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## THE ABORIGINAL LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY YEAR: ADDRESSING THE CANADIAN FORCE'S NEXT RECRUITING CRISIS

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MASTERS OF DEFENCE STUDIES RESEARCH PAPER

**THE ABORIGINAL LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY YEAR: ADDRESSING THE  
CANADIAN FORCE'S NEXT RECRUITING CRISIS**

By / par Major Bruce MacLean

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## ABSTRACT

An investigation into future Canadian demographics reveals a pending critical shortage in the Canadian labour pool. By the year 2020, there will be more people retiring than joining the work force. The Canadian Forces (CF) faces an enormous workforce outflow rate in the next ten to twenty years with a declining pool of young recruits to replace those retiring. This shortage will create a human resource crisis for the CF.

Although immigration presently maintains Canada's civilian workforce, the CF is unable to attract visible minorities in sufficient numbers. Statistics and demographic trends suggest that visible minority recruiting will continue to be a challenge in the near future regardless of changes to CF visible minority outreach initiatives. The solution to this crisis rests within Canada's Aboriginal people.

Despite Canada's decreasing birth rates, there is an explosion in Canada's Aboriginal population creating a large pool of potential future recruits. Aboriginal recruiting initiatives have been successful at attracting young Aboriginals, but at a much lower rate than the CF's strategic goals, particularly in the officer cadre. The CF's newest initiative to improve Aboriginal recruiting is the Aboriginal Leadership Opportunity Year (ALOY) program offered at the Royal Military College of Canada.

ALOY is distinct from any other Aboriginal outreach program in that its primary aim is to prepare motivated Aboriginal youth for post-secondary education in a university environment while preparing them for positions of leadership. The ALOY program builds upon the cultural similarities between Aboriginal culture and the military and possesses



robust measures to mitigate the difficulties Aboriginal youth experience when adapting to military and western ways.

By analyzing and comparing other outreach programs within the CF, as well as domestic and international organizations, the importance and significance of programs such as ALOY becomes apparent. ALOY attracts more officers to the CF, thereby creating further role models within the Aboriginal community and increasing the attractiveness of joining the CF. To manage the upcoming human resource crisis, programs such as ALOY need to succeed and expand in order to improve the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal leaders into the CF.

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Since 1996, the Canadian Forces (CF) has been dealing with a human resource crisis precipitated by the Force Reduction Plan (FRP) and Alternate Service Delivery (ASD) initiatives of the mid 1990's. Attracting enough skilled personnel to meet the CF's Strategic Intake Plan (SIP) was a challenge until recently. As of 2010, the CF's Regular Force strength was 69,392; 1,392 personnel over the goal of 68,000.<sup>1</sup> The CF human resource crisis was averted, but the Regular Force has planned expansion set to reach 70,000 personnel by the year 2028.<sup>2</sup> An investigation into future Canadian demographics reveals the labour pool within Canada for the next ten to twenty years will present another critical human resource crisis for the CF.

Canada faces a decreasing population growth due to declining birth rates creating an inverted population pyramid. That is to say, the majority of the population will be older, with fewer young people. Immigration presently sustains Canada's population and civilian work force.<sup>3</sup> With the increase in immigration, Canada's public and private sectors and the CF have developed initiatives to attract visible minorities to staff its workforces. The public and private sectors have been successful, but the CF has struggled to develop effective initiatives to entice more immigrants with the idea of serving their country through military service.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of National Defence, *Report on Plans and Priorities 2009-2010* (Ottawa: Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, 2010), 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada, "2006 Census," <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/rt-td/index-eng.cfm>; Internet; accessed 1 January 2010.

Despite Canada's decreasing birth rate, there is an explosion in the Aboriginal population, creating a large proportion of the Aboriginal community that is very young. There have been several CF initiatives implemented in the past to attract Aboriginal youth into the military yielding varying results. Most programs have been successful at attracting Aboriginals, but at lower numbers than projected; particularly in the officer cadre. The CF is trying to remedy this issue by initiating programs such as the ALOY at the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC), which focuses on attracting Aboriginals to leadership positions and the officer cadre. The purpose of ALOY is to attract Aboriginals with leadership potential and allow them the opportunity to further their education and pursue professional goals. This in turn creates more role models within the Aboriginal community, hence increasing the attractiveness of joining the CF. In order to weather the next human resource crisis in the next ten to twenty years, the CF must be better able to attract and retain a greater number of Aboriginal leaders using programs such as ALOY.

This paper argues that in order to meet future strategic manning goals, the CF needs to improve its programs on attracting and retaining Aboriginals into leadership positions by using and expanding upon initiatives like the ALOY program. An analysis of Canadian demographics, Aboriginal culture, present programs, and an examination of recruitment strategies used by other organizations within Canada and throughout the world will demonstrate why the ALOY program will continue to be successful. In order to successfully increase manning in ten to twenty years, the CF must better attract and retain a greater number of Aboriginal leaders using programs such as ALOY. By fully utilizing initiatives such as ALOY to attract and retain Aboriginal leaders, the CF will be one-step closer to mitigating the future human resource crisis by increasing its pool of

young, interested and qualified recruits. This paper is divided into seven chapters that examine the significance of programs such as ALOY and the circumstances that led to its inception.

An examination of Canadian demographics confirms there is going to be a labour shortage of young recruits eligible to join the CF in the next ten to twenty years. Despite Canada's aging workforce and declining birth rates, the total population continues to increase due to immigration and a population explosion among Aboriginal people. Unfortunately, the CF has been unable to attract immigrants and Aboriginals in sufficient numbers toward careers in the military. This confirms that current recruiting strategies are not meeting forecasted expectations. There is a need for change if the CF wishes to continue to maintain its strategic intake plan in the future.

Culture plays an important role in explaining the poor representation of visible minorities and Aboriginals in the CF. Low representation of visible minorities is caused by cultural stigmas associated with the military in which there is no immediate solution in the near future. Historical data on Aboriginals and their contributions to the military suggests that the cultural barriers between the two can be mitigated and bridged. Therefore, a study of Aboriginal cultural similarities and differences as it relates to the military can reveal best practices for recruiting and retention. This will involve the accommodation of Aboriginal culture into the CF if it wishes to attract and retain Aboriginals in sufficient numbers. To be successful, the CF can promote and leverage cultural similarities including common values, teamwork, community, and the desire for higher education. With a better understanding of cultural differences, CF recruiters and program developers can leverage and bridge the major differences between the CF and

Aboriginals. These differences include dissimilar leadership styles, spiritual/cultural isolation and language barriers. A better understanding of the importance of culture allows for a more thorough examination of recruiting programs both within and outside of Canada.

Several lessons learned and best practises become apparent with an analysis of other programs outside of the CF, including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Brock University's programs. The RCMP is able to leverage spiritual/cultural isolation issues, while Brock University is at the leading edge of Aboriginal professional education. A further examination of military outreach programs within other countries including Australia and New Zealand also has great value. Australia's relationship with its Indigenous people and recruiting programs are very similar to Canada's. Australia's poor recruiting results confirm that Canada must change the ways it attempts to attract and retain Aboriginal people. Quite opposite to Australia, the New Zealand Defence Force's relationship with its Indigenous people (the Māori) shows cultural accommodation and acceptance, reflective in the high representation of Māori members in its military. The New Zealand Defence Force's relation with the Māori should stand as the desired end-state the CF strives to attain with Aboriginals. The CF can learn from all these external examples and use this information to improve its programs and avoid the mistakes of others.

An examination of CF Aboriginal outreach initiatives before ALOY reveals four very similar programs aimed at increasing the level of interest and participation of Aboriginals in the CF. All four programs are similar in that they attempt to attract Aboriginals to careers in the military through job opportunities and providing trade-based

skills. These programs have been insufficient at attracting the number of Aboriginal members that the CF has set out to attain. More specifically, statistics shows that these programs have been particularly ineffective at attracting Aboriginals into the officer cadre and positions of leadership. The deficiencies in these programs to attract Aboriginal youth interested in professional level education and further leadership led to the development of the ALOY program.

The ALOY program is the CF's attempt to combine all of the lessons learned from other outreach programs, while providing Aboriginal youth the opportunity to pursue professional leadership skills through university education. A short history of the ALOY program identifies the CF's willingness to adapt to Aboriginal cultural differences, thereby opening the door for increased recruiting in the future. By promoting cultural similarities and having a robust mitigation plan to address cultural differences within the university setting, ALOY is at the leading edge of military outreach programs. An overview of the program demonstrates that ALOY and ALOY-type programs are the key to future recruiting if the CF wants to attract more Aboriginals into military service.

