organizations such as the Michigan State Police have already implemented such measures with success, improving the progression and retention of female police officers.<sup>34</sup> Another area where the CAF can improve to make women more likely to stay in, is by making sure they feel they are rewarded equitably for their efforts. When faced with a similar challenges, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) determined that there was a perceived disadvantage for women at promotion and succession boards which caused dissatisfaction. They instituted

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<sup>30</sup> Barbara T. Waruszynski and DRDC, "Female Regular Force Member's Perceptions on Recruitment and Employment of Women in the CAF Top-Line Findings Presentation," n.d., 14.

<sup>31</sup> Kathy Michaud, "Voluntary Attrition during Basic Military Qualification (BMQ) and Basic Military Officer Qualification (BMOQ) Focus Groups Findings," August 2010, 20.

<sup>32</sup> Barbara T. Waruszynski and DRDC, "Female Regular Force Member's Perceptions on Recruitment and Employment of Women in the CAF Preliminary Findings" (DSpcSci, May 4, 2017), 14.

<sup>33</sup> Mary Sue Hay, Charles H. Middlestead, and U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, *Women in Combat: An Overview of the Implications for Recruiting*, vol. 1568, Book, Whole (Alexandria, Va: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 1990), 17.

<sup>34</sup> Denise Powell, "Recruiting Women Into Law Enforcement," *WomenPolice*, no. Journal Article (2016): 1.

a mixed representation policy at those boards and saw a reduction in the perceived bias towards one gender over the other.<sup>35</sup> By instituting a similar policy, the CAF could benefit by creating a more positive outlook on career progression for serving women, thus supporting their decision to stay longer. In turn, this could increase the number of women who attain a senior rank and act as role models and mentors for junior women in the organization, enabling the implementation of the measures presented above. As shown by historical female recruitment numbers, only through innovative recruitment and retention strategies can the CAF achieve its goal and sustain a growth in its representation of women. As many of those initiatives will take time to implement and take effect, it is likely that the CAF will not meet its goals in the early years of SSE, but must remain focussed on the long-term solutions to effect real changes.

### **LATERAL PROGRESSION SYSTEM**

As identified by the Auditor General in 2016, the CAF is dependent on its ability to retain specialized and trained personnel over a long period of time, in order to maintain its operational capabilities. The financial costs and operational implications associated with a high turnover rate is simply not one that can be borne by the organization if it wishes to remain relevant in the future.<sup>36</sup> As presented above, it is clear that the CAF cannot achieve the personnel objective targets in SSE through recruitment alone and that specialist trades are some of the ones experiencing the biggest challenges.<sup>37</sup> As identified in the 2006 Auditor General report on recruitment and retention, the CAF already tried to improve its retention between 2002 and 2005. At the time, they identified that some

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<sup>35</sup> Meg Trucano et al., “Foreign Military Strategies to Recruit and Retain Women,” March 2017, 11; Waruszynski and DRDC, “Female RegF Perception Top-Line PPT,” 1.

<sup>36</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2016 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 21.

<sup>37</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, “18-19 RegF SIP Annex A,” 2–3.

benefit packages and policies which dated from the Cold War promoted the early release of soldiers and therefore were removed. For example, the CAF changed the minimum serving time to obtain a pension to 25 years of service instead of 20 years and raised the compulsory retirement age from 55 to 60 years of age.<sup>38</sup> Now that these quick hit initiatives have been implemented and the CAF still experiences a greater number of people leaving than being recruited, it leads to the conclusion that more drastic retention and efficiency measures are required to ensure the CAF regains its status as an employer of choice in Canada. With the continued trend to accept additional tasks within a manning cap,<sup>39</sup> it is crucial that the CAF reward skills and experience if it wishes to preserve the ability to force generate a general purpose force that is credible.<sup>40</sup> Beyond stating obvious options such as offering retention bonuses for serving members, this section proposes that the CAF should implement a retention strategy which not only entices members to stay in, but also optimizes the employment of soldiers and, more specifically, the employment of technicians.

