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EXERCISE/EXERCICE

## New Horizons

### **MOSART – Canadian Forces HR Restructure**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Canadian Forces (CF), like many large employers, has recently been faced with major Human Resource (HR) management challenges. One such challenge, involves the Military Occupation Structure (MOS), the foundation of the CF HR management system. This structure was designed in the early 1960s to enable the transition to a unified Military, and no longer meets the needs of the CF. The negative impact of this aging, and frequently irrelevant MOS, has been felt in the area of operations, finance and career satisfaction. Issues from all of these areas have resulted in retention challenges, as well other Quality of Life issues. The CF document “Strategy 2020” clearly reveals the CF’s long-term agenda for change. One change objective is oriented to correct the deficiencies found within the current HR management model, resulting from the aging MOS. To meet this objective, ADM HR (Mil) has initiated a project entitled the Military Occupational Structure Analysis Redesign and Tailoring project, or MOSART. The changes to the MOS resulting from the implementation of MOSART will result in restored operational effectiveness, as the CF will be able to “recruit, train, employ and manage Officers and Non-Commissioned Members” in an “operationally efficient and cost-effective manner.”<sup>1</sup>

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## **MOSART – Canadian Forces HR Restructure**

A recurring theme in modern Canadian Forces (CF) management and leadership documents is the motherhood-like statement that “our people are our most important asset.”<sup>2</sup> The Concept Paper, “Creating the CF of 2020”, repeats this remark; however it goes on to lament that despite this corporate belief, to-date “the amount of effort devoted to understanding and integrating human resources into the development of CF capability has been meager.”<sup>3</sup> Reinforcing this, is the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff’s observation that ADM HR (Mil), the Human Resource Manager for the CF, lacks and therefore needs to develop, an overarching conceptual framework for Human Resource development.”<sup>4</sup>

Strategy 2020, an earlier CF paper from the Chief of the Defense Staff, builds “on the existing Defence policy to articulate eight long-term strategic objectives, each of which will be achieved by meeting a number of five year targets.”<sup>5</sup> Of these strategic objectives, Objective 6, entitled “Career of Choice” speaks directly to the subject of Human Resource (HR) management within the CF. Stated in full, Objective 6 is to “Position Defence as a rewarding, flexible and progressive workplace that builds professional teams of innovative and highly skilled men and women dedicated to accomplishing the mission.”<sup>6</sup>

As previously noted, in order to achieve each of the Strategy 2020 objectives, each one is broken into several shorter term, five-year targets. Two such targets of Objective 6 are:

1. Reduce the number of military support occupations and refocus on broader career fields; and
2. Develop flexible career policies to meet changing requirements.<sup>7</sup>

Focusing on these targets is the ADM HR (Mil) sponsored project, entitled Military Occupational Structure Analysis, Redesign and Tailoring or MOSART.<sup>8</sup>

For many members of the CF the first time they would have heard of MOSART would have been through CANFORGEN 104/00 ADMHRMIL in September of 2000.<sup>9</sup> Anecdotally this central communication failed to receive much attention. This was indeed unfortunate for the Project, as it had relied upon this message to introduce MOSART to the CF population, et al. This communiqué repeated the Defence Planning Guidance 2000's intention of positioning the CF as a rewarding, flexible and progressive workplace, etc. It then went on to highlight several external pressures upon the CF that prevent it's being a "Career of Choice." As a result of the socio-demographic pressures identified, the CANFORGEN opined that one potential curative action might be the modernization of the MOS. The message went on to speak of how MOSART would "investigate whether the current MOS supports the CF mission or not, and if necessary how it might be changed to do so."<sup>10</sup> In a very positive and inclusive fashion, it continued with the promise of regular progress reports and full participation from the various levels from within the CF.

Despite stating in the project charter that MOSART would employ an "aggressive and effective Communications Plan,"<sup>11</sup> CANFORGEN 104/00, and a short article in the ubiquitous Maple Leaf,<sup>12</sup> were to be the only aggressive steps taken to inform CF members of the project goals. Passive communication through the ADM HR (Mil) web site<sup>13</sup> was certainly available for those so inclined or, more appropriately, even aware of its existence, but for many the first time MOSART would surface would be word that a working group had met to decide the future of a member's MOC. This ineffective

Communication Plan almost certainly contributed to the initial lack of acceptance, even suspicion on the part of the members to be affected and the senior leadership within these affected MOCs.<sup>14</sup> Accepting that the failure of the Communication Plan has to some degree poisoned the environment of the target audience, this failure has in no way reduced the need to modernize the MOS.