If the CF cannot quickly adapt to population and cultural changes occurring within Canada, it faces another critical manning shortage in the near future. By recognizing and addressing these issues now, the CF can avoid past mistakes and cultivate a force better representative of its population because "...if a [military] does not reflect the values and composition of the larger society that nurtures it, it invariably loses the support and allegiance of that society."<sup>4</sup>

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## CHAPTER 2 – DEMOGRAPHICS AND THE HUMAN RESOURCE CRISIS

Despite finally meeting desired manning levels within the CF after approximately fifteen years of shortages, the next human resource crisis for the CF is quickly approaching due to demographic shifts. The aim of this chapter is to analyze future demographic trends within Canada as they pertain to recruitment in the CF. In particular, population growth rates and future trends substantiate the recruiting crisis the CF will encounter between 2021 and 2031. A quick examination of immigration demographics and trends reveals that attracting a greater number of visible minorities may not be the sole solution for the CF. Aboriginal demographics identifies the explosion in their population with a large number of youth that will be eligible for recruitment in the coming decades. Present employment data of Aboriginals within the CF demonstrates the need of the CF to have better Aboriginal representation. Next, a comparison between the percentages of Aboriginal non-commissioned members (NCM) and officers in the CF reveals that the officer cadre is significantly further behind recruiting and retention numbers of NCMs. Finally, education demographics among Aboriginals substantiate the lower representation of officers in the CF and highlight the potential to appeal to young Aboriginal leaders through incentives involving higher education.

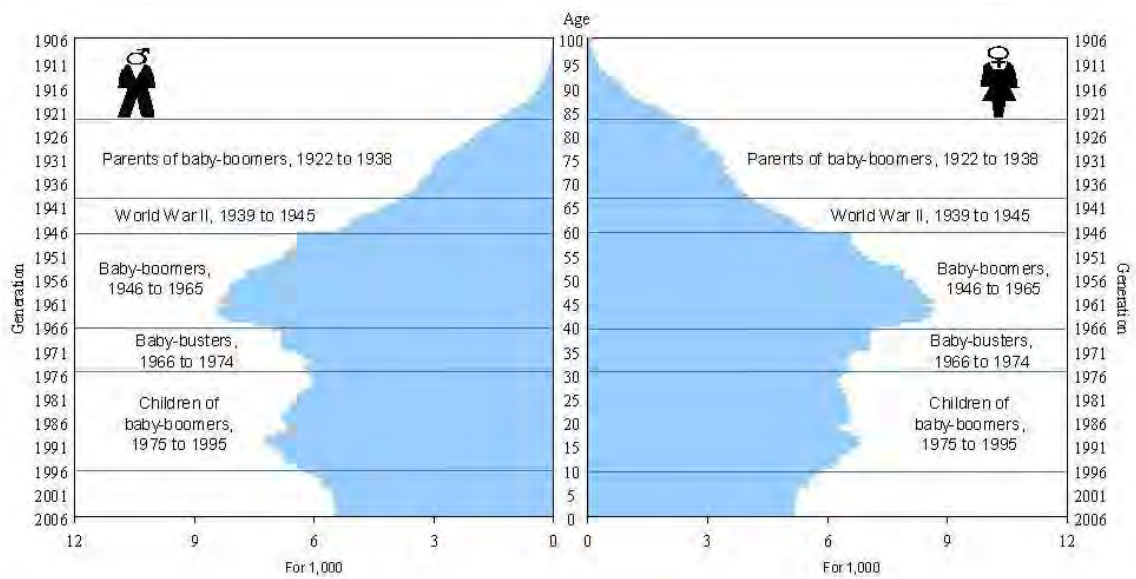
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<sup>4</sup> Franklin C. Pinch, Allister T. MacIntyre, Phyllis Browne, and Alan C. Okros, ed., *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues* (Kingston: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005), 198.

## Canada's Population Trends

“Canada has an aging population that is being heavily influenced by the ‘baby boom’ generation, a huge segment of the population born between 1947 and 1966.”<sup>5</sup>

After the baby boom, birth rates have declined creating an inverse population pyramid as seen in Figure 2-1.



**Figure 2-1. – Age Pyramid of the Canadian Population in 2006.**

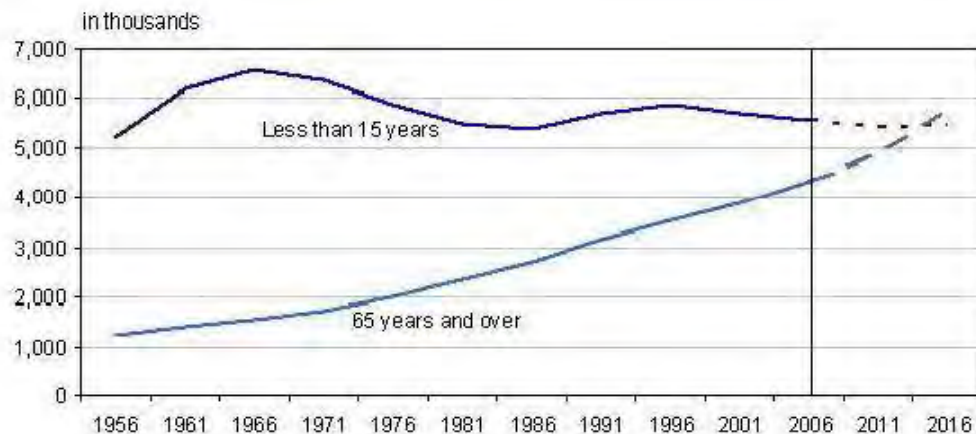
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census.

By 2015, the number of people over sixty-five years of age will be greater than the number of youths under fifteen, as seen in Figure 2-2. Further demonstrating the effects of this inverse population pyramid, between 2001 and 2006, the working age population

<sup>5</sup> Captain(N) A. F. Rueban, "Recruiting Visible Minorities: A Matter of Survival" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College National Security Studies Course Master's Thesis, 2004), 13.



between the ages of fifty-five and sixty-four increased by 28% and the percentage of Canadians under the age of fifteen dropped to its lowest level ever at 17.7%.<sup>6</sup> By the year 2020, there will be more people approaching retirement age than entering the work force. “By 2031, about 25% of Canadians will be aged sixty-five years or older, up from 13% in 2006.”<sup>7</sup> The impact of these statistics is that the CF faces an enormous workforce outflow rate between 2021 and 2031 with a declining pool of potential recruits to replace those retiring. The CF has attempted to mitigate the workforce outflow by extending the compulsory retirement age from fifty-five to sixty, but this cannot be an effective solution in the future. The answers lie in recruiting.



**Figure 2-2. – Number of persons aged 65 or older and number of children aged less than 15 years in Canadian Populace. (1956-2016)**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census.

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Census*.

<sup>7</sup> Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, *The Demographic Time Bomb: Mitigating the Effects of Demographic Change in Canada* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2006), 11.

## **Immigration and Visible Minorities**

Despite the drop in birth rates in recent years, Canada's overall population is still increasing. This increase is a result of Canada's immigration policies. As of 1 October 2010, Canada's population increased 0.4% from 1 July 2010 because of immigration. Of the additional 129,300 people in Canada during that period, 84,200 of them were immigrants.<sup>8</sup> Canada's immigration policy maintains a workforce despite the decrease in the Canadian born populace. Therefore, it is logical to assume the large numbers of immigrants coming into Canada can supplement the CF's future outflow rates, but the solution is not that simple. As of 2006, only 5% of the CF's regular force members consisted of visible minorities, which is much lower than the 17% representation that exists in the civilian workforce.<sup>9</sup> The CF has experienced difficulties recruiting visible minorities in the past and this trend should continue in the near future. Chapter 3 validates this theory through an explanation of the cultural issues revealing no set solutions. Therefore, attracting a greater percentage of visible minorities may not be the sole solution for the CF, but an analysis of Aboriginal demographics reveals a population explosion and possible solution to the CF's dilemma.

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<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Census*.

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

## Aboriginal Population Trends

Results from the 2006 census reveals the number of Aboriginal people within Canada is 1,172,790.<sup>10</sup> This is a drastic increase from 1996 and 2001 where the Aboriginal populations were 799,010 and 976,305 respectively.<sup>11</sup> Between 1996 and 2006, the Aboriginal population in Canada has increased nearly 45% compared to that of 8% for non-Aboriginals.<sup>12</sup> This represents a population increase almost six times higher than the rest of the country.

In addition to the increase in the Aboriginal population, their percentage of Canada's total population is also increasing.<sup>13</sup> Aboriginal people now make up 3.8% of the total population of Canada. This number has been steadily increasing since 1996 when Aboriginals only made up 2.8% of the population and 3.3% in 2001.<sup>14</sup> At this rate, the percentage of Canada's total population that is Aboriginal is growing at a rate of 0.1% per year.

There are a few of reasons to account for the explosion in the Aboriginal population. A high birth rate accounts for a large majority of the increase, but in addition, "...more individuals are identifying themselves as Aboriginal persons, and there has also been a reduction in the number of incompletely [*sic*] enumerated Indian reserves

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<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Census*.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

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

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

since 1996.”<sup>15</sup> This was the result of census questionnaire changes in the 1996, where Statistics Canada asked if Canadians were ‘Aboriginal’ as opposed to asking ‘their ethnic origin’.<sup>16</sup> Despite the changes in the 1996 census, statistics since then indicate the Aboriginal population in Canada is still growing at an extremely high rate. Further analysis of Aboriginal demographics reveals there will be large percentage of Aboriginal people eligible to join the CF when it faces its manning shortages.