As part of *The Journey* initiative, many retention ideas have been raised and this paper will analyze one in particular, the Lateral Progression System (LPS). The idea of a LPS is not new, but the conditions may finally be right to implement it within the CAF. The idea was originally brought forward in the 1970s after the Canadian Forces were unified and changed the rank and trade structure that some of the services previously had. Recognizing the potential of this system, a formal project called Trade Advancement for

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<sup>38</sup> Auditor General of Canada, *2006 AG Report CAF Recruitment and Retention*, 64–65.

<sup>39</sup> From VCDS presentation at CFC, SSE added 3,500 RegF positions but the need identified is for 7,000.

<sup>40</sup> D. G. Neasmith and Canadian Forces College, “Lateral Skill Progression: Time for Another Look?” (Toronto: Canadian Forces College, 1997), 13.

Skills and Knowledge (TASK) studied the issue and created an implementation plan ending in 1989. Unfortunately, the project was never given approval to implement as too many organizational challenges existed at the time and it would have taken too many resources and time to address them.<sup>41</sup> Between 2015 and 2017, the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals conducted an occupation analysis of the Army Communication Information System Specialist (ACISS) and one of the recommendations was that the occupation could benefit from a LPS, showing that while the idea was studied in the 1980s, it is still valid today.<sup>42</sup> Understanding that the conclusions drawn by the TASK project in 1988 were based on the analysis of the demographics and organizational structures at that time, a cursory review of them against the current CAF operating environment shows that the majority of the reasons supporting a LPS then, remain valid today. As identified earlier in this document, recruitment levels have not been able to match current attrition rates for many technical trades. By implementing a LPS, the CAF could potentially greatly improve retention within those trades as well as increase their capacity, reducing the impact of personnel shortages. For the remainder of this section, key benefits and considerations of a LPS will be discussed to demonstrate how it can help with retention as well as optimization of technician performance within the CAF.

One of the main components of a retention strategy is to ensure that employees feel fulfilled by the work they perform, and feel rewarded fairly for their performance. When the TASK project studied this question, they determined that soldiers felt that they enjoyed the work they performed and liked the benefits they were provided while

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<sup>41</sup> Lynn Bradley, "Gmail - FW\_ Solo Flight Paper - Lateral Promotion System," March 8, 2018.

<sup>42</sup> LCol Francois Robichaud, "JCSP IPS Solo Flight - ACISS Lateral Progression System," May 1, 2018.

serving. The only major dissatisfaction was the level of pay and the issue of salary adaptation to recognize specialization.<sup>43</sup> Pay was the most important extrinsic reward to soldiers, ranking even higher than job satisfaction.<sup>44</sup> While demographics and pay scales have changed today, it is still very true that pay is a major factor in employment satisfaction.<sup>45</sup> Also, the TASK project determined that "professional self-esteem can emerge from technical or leadership competence or a combination of both,"<sup>46</sup> showing that a LPS can provide a great source of pride for soldiers who value technical competence.

In Canadian society, the work environment is separated in a three-tier model where you have the managers/professionals, technologists/technicians, and labourers/unskilled workers. In contrast, the military is structured in a traditional two-tier system between officers and non-commissioned members (NCM). "Technical specialists with few or no requirement for leadership skills are difficult to integrate into the existing system where rank and skill are linked in a lock-step fashion."<sup>47</sup> In order to recognize the technical complexity of certain NCM trades, the CAF implemented a three-tiered pay category system, placing all trades in one of the three categories: Standard, Specialist 1 and Specialist 2. While it enabled specialists to be rewarded for their technical expertise, the system did not address the problem of linkage between expertise and rank level,

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<sup>43</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, *Career Progression and Rewards System in the Canadian Forces: Preliminary Analysis of Survey Results*, Book, Whole (Ottawa: Bureau of Management Consulting, 1989), 131.

<sup>44</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "TASK, Development Study Report (TASK DSR)" (Ottawa: Dept. of National Defence, 1989), 39.

<sup>45</sup> Glen T. Howell and Glen Budgell, "2016 Analyses of the Annual Canadian Armed Forces Recruiting Survey," March 25, 2016, 3.

<sup>46</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "TASK DSR," 17.