Notwithstanding this early set-back, MOSART continues to portray itself as a Project including a “transparent and consultative process that has benefited from the active participation of a large number of stakeholders in the CF.”<sup>15</sup> That consultative process confirmed the Project’s original assumption that “the existing MOS does not meet the needs of the current CF strategic vision” and that this critical HR management tool fails in the three principle areas of operational capability, financial effectiveness and CF Member Career Expectations.<sup>16</sup>

It is the thesis of this paper, that the project known as MOSART, will result in the much needed changes to the MOS, that will correct many of the deficiencies of HR management within the CF. Despite MOSART being met with considerable suspicion and resistance from across the full spectrum of the members of the CF,<sup>17</sup> when fully implemented, it will achieve its stated goals by providing increased and broader career paths within common career fields, shared by closely related MOCs. As a result, it will directly improve the CF’s ability to capitalize on common skill sets shared by more than one occupation. In addition, MOSART will provide both the member and the CF with increased flexibility in career planning and employment options, resulting in more personnel management options in area such as personnel placement and career management. These initiatives will not only improve the CF’s ability to manage its HR

resources, but will have spin-off benefits as well. Intuitively, it expected that MOSART implementation would also result in increased retention, thereby reducing recruiting and training pressures as well as costs. MOSART also intends to address such issues as pay, and the management of sub-specialties, within given MOCs. These secondary benefits will not be examined in this paper.

In order to prove the stated thesis, this paper will first provide a brief historical perspective as to how the current CF's HR management system evolved, including observations upon the flaws within that system.<sup>18</sup> I shall then move on to the genesis of MOSART and, provide details on the project and its desired end state, showing why this project will, if fully implemented, improve the CF through increased operational effectiveness, cost effective HR management and increased career satisfaction.

### **Discussion**

At the core of this project is the reorganization of the CF's career structure, following an in-depth analysis of the Military Occupational Structure (MOS). The Military Occupation Structure (MOS) is currently the foundation of Human Resource management within the CF. It's fundamental principle is that specific jobs are assigned to specific Military Occupation Classifications (MOC). In addition to the positions that are assigned due to requisite capabilities found within each of these MOCs, there is also a requirement that a significant number of more generic positions be assigned as well. Broadly speaking, the result is a model where Officers spend roughly 50% of their careers employed within their specific occupations and Non-Commissioned Members approximately 80%.<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately, as each MOC is given ownership of a percentage of the generic positions, the result is that these jobs are often filled by an individual, not

so much because he/she is the best qualified, but rather because the MOC the Member belongs to has a quota to fill.

To study this problem, MOSART created a Tiger Team. The directive for the creation of this Team states:

MOSART's objectives include surveying the "best practices" in Allied Forces' and civilian Human Resource Management (HRM); consulting with all CF MOS and CF HRM stakeholders to improve upon existing MOS policies and principles; incorporating the best of newly-developed personnel management concepts and structures, and overall; ensuring the implementation of the most modern, operationally-focused and cost-effective MOS.<sup>20</sup>

By definition, the MOS provides the essential structural framework for CF personnel management. It is within this career architecture that personnel are “packaged” into sub-sets known as “Occupations and Sub-Occupations.”<sup>21</sup> Almost all aspects of our current personnel management are driven by the MOS, and it is this structure that MOSART focuses upon to achieve the two five year targets of Objective 6 described previously.

Incredibly, the current MOS has been in place, fundamentally unchanged, since the publication of two core CF unification documents in 1965 and 1966. These documents, the Minister's Manpower Study (Officers) and the Minister's Manpower Study (Men) respectively created two CF HR management systems, one for the Officers and one for the Non-Commissioned Members (NCM).<sup>22</sup> Through these reports the plan was conceived for the amalgamation of approximately 85 officer classifications and approximately 300 enlisted trades from the former three services, branches, corps, etc. into a unified Military Occupational Structure. The post-unification goals were 32 Military Occupations Classifications (MOCs) for the Officers and approximately 100



MOCs for the NCMs.<sup>23</sup> Given the dramatic nature of these changes, that these fundamental transformations were accomplished with little modeling, and no existing example to provide guidance, is seemingly miraculous.<sup>24</sup> Forty years later, and despite almost constant change to the structure of the CF throughout that period, this post-unification MOS system is still in use.