In 2006, according to Statistics Canada, the Aboriginal population is much younger with a median age of 27 compared to the non-Aboriginal population’s median age of 40.<sup>17</sup> Aboriginals will account for a growing share of the young population within Canada for several years to come. As of 2006, youth and children under the age of 24 years of age made up 48% of the total Aboriginal population.<sup>18</sup> By the year 2017, Aboriginal youth expect to make up a remarkably large percentage of the total youth within several provinces as seen in Table 2-1. These high numbers represent a large recruiting pool for the CF in the future. Recruiting members in their twenties is ideal if the CF hopes to get a return on its training investments. The CF must take advantage of this information and become more attractive to Aboriginal youth, as present efforts to recruit larger percentages of Aboriginals to the CF have produced disappointing results.

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<sup>15</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Census*.

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

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

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

Province	Percentage of Aboriginals between the ages of 20-29
Saskatchewan	30%
Manitoba	24%
Yukon	40%
Northwest Territories	58%
Nunavut	80%

**Table 2-1. – Percentage of Aboriginal Youth Between Ages of 20-29 in Year 2017.**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census.

### **Aboriginals in the CF**

“In 1998, the CF identified a ten year goal of 3% as reasonable for Regular Force participation for Aboriginal people.”<sup>19</sup> As of 2010, the CF’s goal is 3.4%. Presently, Aboriginal people only make up 1.9% of the CF’s Regular Force.<sup>20</sup> When this number is broken down further, 2.36% of all NCMs in the CF are Aboriginal, while only 1.35% of all officers are Aboriginal.<sup>21</sup> This data demonstrates that although Aboriginal recruitment is much lower than the CF’s strategic goals, it is particularly ineffective at attracting Aboriginals at the officer level by a ratio of almost two to one.

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<sup>19</sup> Department of National Defence, *Requirements for Achieving Proportionality Targets for Aboriginal Peoples in the CF Research Note RN 9803* (Ottawa: Defence Research and Development Canada, 1998), 2.

<sup>20</sup> Canadian Forces Directorate of Human Rights and Diversity, *Canadian Forces Employment Equity Report 2009-2010*. Report prepared for Office of the Chief Human resources Officer (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2010) schedule 4.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, schedule 4.

Advertising and awareness of the CF does not appear to be the reason for low representation of Aboriginals in the CF. Data collected between January 2003 and October 2006 indicated that 6.7% of all persons visiting CF Recruiting Centres (CFRC) were Aboriginal, but only 1% enrolled.<sup>22</sup> This enrolment number is much lower than the national average and suggests that although Aboriginal applicants visit CFRCs, they are less likely to enrol than their Caucasian counterparts.<sup>23</sup> This data suggests that the CF needs to do more to attract members of the Aboriginal community moving beyond just getting them through the doors of CFRCs. Young Aboriginals appear aware of job prospects within the CF, but do not enrol in sufficient numbers. The CF needs to develop and expand programs that attract Aboriginal youth. Furthermore, an examination of Aboriginal education demographics reveals the incentive of obtaining a better education can be an effective selling point.

### **Aboriginal Education Demographics**

Aboriginal applicants to the CF are proportionally less educated than non-Aboriginals. As an example, of all Aboriginals applicants that applied to the CF, 44% had less than a High School diploma. This number is high when compared to visible minorities at 20.3% and Caucasians at 28.8%.<sup>24</sup> One reason for this large difference is the fact that Aboriginal applicants tend to be younger than their non-Aboriginal

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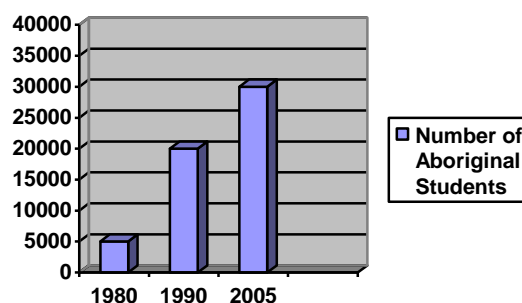
<sup>22</sup> Irina Goldenberg, *Canadian Forces Prospect Survey: Analysis by Employment Equity Group* (Ottawa: Centre for Operational Research and Analysis, Defence R&D, 2007), iv.

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

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

counterparts, hence a larger percentage apply between the ages of 16 and 20. The lower education level of Aboriginal recruits also explains the lower percentage of Aboriginal CF members who are officers.

The CF needs to be aware that educational trends among Aboriginal youth are changing. “In 1980, there were about 5000 Status [Aboriginals] registered in post-secondary education programs.”<sup>25</sup> By 1990, the number had risen to 20,000, and in 2005, the number was over 30,000.<sup>26</sup> These numbers depict a positive trend of Aboriginal youth wishing to further their post-secondary education as seen in Figure 2-3.



**Figure 2-3. – Number of Aboriginals in Post Secondary Education Programs (1980 to 2005).**

“Just like non-Aboriginals, the rapidly growing and better educated population of young Aboriginals is [*sic*] looking for careers and opportunities to better themselves.”<sup>27</sup> The CF must take advantage of the desire for Aboriginal youth to further their education by

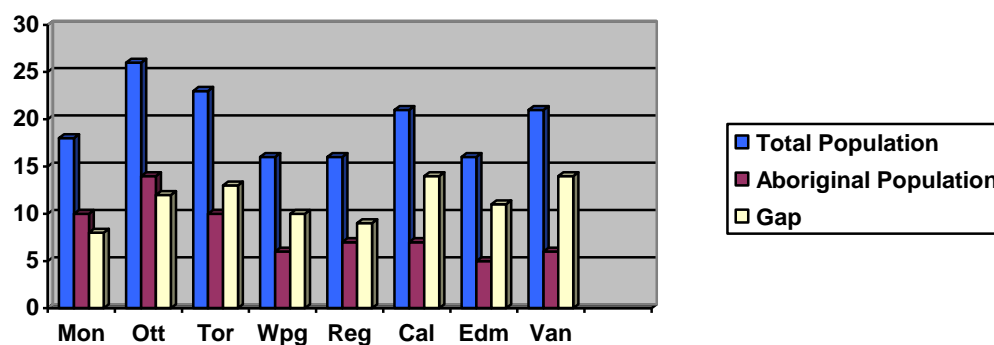
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<sup>25</sup> Harvey McCue, *Strengthening Relationships between the Canadian Forces and Aboriginal People* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1999), 27.

<sup>26</sup> Louise Brown, "Natives Plan for Better Future; Education seen as Cornerstone Investment Sought from Summit," *Toronto Star*, 23 Nov 2010, 19.

<sup>27</sup> McCue, *Strengthening Relationships between the Canadian Forces and Aboriginal People*, 31.

providing such opportunities. Figure 2-4 demonstrates the percentage of Aboriginals compared to the total population for specific cities that have completed university degrees. Winnipeg and Regina have lower gaps attributable to Aboriginal programs within the province. This graph demonstrates that there is still a large percentage of Aboriginal youth that require an opportunity to attend university. It also demonstrates that Aboriginal youth respond better to Aboriginal based university programs. CF initiatives such as the ALOY allow Aboriginal youth to complete their university educations in a unique Aboriginal based program and is discussed in further detail in Chapter 6.



**Figure 2-4. – Percentage of Aboriginal and Total Population Aged 15+ Completing University, (and the Gap) by City, 2001 Census.**

Source: Mendelson, *Aboriginal Peoples and Postsecondary Education in Canada*, 23.



## Demographic Conclusions

In 2006, the Auditor General of Canada stated,

The demographic die is cast: there is little we can do to reverse or even slow the ageing of Canada's population over the coming decades. But it is certainly within our power to plan better for it.<sup>28</sup>

These words should stand as the strategic vision to counter the CF's upcoming human resources crisis. As a large percentage of the CF's workforce prepares to retire between 2021 and 2031, the CF needs to attract young recruits despite a shrinking population growth among Canadian born recruits. Although immigration enables Canada's civilian workforce to maintain its numbers, statistics show that visible minorities may not be the sole solution for the CF. The CF must take full advantage of a young Aboriginal population that is experiencing a population explosion. CFRC's have attracted potential Aboriginal recruits, but a disappointingly low number are actually enrolling. In addition, the CF has particular difficulties attracting Aboriginal recruits into the officer cadre. An examination of culture in the CF and Aboriginals helps identify the reasons for the low enrolment rates and presents opportunities for maximizing similarities and mitigating differences. Culture is the focus of Chapter 3.

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<sup>28</sup> Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, *The Demographic Time Bomb: Mitigating the Effects of Demographic Change in Canada*, 1.