<sup>47</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "Canadian Forces Future Trends and the TASK Concept: Forces Canadiennes l'orientation Future et Le Concept de l'AMCC" (Ottawa: Dept. of National Defence, 1987), 6.

which is a source of dissatisfaction within the specialist trades.<sup>48</sup> This section will not analyze whether the use of a tiered pay category system is beneficial, but will focus on the need to de-link the recognition for speciality from rank.

As a general rule, the type of soldiers attracted to the specialist trades do not present the same leadership aspiration as others do. As identified above, they draw their satisfaction from technical expertise and are more than comfortable with becoming more specialized while gaining no additional leadership responsibilities. This was recognized by the TASK project when they wrote that “a good technician does not automatically make a good supervisor and that a reward system based on promotion alone most often transforms a good technician into a poor supervisor.”<sup>49</sup> The rank system was designed to recognize leadership abilities and therefore confers authorities in recognition for one’s progression.<sup>50</sup> By using the promotion system to recognize technical expertise, it dilutes the integrity and operational effectiveness of the rank structure. Unlike the soldiers being promoted based on their leadership potential, the ones being recognized for their technical skills have not demonstrated the ability to lead others and make organizational decisions.<sup>51</sup> In turn, this results in a force which operates below its full potential and which requires more soldiers to accomplish its mission. Therefore, by implementing a LPS, the CAF could potentially retain more technicians through an increase in their job satisfaction and pay scale, as well as become more effective throughout by ensuring that supervisors are competent. In the remainder of this section, the paper will present considerations that should be taken into account in order to implement a LPS today.

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<sup>48</sup> Canada. Dept. of National Defence, “TASK DSR,” 13.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

In a study conducted in 1980 by the Director General Organization and Manpower, it was assessed that as a result of the link between rank and specialization, between 1500 and 4500 positions were over-ranked by at least one rank.<sup>52</sup> By permitting the specialization and compensation to take place regardless of rank, the CAF could benefit from reducing its rank structure in many areas. While it was originally reported that it would create savings in terms of salary, it was later recognized that the pay savings from a higher rank to a lower one would only be offset by an increase in specialization pay. Therefore, a LPS should not be seen as a cost saving measure, but one to increase productivity and retention through higher job satisfaction. In the 1980s, one of the concerns with implementing a skill-based pay system was that a lower rank specialist could potentially be paid more than a soldier of a higher rank.<sup>53</sup> While it may have been a concern raised at the time, it must be kept in mind that similar to the current three-tiered system, the balance is respected within a specialist occupation.

The major difference between the current pay system and one proposed for a LPS is that a career Corporal, within a specialist occupation, would no longer have an imposed pay cap after reaching the maximum incentive for that rank. A simple way to implement this new system would be to modify the current Incentive Pay Category system to separate the amount for each level into two portions. The first portion would be to account for the technical expertise and the second portion for the leadership abilities. This would allow soldiers to continue to receive pay increases without the need to be promoted. Back in the 1980s, this was deemed to be too difficult to implement as it would have not only required changes to the pay system, but also to the CAF

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

establishment and training system.<sup>54</sup> At that time, these systems were designed to provide a single course qualification code incorporating both leadership and technical expertise for each rank level. Since then, the CAF has moved to a different training and establishment system. Under this new system, the leadership and technical courses are separated, therefore allowing a LPS corporal to attend advanced technical courses without needing the leadership portion.<sup>55</sup> As well, by having separated the leadership and technical qualifications, it is also now possible to manage the careers of LPS corporals through their qualification levels while they remain at the same rank.

Below, you will find a table proposing how a LPS pay scale system could function if implemented today.