Recognizing that the MOS system still in use had been designed for a Canadian Forces considerably different than the CF of today, the CDS mandated ADM HR (Mil) through Defence Plan (DP) 2001 to “optimize the MOS”, through the design and implementation of a modernized, operational and cost effective military occupational structure, including broader career fields.<sup>25</sup> This became the formal mandate for MOSART.

As previously stated, the current Military Occupational Structure (MOS) has its origin in the two Minister’s Manpower Study documents.<sup>26</sup> These independently completed documents, fundamental to the “unification” of the Canadian Armed Forces, approached the challenge of amalgamating approximately 400 classifications and trades of the three former services, and their associated support organizations, from very different angles.<sup>27</sup> That these studies did so should not be surprising, as the direction provided to the Manpower Study Groups (MSG), the authors of the two documents, included neither an existing military organizational model upon which to rely on for guidance, nor was there a clear picture of what a post-unification CF would look like.<sup>28</sup> In addition, new amalgamated Occupational Structures were created without the benefit of a comparative analysis of the knowledge, skills and training required by each classification or trade. This happened despite both MSGs recognizing and observing in their reports

that “no personnel control system can function efficiently unless there is a comprehensive knowledge of the jobs which have to be done, and the capabilities of the men that have to do them.”<sup>29</sup> Regardless, no studies were used to create the new job descriptions. Both studies also recommended that a process be created to validate the effectiveness of these post-unification classification and trades. Unlike the previous recommendation, this has happened and has become the process known as Occupational Analysis (OA). Through these OAs, or periodic reviews, it was felt that detailed job descriptions would be created and subsequently validated.

An historical study of how the requirements for these detailed job descriptions were identified is very interesting. In the haste, and drive, to accomplish the politically sensitive unification of the Royal Canadian Navy, the Canadian Army, and the Royal Canadian Air Force, official policy stated that all occupational structures and specifications for support occupations were to be purged of environmental, i.e. Navy, Army or Air Force specific job performance requirements, that would define the deployed or operational aspects of a trade or classification.<sup>30</sup> As ordered, only the occupational requirements common to all environments were used. This, in turn, resulted in the unique environmental aspects of each trade again being omitted when training specifications were drafted. With the clarity of hindsight, it appears peculiar that an occupational specification for a military job would not include anything concerning its specific environmental military employment role.

Within the “hard operational” occupations there was significantly less impact. The MOS in this area was more functionally oriented, and many of these occupations and classifications were retained with little change from their former service affiliations.

Further, for example, the officer Military Occupational Classifications (MOC), were subdivided under two principal headings, Specialist (Doctors, Dentists, Lawyers, etc) and Generalists (all of the operational classifications such as Infantry, Pilot, MARS, etc). In addition, under the heading of General Service Officer (GSO), there were two further divisions entitled Environmental and Non-environmental. This latter sub-set would identify what came to be known as the “purple”, or common, positions such as Logistics and Administration.<sup>31</sup>

Policy concerning the management of this MOS was written in two massive CF publications. These multi-volume publications, entitled CFP 150 (Officers) and CFP 123 (Men), described every occupation in the CF. These documents, which first appeared in the late 1960s, were the constant target of rewrites and amendments, but nevertheless survived until they were at last superseded in the mid 1990s by A-PD-055-001/AG-001, The CF Manual of Military Occupational Structure.<sup>32</sup>

As a result of the over three decades of pressure upon the CF, due to extraordinary changes resulting from the end of the Cold War and economic pressures resulting in force reductions, recruiting and retention challenges, it has become glaringly obvious that the aging MOS must undergo a major review.<sup>33</sup> One of the driving philosophies for such a review has been the ADM HR (Mil) acknowledgement of the need for a fundamental shift, from the original concept of a functionally organized career structure to one based solely on operational requirements or primacy.<sup>34</sup> The post-unification policy, based on commonality of function may have met its unification goal of being cost-effective, but it ignored the hard requirement for “operationally required competencies, as inherent in the Universality of Service principle.”<sup>35</sup> MOSART calls for a return to the idea of “Sailor,

Soldier and Airman first.”<sup>36</sup> This simple catch phrase serves to highlight the projects goal of restructuring the MOS to facilitate the development of operations-based expertise first.