### CHAPTER 3 – CULTURE AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO CF RECRUITING

Despite needing to address the upcoming manning crisis, the CF also needs to attract a greater proportion of Aboriginal members to be more representative of its society. “In democratic societies, especially those that value diversity, it is widely agreed that public institutions should meet the needs of the populations they serve.”<sup>29</sup> The credibility of the CF to its population is dependant on reflecting the society it serves and therefore, should attempt to reflect Canada’s wide variety of cultures.<sup>30</sup> To meet this goal and attain its “...own personnel needs, the CF must draw upon the largest pool of eligible, interested and motivated individuals in Canada’s diverse population.”<sup>31</sup> Aboriginal youth will continue to make up an increasingly larger proportion of Canada’s workforce in the future. To attract greater numbers of Aboriginal youth, it is paramount that recruiters and program designers possess in-depth knowledge of Aboriginal culture.

This chapter examines culture and its impact on recruiting and retention. An examination of culture within Canada’s largest visible minority groups reveals that unlike the public workforce, visible minorities are not the sole solution to solving the CF’s future recruiting crisis. Next, a history of Aboriginals in the CF since the First World War reveals the military did not always have the issues recruiting Aboriginal people into military service as it does today. The final section of this chapter examines the cultural

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<sup>29</sup> J. W. Berry, *A Conceptual Framework for Achieving Diversity and Equity in the Candian Forces* (Kingston: Cross Cultural/Multicultural Associates Inc., 1997), 3.

<sup>30</sup> Rueban, *Recruiting Visible Minorities: A Matter of Survival*, 20.

<sup>31</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 146.

similarities and differences between Aboriginals and the CF. Capitalizing on the similarities between the two cultures and bridging or mitigating the differences is imperative to attracting future Aboriginal recruits into CF programs. With an improved understanding of the social and cultural differences, Aboriginal programs existing both inside and outside the CF are further analyzed in following chapters.

“Culture is the set of values, norms guiding beliefs, and understandings that is shared by members of an organization and taught to new members.”<sup>32</sup> Within an organization, culture “...provides members with a sense of organizational identity and generates a commitment to beliefs and values that are larger than themselves.”<sup>33</sup> As it relates to the military, culture is defined as “...the bedrock of military effectiveness...” where members derive their “...motivations, aspirations, norms and rules of conduct.”<sup>34</sup> To understand the issues involved in visible minority and Aboriginal recruiting and retention, it is important to have in depth knowledge of cultures involved, as they are vital to understanding how groups relate to each other and aids in adapting to differences when possible.<sup>35</sup> Understanding the values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of the CF, visible minorities and Aboriginals is imperative for any analysis of culture and its effect on recruiting and retention.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Richard L. Daft *Organization Theory and Design*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (Vanderbilt University: Thomson Learning, 2004), 361.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 361.

<sup>34</sup> Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press), 10.

<sup>35</sup> Daft, *Organization Theory and Design*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed., 361.

<sup>36</sup> English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective*, 11.

## Visible Minorities

Although not the primary focus of this paper, one cannot ignore visible minority recruiting as a potential solution to the CF's future recruiting crisis. Nevertheless, the CF has failed to reach its recruiting goals for visible minorities as well as Aboriginals. As discussed in Chapter 2, as of 2006, visible minorities made up only 5% of the CF compared to 17% of the civilian workforce.<sup>37</sup> Immigration represents more than 60% of the observed population growth in Canada since 2000, yet the CF is unable to attract this large pool of potential recruits in adequate numbers.<sup>38</sup> There are various reasons why visible minorities are not interested in joining the CF, mostly related to cultural stigmas. The CF's ability to simply capitalize on cultural similarities and mitigate differences is not an achievable sole solution in the near future.

According to the 2006 report from the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce entitled *Demographic Time Bomb: Mitigating the Effects of Demographic Change in Canada*, "...it will be more difficult for Canada to attract immigrants in the next ten to twenty years since [Canada] will be competing with other countries for immigrants."<sup>39</sup> The report also states that historical sources of immigrants to Canada are also facing declining birth rates and ageing populations.<sup>40</sup> Within the next

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<sup>37</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Census*.

<sup>38</sup> Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, *The Demographic Time Bomb: Mitigating the Effects of Demographic Change in Canada*, i.

<sup>39</sup> Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, *The Demographic Time Bomb: Mitigating the Effects of Demographic Change in Canada*, i.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, i.

few years, Canada's civilian workforce could also be looking at a potential human resource crisis if immigration numbers start to decline. This will increase the negative effect on CF recruiting as civilian jobs become more available.

In Canada, there are over 200 different ethnic origins of immigrants.<sup>41</sup> There are an increasing number of immigrants from Asia and the Middle East; however, Chinese and South Asians remain the largest minority groups. Large proportions of these immigrants are urbanized, preferring to settle in major centers such as Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.<sup>42</sup> They prefer to live in urban centers for reasons of proximity to family and friends, availability of jobs, climate and language.<sup>43</sup> The military typically does not attract a majority of its members from urbanized centers because of the nature of the work and locations where CF members serve. In fact, in 2000, "...51% of all CF applicants came from communities with populations below 100,000 people."<sup>44</sup>

Several cultural stigmas also account for why visible minorities are not attracted to employment in the CF. These stigmas present some obstacles not easily bridged by the CF in the near future. Immigrants from several countries tend to view the military in a negative regard due to the unfavourable image the military represents in their countries of origin. The military can represent an instrument of oppression based on experiences from their home country and escaping oppression is a key reason why many immigrants come to Canada. Perceptions of low status and priorities on fiscal success also tend to deter

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<sup>41</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Census*.

<sup>42</sup> Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, *The Demographic Time Bomb: Mitigating the Effects of Demographic Change in Canada*, 7.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>44</sup> Delta Partners, *Canadian Forces Recruiting Improvement Study. Report Prepared for ADM (HR-Mil)* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2000), 3.

immigrants from joining the CF.<sup>45</sup> The lack of visible role models within visible minority groups also contribute to lower enrolment rates. Finally, a lack of loyalty to Canada, as one would expect a new citizen to be, contributes to lack of interest in joining the CF.<sup>46</sup> Many of these cultural stigmas will diminish as future generations of immigrants and their families inculcate Canadian culture as a way of life. The benefits of a career in the CF may become more apparent in time to immigrants and their children, but this will not solve the immediate recruiting crisis within the next ten to twenty years.

Although several papers have been and will be written on visible minority recruiting in the CF, it is evident that visible minorities are not the sole-solution to solving the CF's recruiting crisis for the next ten to twenty years. This paper will now focus strictly on Aboriginal recruiting as a potential solution to the CF's dilemma.

### **Aboriginal Participation in the Canadian Forces – A Historical Background**

As previously stated, the Canadian Forces had difficulties meeting its Aboriginal recruiting quotas for several years, but this was not always the case. There is "...a long history of Aboriginal people in militarized situations..." and "...the idea of warriors is celebrated in contemporary Aboriginal cultures."<sup>47</sup> Aboriginals were willing to fight for Canada on several occasions. During the First World War, approximately 4000 Treaty

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<sup>45</sup> Rolina van Gaalen, *Visible Minority Recruitment Issues for the Federal Public Service: An Analysis of Survey Results*. (Ottawa: Labour Market Analysis Unit, Research Directorate, Public Service Commission of Canada, 2002) 6.

<sup>46</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Census*.

<sup>47</sup> P. Whitney Lackenbrauer, R. Scott, Scott R. Sheffield, and Craig Leslie Mantle, *Aboriginal People and Military Participation* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 17.

Indians fought for Canada despite several obstacles such as Ottawa's policy not to accept Native volunteers.<sup>48</sup> Approximately 3000 (and as many as 6000) Indians participated in the Second World War, which was close to the Canadian average.<sup>49</sup> During those times, Aboriginals joined out of "...patriotism, adventure, or simply to earn a regular wage."<sup>50</sup> Since the two world wars, "...the Canadian government has been accused of perpetuating 'cultural genocide' against Canada's Aboriginal people."<sup>51</sup> This exacerbated the relationship between the Canadian government and Aboriginal people. Joining the CF for reasons of patriotism diminished for Aboriginal people and trust became a larger issue. Aboriginals still joined the CF but less for reasons of "...following friends or defending an important cause" and more for "...adventure and employment."<sup>52</sup> Throughout the majority of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, segregation and assimilation policies existed which were not conducive to Aboriginal enrolment in the CF. However, since 1969, there have been "...attempts to increase the number of Aboriginal peoples in [the CF's] ranks based on mutual accommodation."<sup>53</sup>

Despite these changes, the CF approached the majority of its Aboriginal recruiting "...in the same manner as it would non-Aboriginal, not taking into account the significant

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<sup>48</sup> John MacFarlane and John Moses, "Different Drummers: Aboriginal Culture and the Canadian Armed Forces, 1939-2002," *Canadian Forces Journal* (Spring 2005); 26.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>51</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 149.