Rank/specialization		Private & Corporal (DP 1.1)			Master-Corporal or LPS Cpl with DP2.1			Sergeant or LPS Cpl with DP 3.1	
		Incentive Pay Category							
Tiered Pay Category		0	1	2...	0	1	2...	0	1...
Standard		S0+L0+I0	S0+L0+I1	S0+L0+I2	S1+L1+I0	S1+L1+I1	S1+L1+I2	S2+L2+I0	S2+L2+I1
Specialist 1	LPS	S0+I0+SP1	S0+I1+SP1	S0+I2+SP1	S1+I0+SP1	S1+I1+SP1	S1+I2+SP1	S2+I0+SP1	S2+I2+SP1
	Leader	S0+L0+I0+ SP1	S0+L0+I1+ SP1	S0+L0+I2+ SP1	S1+L1+I0+ SP1	S1+L1+I1+ SP1	S1+L1+I2+ SP1	S2+L2+I0+ SP1	S2+L2+I1+ SP1
Specialist 2	LPS	S+I+SP2	S0+I1+SP2	S0+I2+SP2	S1+I0+SP2	S1+I1+SP2	S1+I2+SP2	S2+I0+SP2	S2+I1+SP2
	Leader	S+L+I+SP2	S0+L0+I1+ SP2	S0+L0+I2+ SP2	S1+L1+I0+ SP2	S1+L1+I1+ SP2	S1+L1+I2+ SP2	S2+L2+I0+ SP2	S2+L2+I1+ SP2
S=Skill Pay, L = Leadership pay, I = Annual Incentive, SP1 = Spec Pay 1, SP2 = Spec Pay 2									
Note1: Skill and Leadership amounts remains the same whether a soldier is a specialist or not. What differentiates between a technical trade or not is the specialist pay bonus.									

**Figure 1: Proposed LPS Pay Scale**

While the CAF is in a much better place to implement this system than it was in the 1980s, it will not be without significant effort and disruption to the soldiers. As proven by the current effort to restructure the ACISS occupation and re-instate specialist pay retroactively for a portion of soldiers, this kind of initiative will require careful

<sup>54</sup> Neasmith and Canadian Forces College, "Lateral Skill Progression: Time for Another Look?," 7; Canada. Dept. of National Defence, "TASK DSR," 79.

<sup>55</sup> In the Job Based Specification system, courses designated as DP X.0 (2.0) are leadership courses and DP X.Y (2.1, 3.1, etc) are technical/occupation courses.

planning and execution to prevent negatively impacting the soldiers while the transition occurs.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, while the implementation of a LPS can offer significant benefits to the organization and may prove to be the key to retain more specialists in the CAF, it comes at a high risk due to the transition process. If implemented, an additional benefit created by a LPS would be to allow for the horizontal recruitment of experienced specialists by allowing them to be hired at a higher pay scale based on their experience. Not only would this help the CAF solve its recruiting challenges, but it would also provide a much more effective workforce, reducing the impact of personnel shortages.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper demonstrated that the CAF will not be able to attain the personnel goals identified in SSE without implementing innovative retention strategies. Based on historical data, the CAF should not be concerned so much about having to attract more Canadian males to meet the SIP, but more specifically about the system's capacity to absorb and train a large number of recruits. With forty occupations identified as stressed, the CAF must either be willing to reduce its operational tempo or first correct its retention problem before being able to direct an increase in training tasks. Ignoring this problem and overtasking soldiers can in fact result in a higher attrition rate and further compound the issue. Where the CAF will face an even greater challenge is in meeting its women representation goals. Unlike the problem identified for the SIP, the CAF has not historically been able to attract enough women to meet its goal. In order to do so, it will need to be willing to invest significant efforts and personnel to advance beyond legacy recruiting methods which have not been successful in attracting women. As these

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<sup>56</sup> LCol Ian Marchand, "Over Payments and Amended T4s Trop-Payés et T4 Amendes," April 20, 2018.

methods all require personnel, the CAF must be ready to implement new retention strategies specific to women in order to stabilize the current manning before proceeding forward. Should the CAF intend to use serving women as their ambassadors, it must first ensure that they feel valued and respected in the organization. Finally, as the CAF is undergoing this transformation and is given permission to implement innovative retention strategies, the case can be made that long-lost ideas such as the LPS should be re-examined. While it was determined to be unfeasible in the 1980s, the current conditions seem to be favorable to implement this type reward and retention strategy which may mitigate the enduring problem of specialist attrition. If one thing is for sure, it is that the CAF can no longer ignore the need for retention strategies if it wishes to meet its personnel goals. While many retention strategies may seem costly on the surface, they can prove to be much more cost effective in the long run while also enabling the CAF to maintain a higher level of operational readiness.

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