While the need for MOSART is sound and its goals are laudable, the program has met with considerable skepticism from CF members. For the most part this seems due to the previously described poorly designed communications plan and a jaundiced audience spring- loaded to look on any new HR initiative as just another attempt to cut positions.

As previously stated, the foundation of the CF’s HR structure is the MOS. The MOSART Project Charter makes the statement that the “MOS is no longer optimized towards providing interoperable, combat-capable, rapidly deployable, task-tailored forces as it lacks the flexibility to meet and sustain the needs of current operations and contingency plans.”<sup>37</sup> This bold statement is supported by the experiences of the last decade, when frequently the force establishments of various units in Canada were found to be inadequate to support either current contingency plans or tasked operations.<sup>38</sup> In effect, the changing requirements of current operational plans are not met by the units of the CF, as designed in the late 60’s and since modified by such events as force reductions. These force establishment problems have frequently resulted in some occupations being significantly overburdened, driving up costs due to the requirement for contracted replacements, subsequently resulting in further retention problems.

In addition, under the first project sub-section Operational capability, the MOSART observes the problems caused by the high number of generic positions at the numerous Headquarters. These generic positions must be filled by the occupation they are assigned to via the quota system known as Base Line Manning Control (BLMC). As

few of these generic positions employ skill sets specific to the responsible MOC, long periods of training are frequently required for each new arrival. This is later followed by the inevitable loss of that experience, upon the individual's return to a job within their MOC. The last, and most incredible observation under this sub-title, is that there exist a number of occupations that have been identified as having no core military requirement.<sup>39</sup> Strangely, no discussion of action concerning these MOCs is to be found within the considerable body of MOSART Project documentation.

The second sub-section, financial effectiveness, is focused on personnel and training. MOSART asserts that in these areas the current MOS is not cost-effective.<sup>40</sup> This statement is based on observations that, the numerous modifications to the structure over its 30 plus years of use have been aimed at maintaining a highly flexible framework of employment, while still retaining the groupings of occupations. The project acknowledges that, as a result of various amalgamations to achieve this, MOC training has frequently lost its employment driven focus and has acquired the extra financial burden of training that is neither timely nor in some instances useable. This issue of appropriate employment of members,, with specialized training uncovers the financial inefficiencies resulting from expensive training that is never used, or is quickly lost to the civilian sector.<sup>41</sup>

The last sub-section, Career Expectations, is related through Quality of Life (QOL) to the issue of retention. Personnel cut backs and high operational tempo have reduced personnel management flexibility, further exacerbating, for many distressed MOCs, an already elevated release rate.<sup>42</sup> As these occupations become smaller, HR managers become increasingly challenged to fill MOC specific positions, let alone that

MOC's share of generic positions, assigned to them through the process of BLMC.

Anecdotally, this has resulted in a loss of flexibility for career managers and a subsequent loss of input by CF members on such issues as posting location and tour length.<sup>43</sup>

To address the short falls identified in the previous paragraphs, MOSART claims that it will “implement an operational and cost-effective MOS based on broader career fields, provide the policy basis for a modern HR management system and to analyze, redesign and implement a revised military structure for the CF.”<sup>44</sup> The desired goal, upon achieving this objective, is to achieve an increase in operational effectiveness, provide increased flexibility for both the CF and its members and to do so in a cost effective manner.