<sup>52</sup> MacFarlane, *Different Drummers: Aboriginal Culture and the Canadian Armed Forces, 1939-2002*, 27.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

cultural and socio-economic challenges that Aboriginals face prior to joining the CF.”<sup>54</sup> All recruits that join the CF, including Aboriginals, were assimilated into the military. This paper acknowledges that “...a great deal of conformity is essential for efficient military training and operations...,” but there are times when accommodation for individuals or cultural groups is appropriate.<sup>55</sup> The report *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues* states that in order to be more successful at recruiting Aboriginals into the CF, it needs to continue to “...strive to integrate, rather than assimilate...” its principles into Aboriginal people.<sup>56</sup>

### **Guiding Cultural Principles for the Canadian Forces**

There is a trend for “...military organizations to be evolving away from rigid, machine-like cultures, towards more flexible, professional cultures.”<sup>57</sup> This tendency bodes well for the CF as it needs to accept change in order to attract Aboriginal people. “Change has been a constant companion of the Canadian Armed Forces during the last half of the twentieth century...” and must continue to do so if it hopes to adapt to upcoming personnel challenges.<sup>58</sup> “Leaders play a crucial role in shaping and reinforcing

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<sup>54</sup> LCdr Guy Parent, "Challenges Associated with the Recruitment of Aboriginal Canadians in the Canadian Forces - an Innovative Approach to a Long Standing Problem" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College Joint Command and Staff Programme Exercise New Horizon, 2009), 2.

<sup>55</sup> MacFarlane, *Different Drummers: Aboriginal Culture and the Canadian Armed Forces, 1939-2002*, 25.

<sup>56</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 152.

<sup>57</sup> English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective*, 40.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.



culture...” therefore, the officer cadre must be the focal point for Aboriginal recruiting as it is responsible for creating and modifying the military organizational culture.<sup>5960</sup>

The CF needs to appreciate the cultural differences of Aboriginal people if it wishes to become a more attractive employer. *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*, promotes “...a melting pot ideology to achieve homogenized military identity derived from a collective unity and identity from the unique function they perform.”<sup>61</sup> Although the CF wishes to achieve this melting pot ideology, it must understand it also needs to accommodate Aboriginal culture and bridge the existing barriers. To do this, the CF must “...determine, acknowledge and understand those values that establish a sense of worth among Aboriginal service members, while, at the same time, recognizing the differences in those cultural values which determine behaviour.”<sup>62</sup> While the CF needs to understand these cultural differences and attempt to accommodate Aboriginal culture, “...it will still be ultimately responsible for what kinds, and how much accommodation can be made, while still meeting its operational goals”.<sup>63</sup> A better understanding of key similarities and differences in Aboriginal culture as it relates to CF culture will be the focus of the rest of this chapter. A better understanding of the bonds and tensions that culture can create will allow a more thorough analysis of determining best practices of Aboriginal programs both within and outside the CF.

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<sup>59</sup> English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective*, 21.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>61</sup> Department of National Defence, *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2003), 20.

<sup>62</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 151.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

## Cultural Similarities

Before discussing cultural differences, there is value in analyzing the cultural similarities between Aboriginals and the CF. Understanding the cultural similarities between the two can help the CF capitalize on present and future programs and focus on promoting the similarities. Similar cultural aspects include common values, teamwork, community and the desire for higher education. These similarities clearly suggest many aspects of the CF are not alien to Aboriginal culture.

### Common Values (the Warrior Spirit)

The Warrior Spirit (or Warrior Ethos) is a common value deeply established in Aboriginal culture and the military. “A number of value orientations nurtured within Aboriginal communities are similar, if not parallel, to the espoused values of the CF.”<sup>64</sup> Values such as “...honour, wisdom, loyalty and respect...” are deeply ingrained in both Aboriginal culture and CF members from the beginning of their careers.<sup>65</sup> “Acquiring greater respect and self-confidence, particularly through discipline...” is another commonality of the warrior spirit between the two cultures.<sup>66</sup> By emphasizing these common values shared by Aboriginals and members of the CF at the earliest stages of

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<sup>64</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 153.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 149.

<sup>66</sup> MacFarlane, *Different Drummers: Aboriginal Culture and the Canadian Armed Forces, 1939-2002*, 28.

training, Aboriginal recruits realize they are not as different from CF members as they first appear to be.

### Teamwork

Teamwork is another important component of both Aboriginal culture and the CF. “The value of group effort and social accomplishment is commonly held by Aboriginals nations with respect to survival and sharing.” This notion is well matched with the concept of teamwork in the CF.<sup>67</sup> During basic training, military members learn that “...military ethos places a high value on teamwork . . . permitting military members and organizations to prevail in the most complex and dangerous settings.”<sup>68</sup> The CF emphasizes that common goals cannot be accomplished individually and that teamwork is essential to success. Knowing they will become a valued member of a team can be a significant incentive for Aboriginal youth to join the CF.

### Community

Community plays an important role for both Aboriginals and the CF. A major theme of Aboriginals and the CF include community-based value systems in which, “...the best interest of the community is placed first and individualistic motives are

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<sup>67</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 154.

<sup>68</sup> Department of National Defence, *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*, 27.

discouraged.”<sup>69</sup> When Aboriginals join the CF, they become part of a new community where there is a real sense of belonging within regiments, ships, units or squadrons. Previous Aboriginal members reported feeling like part of a tribe and having no doubts as to who they were while serving in the CF.<sup>70</sup> This sense of community within the CF allows members of various cultures to integrate into one.

The Aboriginal community also plays a significant role in whether or not members join the CF. Consent from parents and community Elders play an important role in Aboriginals joining the CF; therefore, the CF must remain aware of its need to connect with Aboriginal communities as a whole, and not just individual members.<sup>71</sup> The CF must also maintain a close relationship with Aboriginal communities as numerous Aboriginals credit the military presence within their communities as a key reason for their decision to join the military as opposed to recruiting programs.<sup>72</sup>

## Education

There is great emphasis placed on education by both Aboriginal communities and the CF. While career motivations are “...the main reason for joining the CF, it is not surprising that [Aboriginals] focus on education and training as the most important areas

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<sup>69</sup> Lackenbauer, Sheffield, and Mantle, *Aboriginal People and Military Participation*, 19.

<sup>70</sup> MacFarlane, *Different Drummers: Aboriginal Culture and the Canadian Armed Forces, 1939-2002*, 20.

<sup>71</sup> Karen D. Davis, *Northern Native Entry Program Attrition Monitoring Report: A Preliminary Evaluation* (Willowdale: Canadian Forces Personnel Applied Research Unit, 1996), 1.

<sup>72</sup> MacFarlane, *Different Drummers: Aboriginal Culture and the Canadian Armed Forces, 1939-2002*, 28.

in which they have been helped.”<sup>73</sup> Many Aboriginal veterans “...emphasized how useful their education and training had been for subsequent careers.”<sup>74</sup> Formal education in career fields such as health and medicine have allowed Aboriginal members to take these skills back to their communities after their service to the CF was complete.<sup>75</sup> The importance the CF places on post-secondary education for officers also needs to become a focal point for Aboriginal programs aimed at attracting motivated Aboriginal youth and community leaders. Statistics depict there is a greater desire in Aboriginal communities for university level education and the CF must adjust its programs to capitalize on this opportunity.

#### CF Administrative Policies

There are many similarities between Aboriginal and military culture. However, the CF must be aware that even within these similarities, there are still issues that require resolution. One example is CF financial benefits policies. Benefit policies allow members to receive financial compensation when posted to remote locations or long distances from their families. Policies such as compassionate leave and isolation pay base themselves on the ‘western nuclear family’ model, yet Aboriginal culture often “...makes no distinction between immediate family and much of the surrounding

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<sup>73</sup> MacFarlane, *Different Drummers: Aboriginal Culture and the Canadian Armed Forces, 1939-2002*, 30.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>75</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 156.

community.”<sup>76</sup> Henceforth, despite the fact Aboriginal members may live in highly urbanized areas that are not isolated by CF or western standards; they may feel extremely isolated from their remote communities thousands of kilometres away. Future financial compensation policies must go beyond the typical rigid rules of today and consider the circumstances of its Aboriginal members if the CF wants to maintain a reputation as a fair and equitable employer for Aboriginal people. Small changes such as these could yield great dividends.

### **Cultural Barriers**

An understanding of the cultural differences and barriers between Aboriginals and the CF is critical. By identifying cultural differences and barriers, the CF can develop improvements, mitigate issues and bridge differences in its Aboriginal recruiting programs. The key cultural differences and barriers between Aboriginals and the CF affecting recruitment and retention include different leadership systems and spiritual/cultural isolation. In addition, changes in CF language policies could make a career in the military more attractive for Aboriginal people.

### **CF and Aboriginal Leadership Styles**

The leadership structure of the CF is one of the most significant differences when compared to Aboriginal views on leadership. “Military leadership reinforces hierarchy

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<sup>76</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 162.

and the promotion of military identity based on rank and structure.”<sup>77</sup> Contrary to the military, Aboriginal people have a circular conception of existence where all members are considered equal. This egalitarian view of leadership is inconsistent with the hierarchy of military systems. Many Aboriginals find a hierarchical system to be “...oppressive, difficult to understand, and inherently unfair.”<sup>78</sup> “The notion of subordination is specifically problematic as it further denotes a hierarchical differential.”<sup>79</sup> The differences between hierarchical and egalitarian approaches to leadership also affect the way the two cultures approach decision-making.

Where the military traditionally uses a top-down approach to decision-making, Aboriginals share “...decision-making through consensus [and] is a common practice in contemporary and traditional Aboriginal leadership.”<sup>80</sup> These vastly different approaches to leadership and decision-making have persisted since the First World War and help to explain difficulties Aboriginals have with military practices such “...as the distinction between officers and other ranks.”<sup>81</sup> This fact may also explain why Aboriginal representation within the officer cadre is much lower than in NCM ranks. Throughout the last century, the persistence for Aboriginals to have greater equality between the ranks made adapting to the military a challenge.”<sup>82</sup> Although the CF will not

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<sup>77</sup> Lackenbauer, Sheffield, and Mantle, *Aboriginal People and Military Participation*, 24.

<sup>78</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 157.

<sup>79</sup> Lackenbauer, Sheffield, and Mantle, *Aboriginal People and Military Participation*, 28.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>81</sup> MacFarlane, *Different Drummers: Aboriginal Culture and the Canadian Armed Forces, 1939-2002*, 26.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

compromise on changing its rank structure to accommodate Aboriginal culture, there are some important changes to military leadership styles that are bridging these differences and could better attract and retain Aboriginal people. “Native and Western world-views collide in many respects in military leadership models, but both are values-based.”<sup>83</sup> Some of these values-based leadership styles can bridge the differences between the two cultures.

The CF now emphasizes transformational leadership over transactional leadership in a majority of situations. Through transformational leadership the “...general motivation process [is] based on a shared understanding of the task and mutual commitment and trust.”<sup>84</sup> This coincides with traditional Aboriginal leadership which, falls “...within the lower end of the transformational leadership spectrum...” as seen in Figure 3-1.<sup>85</sup> Facilitative, supportive and participatory leadership influence behaviours are common in Aboriginal leadership.<sup>86</sup> While there appears to be vastly different leadership styles between the CF and Aboriginals, there are significant “...parallels [that] can be drawn using the transformational leadership model.”<sup>87</sup> Despite the fact there are differences between Aboriginal and military leadership models, “...the CF leadership model suggests important commonalities that bridge the seemingly large gaps between

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<sup>83</sup> Lackenbauer, Sheffield, and Mantle, *Aboriginal People and Military Participation*, 32.

<sup>84</sup> Department of National Defence, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations* (Ottawa: Canadian Defence Academy - Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005), 69.

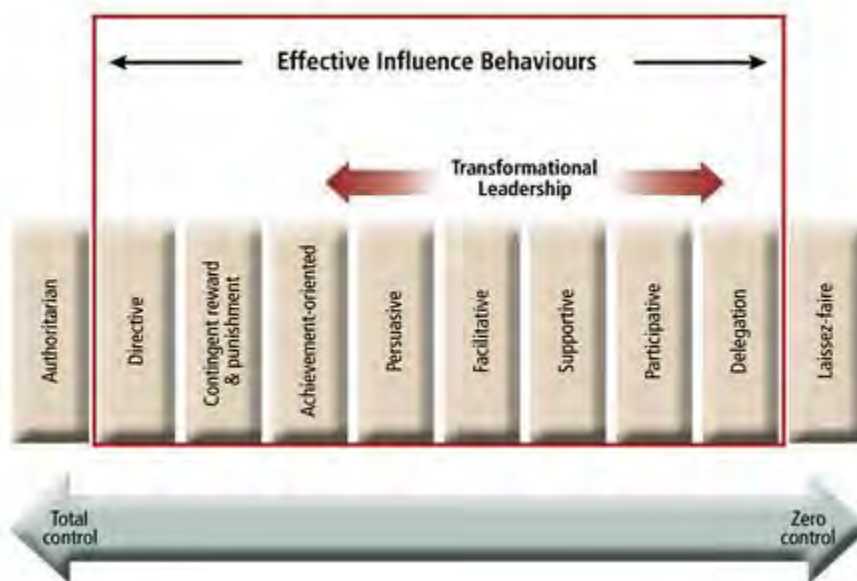
<sup>85</sup> Lackenbauer, Sheffield, and Mantle, *Aboriginal People and Military Participation*, 26.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.



traditional Aboriginal leadership and military principles.”<sup>88</sup> By exposing Aboriginal recruits early in training to transformational leadership styles, retention efforts may be more successful than simply exposing Aboriginal recruits to standard transactional leadership styles often used during basic training.



**Figure 3-1. – Spectrum of Leader Influence Behaviours**

Source: Leadership in the CF: Conceptual Foundations

### Spiritual and Cultural Isolation

Despite the CF’s attempts to accommodate various religious, spiritual and cultural traditions, Aboriginal people still encounter spiritual and cultural isolation when leaving

<sup>88</sup> Lackenbauer, Sheffield, and Mantle, *Aboriginal People and Military Participation*, 17.

their communities for a career in the CF. The inability of Aboriginals "...to communicate with others like themselves and being cut-off from their own culture, family and community "...has a negative impact on retention of Aboriginals in the CF.<sup>89</sup>

In 1996, the Northern Native Entry Program (NNEP) Attrition Monitoring Report stated the lack of Aboriginal retention in the CF was due to feelings of stress in relation to training, culture shock and constant thoughts of home.<sup>90</sup> The report also noted CF social workers and padres were not successful in addressing these situations. Counter to this report, the 'Your-Say' survey in 2006 "...found that visible minorities and Aboriginal members of the CF did not report having greater intentions to leave [the CF] than white members."<sup>91</sup> In fact, a greater number of Aboriginal youth reported joining the CF for reasons of adventure, moving from their communities and travel. Although the NNEP report and Your-Say survey yielded different results, continued low recruiting and retention statistics confirm there are still issues.

The CF is attempting to mitigate the spiritual and cultural isolation issues with further accommodation of certain traditions and the use of Aboriginal Elders. An example of the CF accommodating Aboriginal traditions is the policy allowing "...Aboriginal members to grow longer hair to communicate their cultural heritage."<sup>92</sup> The CF has also made better efforts to increase contact with community Elders and at

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<sup>89</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 163.

<sup>90</sup> Davis, *Northern Native Entry Program Attrition Monitoring Report: A Preliminary Evaluation*, 8.

<sup>91</sup> Nancy Otis and Michelle Staver, *Review of Attrition and Retention Research for the Canadian Forces* (Ottawa: Defence R&D Canada - Centre for Operational Research and Analysis, 2008), 22.

<sup>92</sup> MacFarlane, *Different Drummers: Aboriginal Culture and the Canadian Armed Forces, 1939-2002*, 30.

various bases the "...use of Elders with the CF is encouraged and some locations have appointed a Base Elder to provide spiritual support to Aboriginal service personnel."<sup>93</sup> Elders play an important role in Aboriginal culture, as they are "...the most respected members of Aboriginal communities because of their accumulated wisdom and knowledge."<sup>94</sup> Elders serve as leaders, teachers, historians, healers, spiritual advisors and counsellors within Aboriginal communities.<sup>95</sup> The accommodation of certain Aboriginal traditions and the use of Elders allow the CF to reduce spiritual and cultural isolation in its members and are vital for any Aboriginal program to be successful in the CF.

## Language

Language is the final cultural barrier discussed in this chapter. Although Canada recognizes only two official languages, there are several Aboriginal languages spoken across Canada. As an example, despite its small population, the Inuit alone have five distinct languages.<sup>96</sup> For many Aboriginals (and immigrants), English and French are not their primary languages. As the CF places a great deal of importance in being able to communicate in only its two 'official' languages, not having the ability to speak both English and French drastically reduces chances for advancement and promotion. With Canada's continued demographic shifts, each year more Canadians have a first spoken

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<sup>93</sup> Pinch, MacIntyre, Browne, and Okros, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, 165.

<sup>94</sup> Lackenbauer, Sheffield, and Mantle, *Aboriginal People and Military Participation*, 20.

<sup>95</sup> McCue, *Strengthening Relationships between the Canadian Forces and Aboriginal People*, 18.

<sup>96</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Census*.

language that is neither English nor French. Therefore, the CF needs to re-evaluate its language policies if it hopes to attract and retain quality visible minorities and Aboriginals.

The very nature of CF missions both within and outside of Canada puts an emphasis on its members being able to communicate with local populations. Although the ability to speak languages outside of English or French is a tremendous asset to the military, the CF does not recognize those abilities when formally evaluating potential for advancement. There is no simple solution to this language issue. The fact remains that motivated visible minorities and Aboriginals may be attracted to career opportunities where not having to learn a third (or more) language is required for advancement.

### **Cultural Recommendations**

In the words of David Chuter who wrote extensively on the relationship between the military and society,

If the military does not, at least, make some attempt to adjust to changing social patterns and increased tolerance, then it risks not attracting the best people.<sup>97</sup>

In order for the CF to be more successful at recruiting a larger percentage of Aboriginal people in the future, it needs to promote similarities and bridge cultural differences. Aboriginal programs need to include Aboriginal history as it pertains to the CF, promote teamwork, foster a sense of community and further formal education. Such factors must

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<sup>97</sup> Berry, *A Conceptual Framework for Achieving Diversity and Equity in the Canadian Forces*, 31.

be included if the CF wishes to attract and retain the best and brightest Aboriginal candidates.