Accepting that the Project-identified deficiencies are valid, how then does the Project expect to address or rather correct these short falls? The creation of, and in some instance the formalization of, career fields will directly address many of the short falls previously identified. MOSART sees the Military Occupations Structure defined not within the narrow confines of occupations etc, but rather within the broader framework of Career Fields. Career Fields are defined in the new DAOD 5070-0 as “groupings of related occupations and/or common/generic jobs.”<sup>45</sup> An example of a current Career Field in action is well demonstrated by the Personnel Operational Research Team and the Directorate of Strategic Human Resource Coordination analysis of the 640 series trades completed in 2000.<sup>46</sup> These six Construction Engineering MOCs remain very capability specific at the entry and tradesmen levels, through the rank of Sgt. At the rank of WO, each MOC transitions to the MOC 649 Construction Engineering Superintendent, that continues to the rank of CWO as shown below in Table 1.<sup>47</sup>

Table 1

640 Series Distribution of Positions by Rank and MOC

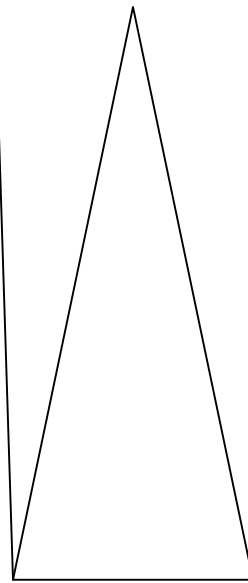
Rank/MOC	641	642	643	646	647	648	649	Total
CWO							36	36
MWO							83	83
WO							91	91
Sgt	12	22	23	25	16	37		135
MCpl	26	22	29	26	24	34		161
Cpl/Pte	54	67	64	64	35	105		389
Total	92	111	116	115	75	176	210	895

The total column of the above table demonstrates the retention of a rank pyramid, despite the MOC merger at the rank of WO within the 649 MOC. It also clearly shows one instance of the effective employment of a number of capability specific, or heterogeneous, trades within a larger homogeneous Career Field. This methodology provides opportunity for members of each MOC to rise to the top, not just those who have selected the fastest moving MOC.

To some degree, other military Manning Authorities (MA) have already implemented some aspects of MOSART. One example, is the current Air Operations Branch. Until recently, at the officer level, it was exclusively populated by the aircrew trades of Pilot and Air Navigator. In the mid 1990s, the newly created Aerospace Control (AEC) MOC, an amalgam of Air Traffic Control and Air Weapons Control, joined the Branch. At the operational level, each of the MOCs still requires members to fill their capability specific jobs i.e. Pilots fly airplanes, Navigators execute airborne tactical navigation and Weapon System management and AECs provide air traffic services or

specific Command and Control Air Defence duties. However, at the senior Major and Lieutenant Colonel rank the duties, within the air operations field, become less capability specific and increasingly homogeneous. As a result, many positions are open to any appropriately trained officer, from any of the base MOCs. This current management practice provides significant flexibility to the Air Force; however, as it has not fully incorporated all of the Career Field management concepts, it is still handicapped by current MOS management driven constraints.

Table 2  
Air Operations Career Field vs. Previous MOC Independent Rank Structure





highly qualified officers, who may not be promoted due to the same BLMC quota constraints.<sup>48</sup>

This constraint springs from the Preferred Manning Level or the maximum number of CF members at a given rank, authorized for any one MOC. These rank allotments are currently allocated to MOCs, rather than to career fields. The implementation of the career field concept would enable the Career Field Authority, the flexibility of promoting and, therefore employing, the right training, skill or knowledge embodied individual to fill the open positions, rather than one simply because of their membership within a given MOC.

To achieve the level of HR management required to effectively execute the Career Field concept, in order to meet the three previously stated goals of increased operational effectiveness, cost effective HR management and increased career satisfaction, there must be a fundamental shift in the manner in which career management is delivered. Today, under the broad umbrella of HR, the principle office of management belongs to the ADM HR (Mil). Through the cooperation and input of the Environmental Chiefs of Staff (ECS) and the Branch or MOC advisors appointed by them, the current Career Managers, from within the Director General Military Careers (DGMC), manage the careers of all those members of an MOC within a specific rank group. In so doing, they manage requirements ranging from postings to professional development. Complex issues such as succession planning present significant challenges, as frequently contradictory input is received from the ECS, the unit level, and the members involved. Compounding this, are very specific service needs dictated by such pressures as the VCDS manning priorities and continued

attrition, making the current system reactive, thereby further reducing the element of choice from the formula.