CF programs must expose Aboriginal recruits early in training to transformational styles of leadership. Although important to discipline, transactional leadership displayed by training staff during basic training is often not truly reflective of a member's career in the military. Early exposure to transformational leadership styles allow Aboriginals to witness leadership they can better relate and adapt to. They can also learn early in their careers that the hierarchical system of the military does include influence behaviours common in Aboriginal culture.

The inclusion of spiritual and cultural components in CF programs is another important factor for success. By formally including spiritual and cultural practices in program curriculum, Aboriginal recruits (and their communities) know the CF is accommodating of their culture. Without these formal cultural components, negative perceptions of 'assimilation' can exist and create distrust.

Finally, language policies need to reflect fairness for cultures that do not speak English or French as a first official language. By changing language policies, the CF can attract more visible minorities and Aboriginals, thus gaining a valuable resource for deployments within Canada and abroad.

A basic knowledge of Aboriginal cultural similarities, differences and barriers allows for a better evaluation of present programs within the CF, Canada and in other countries. The subsequent chapters examine these programs and analyze the ability of each organization to address social and cultural aspects effectively.

## CHAPTER 4 – OUTREACH PROGRAMS EXTERNAL TO THE CF

An analysis of Aboriginal and Native recruiting and retention policies in organizations outside the CF presents best practices and possible solutions to cultural barriers discussed previously. A better understanding of how these organizations encourage Aboriginal participation can demonstrate measures to improve programs in the CF. This chapter examines Aboriginal outreach programs within Canada including the RCMP and the Brock University initiatives, revealing distinct programs aimed at attracting young Aboriginal leaders. Next, an analysis of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) present two very different relationships between their Indigenous populations and militaries.

### **The RCMP Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training Program**

Similar to the CF, the RCMP experiences difficulties in hiring sufficient numbers of Aboriginal people to represent the population it serves. As of 2010, Aboriginals made up 7.9% of the RCMP with a benchmark set at 10% for the entire organization.<sup>98</sup> Although this number appears quite high when compared to the 1.9% Aboriginal representation in the CF, one should note the RCMP does work closer and in greater numbers within Aboriginal communities. The RCMP "...serves 634 Aboriginal communities across Canada . . . and in all, 67% of all RCMP detachments serve

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<sup>98</sup> Douglas Quan, "Mounties Focus Recruiting Efforts on Minorities," *Victoria Times - Colonist*, 30 Oct 2010.

Aboriginal communities.”<sup>99</sup> Having a greater representation of Aboriginals within its organization is vital to the RCMP as it wishes to reflect the society it serves. Properly representing and serving Aboriginal communities is a precedence for the RCMP and they have set “...serving Canada’s Aboriginal people as one of its five strategic priorities.”<sup>100</sup>

In order to promote equity, the RCMP developed an innovative program called the Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training Program (APTP) aimed at Aboriginal youth between the ages of nineteen and twenty-nine.<sup>101</sup> The APTP program provides eligible candidates with “...hands-on experience in the RCMP’s training program, and a unique opportunity to work in their community with police officers of the RCMP.”<sup>102</sup>

The program is seventeen weeks in duration and consists of three weeks of formal training at the RCMP Depot in Regina, followed by fourteen weeks of hands-on service with RCMP units. At the Depot, training includes classes on “...collaborative problem solving skills, law enforcement, public speaking and cultural diversity.”<sup>103</sup> The candidates learn elements of physical fitness, defence tactics, finger printing, rifle handling, traffic control, on-scene-procedures and time on the RCMP driving track.<sup>104</sup> Upon successful completion of the initial three weeks at the Depot, candidates transfer to

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<sup>99</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "Aboriginal People and the RCMP," <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/recruiting-recrutement/Aboriginal-autochtone/Aboriginal-autochtone-eng.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 January 2011.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training Program," <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/recruiting-recrutement/Aboriginal-autochtone/Aboriginal-autochtone-cadet-eng.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 January 2011.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

locations near their home communities and work directly with RCMP officers.

Depending on the needs of their detachment, duties usually include crime prevention and community policing initiatives. To be eligible for the APTP, candidates must possess a high school diploma, be in good physical shape, be of good character and able to pass an enhanced reliability security check.<sup>105</sup>

The APTP has met with success for the RCMP. Each year, thirty-two candidates partake in the APTP and as of 2007, over 52% of the candidates that attended the program applied to be regular members of the RCMP.<sup>106</sup> The APTP provides Aboriginal youth with challenging and rewarding experiences, which can lead to a career in law enforcement. Candidates gain confidence through discipline and the RCMP promotes values including honour, wisdom, loyalty and respect. An emphasis on the promotion of teamwork is also vital during training at the Depot. The RCMP incorporates community into the APTP program by posting candidates to locations near their home communities where they are able to have a direct and positive impact. Positioning candidates near home communities also prevents issues resulting from cultural/spiritual isolation.

In addition to the APTP, the RCMP recently launched the Aboriginal Community Constable (ACC) program, which provides Aboriginal communities with "...uniformed peace officers at the rank of Special Constable with the primary focus on crime prevention, community engagement and crime reduction."<sup>107</sup> The program aims at

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<sup>105</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "Aboriginal Pre-Cadet Training Program," <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/recruiting-recrutement/Aboriginal-autochtone/Aboriginal-autochtone-cadet-eng.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 January 2011.

<sup>106</sup> Public Safety Canada, *Aboriginal Policing Update* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2007), 4.

<sup>107</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "Aboriginal Community Constable," <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/Aboriginal-autochtone/acc-gca-eng.htm>; Internet; accessed 1 February 2011.



retention of Aboriginal members with specific linguistic, cultural and community skills. The ACC and APTP show that the RCMP are dedicated to recruiting and retaining Aboriginal members and are willing to "...tailor [their] policing services to specific, community-identified needs."<sup>108</sup>

One negative aspect of the RCMP programs is the use of a hierarchical leadership structure that may not appeal to all Aboriginal youth. Similar to the military, there can only be a minimal amount of accommodation in police leadership structures, therefore limiting Aboriginal applicants. In addition, the APTP and ACC do not have any provisions for formal post-secondary education, although it does provide some basic tools for career success. Unfortunately, this type of program typically does not appeal to Aboriginal youth who want to further their educations by attending university immediately following high school.

### **Brock University**

In the 1990's, of all Aboriginals who graduated with postsecondary degrees, a majority said that their worldviews were fundamentally altered from their previous views on Aboriginal culture.<sup>109</sup> "In many instances, such [postsecondary] experiences further divorced graduates from their culture and language."<sup>110</sup> In 1998, Michael Manley Casmir

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<sup>108</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "Aboriginal Community Constable," <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/Aboriginal-autochtone/acc-gca-eng.htm>; Internet; accessed 1 February 2011.

<sup>109</sup> Michael Kompf and John Hodson, "Keeping the Seventh Fire: Developing an Undergraduate Degree Program for Aboriginal Adult Educators," *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 24, no. 2 (2000), 185.

became the Dean of Education at Brock University. He had a strong interest in Aboriginal issues and distance learning and encouraged Brock University to develop a program to address Aboriginal cultural differences.<sup>111</sup> The program was to focus on the need for "...qualified, culturally and spiritually strong Aboriginal faculty, administrators, counsellors and support personnel."<sup>112</sup> Initiatives were developed in consultation with Aboriginal Elders and prominent educators throughout the country. The results of these initiatives were the development of an Aboriginal research centre, a special Aboriginal student program and degree programs that include Aboriginal culture in the curriculum. Brock University is now at the leading edge of providing postsecondary education to Aboriginals through specialized research, support, and degree programs.

Brock University's Tecumseh Centre for Aboriginal Research and Education is "...the only multidisciplinary research entity in Ontario that builds educational programming around the expressed needs and requirements of Aboriginal communities."<sup>113</sup> The centre is a place where undergraduate and graduate scholars "...build a deeper understanding of the needs of Aboriginal communities."<sup>114</sup> The centre focuses on research, training and support for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. It also offers a centre of excellence to other institutions on a wide variety of

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<sup>110</sup> Michael Kompf and John Hodson, "Keeping the Seventh Fire: Developing an Undergraduate Degree Program for Aboriginal Adult Educators," *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 24, no. 2 (2000), 185.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>113</sup> Brock University, "Aboriginal Education Council," <https://www.brocku.ca/Aboriginal-student-services/Aboriginal-education-council>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2011.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

Aboriginal educational issues. CF recruiters and program developers can use organizations such as the Tecumseh Centre for Aboriginal Research and Education as a resource to better understand Aboriginal education needs and develop enhanced programs.