The creation of Career Fields comprising several MOCs, will require the creation of a new “super Branch Advisor” or Career Field Authority. This individual will be responsible to the respective ECS for the efficient management of a career field within the guidelines and policies as dictated by the Strategic direction on HR management issued by the ADM HR (Mil).<sup>49</sup> This strategic level of control from the ADM HR (Mil) would continue to include such issues as postings, component transfers, Promotion and Terms of Service selection (TOS) Boards, and Personnel Evaluation Report policies. The Career Field Authority would assume responsibility for issues such as recruiting needs within a given occupation or career field, and TOS quotas.<sup>50</sup> Of singular importance to the personnel of the CF, the Career Field Authority would take on considerable responsibility in the direct area of Personnel Management. They would be directly responsible for such functions as succession planning. In addition, as the Career Field Authority, it would fall to them to identify the Career Field’s requirements for all selection boards, such as attendance on CFCSC. The Career Field Authority would also be responsible for the establishment of the criteria employed annually by promotion and TOS boards.

In addition to the new position of Career Field Authority, MOSART still recognizes the requirement for, but modifies the role of the Career Manager. Due to the two levels within a Career Field, occupation specific, and Career Field homogeneous, career management would have to be delivered with both in mind. The Occupational level Career Manager would manage the careers of the junior members of the Career

Field, those previously described as typically filling capability specific jobs, employing as required, the succession plan as developed by the Career Field Authority. The Career Field level Career Manager would manage the senior members of the Career Field, much as the Director Military Careers (D MIL C) section heads currently do; however, in addition, they would coordinate and supervise the selection process for specified Career Field, vice occupational or MOC specific positions.<sup>51</sup>

**TABLE 3**  
**MOSART SUMMARY<sup>52</sup>**

MOSART IDENTIFIED PROBLEM	MOSART PROPOSED SOLUTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; Operational Effectiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; Operational primacy based MOS</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; Financial Effectiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; Occupation focused training</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; Career Expectations - Members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; Career Field Management</li> </ul>

This shift in HR management within broader Career Fields will serve to address the previously identified three principal shortcomings of the current MOS, in the following manner. It addresses the subject of operational capability, by optimizing the occupational structure in order to provide the correct balance of personnel, with the right skill sets within established units. This return to the primacy of operational effectiveness, as described by the phrase “Sailor, Soldier and Airman competencies first,” will result in increased deployability for every occupation.<sup>53</sup> In addition, through the increased flexibility of career fields, generic position previously “owned” or “Base Lined Manning Controlled,” by a given MOC, will be the responsibly of the Career Field, and therefore not a manning burden upon any one group.

Through the delivery of more efficient HR best practices, the significant annual cost of HR management will be better employed. Rather than constantly spending funds to combat attrition from controllable retention pressures, it will be spent on individuals in need of specific training, at the right time. Savings in the area of training will also be experienced as highly specialized training such as Post Graduate degrees, will only be provided to members scheduled to use them. This will serve the purpose of receiving an effective return on investment, as well as limiting the number of positions vacated while members are undergoing such training.

However, of singular importance to “our most important asset”, will be the increased attention upon their career expectations. The creation of Career Fields will result in members having greater control over such issues as posting location and duration. This will be accomplished through greater control over the previously generic, or BLMC, positions, that the failings of MOC management, driven by Preferred Manning Levels, forced Career Managers to fill at the expense of the occupation specific positions.<sup>54</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Throughout the last decade the CF, like many large employers, has been faced with a major reorganization challenge driven by changing HR needs. The impact of our ineffective, aging and frequently irrelevant Military Occupational Structure has been felt in the areas of operations, finance and career satisfaction. The rapidly changing nature of modern conflicts has resulted in operational challenges, as unit establishments are frequently found to be inadequate to meet the requirements of post-Cold War operations. In addition, the pressures related to frequent deployments, or a high op-tempo, have

increased an already excessive rate of attrition. The multiple measures of the Military Occupational Structure Analysis Redesign and Tailoring project will result in restored operational effectiveness, as the CF will be able to “recruit, train, employ and manage Officers and Non-Commissioned Members” in an “operationally efficient and cost-effective manner.”<sup>55</sup> Through the best practices as employed by MOSART, the CF will truly be able to “Look after our people, invest in them and give them confidence in the future.”<sup>56</sup>

## End Notes

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