Brock University has an Aboriginal Scholars Program "...specially designed for First Nations, Métis and Inuit which provides free academic, social, and professional support to full-time and part-time students."<sup>115</sup> Brock University uses the program to mitigate the cultural difficulties Aboriginals encounter when leaving their communities. It provides the tools for academic success and encourages social interaction. The program also offers workshops, tutorials, one-on-one counselling and variety of Aboriginal specific activities including drum making, wood burning, in addition to luncheons and awards.<sup>116</sup> These services allow Aboriginal students to transition into the university lifestyle, while keeping close ties to their heritage.

Finally, Brock University offers specialized degrees developed particularly for Aboriginal students across Canada. These programs are offered through Brock University in conjunction with other universities and colleges. Brock is partnered with the Northern Nishnawbi Education Council in the delivery of a Bachelor of Education Program "...that incorporates Indigenous knowledge and land-based curriculum."<sup>117</sup> Brock also offers a Bachelor of Education in Aboriginal Adult Education to three

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<sup>115</sup> Brock University, "Aboriginal Education Council," <https://www.brocku.ca/Aboriginal-student-services/Aboriginal-education-council/>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2011.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> Northern Nishnawbe Education Council, "Bachelor of Education Program," <http://www.nnec.on.ca/bed/>; Internet; accessed 29 Jan 2011.

campuses of the First Nations University of Canada in Saskatchewan.<sup>118</sup> Brock's expanding partnerships with other Canadian universities in delivering its specialized Aboriginal programs demonstrates a growing demand for university-based education for Aboriginal youth.

Brock University serves as a brilliant example of an institution serious about meeting the demand for Aboriginal postsecondary education. It thrives to improve its programs to better adapt to the cultural differences and difficulties Aboriginals have adjusting to western ways. Through programs that promote cultural accommodation as opposed to assimilation, Brock University is "...at the cutting-edge of Aboriginal education."<sup>119</sup> The CF's ALOY program builds upon several of the successful initiatives developed at Brock University. It bases the concept of integrating Aboriginal culture with formal postsecondary education and stands at the cutting-edge for Aboriginal outreach programs.

### **The Australian Defence Force**

There are several similarities between the ADF and the CF in regards to representation and relationships with their Indigenous populous. As of 2006, Indigenous people make up 2.5% of Australia's total population.<sup>120</sup> The percentage of Indigenous

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<sup>118</sup> "Ontario's Brock University Extends Degree to Saskatchewan's First Nations University," *Canadian Press Newswire* (May 2004).

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

members in the ADF is only 1.4%.<sup>121</sup> These statistics are very similar to Aboriginal representation in the CF. Like the CF, the ADF is dedicated to increasing its Indigenous representation in what it considers a win-win situation. The Australian Minister of Defence stated, "...[It is] a win for Defence who will benefit from a new pool of recruits in a challenging and tight labour market . . . and a win [for Indigenous members] who benefit from employment, health and education opportunities."<sup>122</sup> The ADF hopes to attract Indigenous recruits through programs such as the Indigenous Pre-Recruitment Course (IPRC), the Defence Indigenous Development Program (DIDP) and the Indigenous Employment Development Course (IEDC).

The IPRC is an eight-week course designed to aid Indigenous recruits in successfully completing the ADF recruiting process by providing literary skills, fitness, nutrition and military knowledge.<sup>123</sup> Key benefits used to attract Indigenous people to the IPRC are "...good pay, superannuation [*sic*], first-class training, free medical and dental care, access to higher education programs and guaranteed access...to low cost accommodations."<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Government of Australia, "Australian Bureau of Statistics," <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/home?opendocument#from-banner=GT>; Internet; accessed 30 Jan 2011.

<sup>121</sup> Australia Government Department of Defence, "New Program Win-Win for Indigenous Australians and Defence," [http://minister.defence.gov.au/defencemagazine/editions/200809\\_03/fr\\_indigenous.pdf](http://minister.defence.gov.au/defencemagazine/editions/200809_03/fr_indigenous.pdf); Internet; accessed 7 January 2011.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Australia Government Department of Defence, "Indigenous Pre-Recruitment Course," <http://www.defence.gov.au/fr/IA/IPRC%20brochure.pdf>; Internet; accessed 9 January 2011.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

The DIDP is a new seven-month residential program; graduating the first ten candidates from its pilot course in December 2009. The program meets the needs of northern Australia's remote Indigenous peoples. It provides "...Indigenous adults with education, training, life skills and confidence."<sup>125</sup> With the assistance of several government departments and Charles Darwin University, the program provides employment prospects in land care management, construction and rural operations.<sup>126</sup> This range of skills optimizes employment within the ADF and in local communities and mainstream society. Trainees also receive military training and by graduation, qualify to participate in patrolling activities similar to the Canadian Rangers.

The DIDP operates in a "...supportive environment in a central location suitable to enable the students to maintain cultural, family and social connections."<sup>127</sup> Within the seven-month period, trainees cycle approximately four weeks of training followed by one week in their home communities. This training cycle reduces culture shock and feelings of isolation. The course has yielded positive results and expanded from ten to thirty trainees, with a separate DIDP offered by the Navy. The IEDC is a condensed version of the DIDP offered to Indigenous youth and is similar to a Canadian Cadet or Junior Ranger programs.

Indigenous programs are relatively new to the ADF and their curriculums are similar to present Canadian initiatives. The ADF acknowledges the "...challenges posed

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<sup>125</sup> Australian Army; Forces Command North West Mobile Force, "Defence Indigenous Development Program," <http://www.army.gov.au/norforce/DIDP.asp>; Internet: accessed 30 Jan 2011.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Australian Army; Forces Command North West Mobile Force, "Defence Indigenous Development Program," <http://www.army.gov.au/norforce/DIDP.asp>; Internet: accessed 30 Jan 2011.

by separation from family and ‘country’, such as the need to return home for genuine cultural requirements in a timely fashion.”<sup>128</sup> Although the ADF addresses the importance of education for Indigenous peoples, it does not have any innovative programs directed at attracting young leaders interested in university level education. Their programs are primarily NCM based recruiting efforts aimed at providing trade skills, similar to CF programs.

### **The New Zealand Defence Force**

When compared to CF and ADF, the NZDF maintains a much different relationship with its Indigenous population, the Māori. New Zealand’s population in 2006 was just over 4 million.<sup>129</sup> The Māori consisted of over 565,000 or 14.6% of New Zealand’s total population.<sup>130</sup> In 2007, the Māori made up 18% of the total number of members in the NZDF.<sup>131</sup> This number is 3.6% higher than the total percentage of Māori people in New Zealand. The Māori are well represented in all three services and across the ranks. In fact, the NZDF’s Chief of Defence Staff for the past five years, Lieutenant-General Jerry Mateparae is Māori. “As people of Māori ethnicity have a high propensity

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<sup>128</sup> Australia Government Department of Defence, "New Program Win-Win for Indigenous Australians and Defence," [http://minister.defence.gov.au/defencemagazine/editions/200809\\_03/fr\\_indigenous.pdf](http://minister.defence.gov.au/defencemagazine/editions/200809_03/fr_indigenous.pdf); Internet; accessed 7 January 2011.

<sup>129</sup> New Zealand Government, "Statistics New Zealand," <http://www.stats.govt.nz/>; Internet; accessed 3 Feb 2011.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> Grazia Scoppio, "Indigenous Peoples in the New Zealand Defence Force and the Canadian Forces," <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol10/no4/07-scoppio-eng.asp>; Internet; accessed 4 January 2011.

to join [the military], there are no NZDF recruiting strategies specific to Māori people.”<sup>132</sup> Instead of analysing recruiting efforts, best practices that have made the integration of the Māori into the NZDF so successful will be examined. Countries such as Canada and Australia should view the NZDF’s relationship with the Māori as their desired end-state.

Although there are no specific outreach programs to attract the Māori, the NZDF uses several strategies and initiatives to enhance participation of the Māori in the military. The NZDF has taken a number of steps to integrate portions of Māori culture into military culture. The NZDF is very open towards diversity and is “...diversity smart”.<sup>133</sup> The “...NZDF provides a positive Māori identity, and, therefore recruits of Māori ethnicity do not have to sacrifice their own identity when they join the NZDF.”<sup>134</sup> With almost half the Army of Māori descent, every soldier undergoes Māori initiation rites that make him or her part of the ‘warrior tribe’.<sup>135</sup> The army also builds Marae, which are meeting places dedicated to the Māori God of War. Leaders within the NZDF are encouraged to learn the Māori language and soldiers learn the Haka, which is the Māori warrior dance. The NZDF also ensures there are Māori cultural advisors available to members of all three elements on all of their bases. These cultural advisors are the equivalent of Aboriginal Elders and provide the same type of cultural and spiritual support. All of these examples show the NZDF is not only willing to tolerate or

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<sup>132</sup> Scoppio, *Indigenous Peoples in the New Zealand Defence Force and the Canadian Forces*.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*



accommodate Māori culture within the military, but fully embrace it and make Māori culture a part of the military as a whole. The CF's ability to achieve the cultural integration the NZDF enjoys with the Māori may be limited due to a number of factors not easily bridged.

Geography is a major difference between Canada and New Zealand. Canada is an extremely large country compared to New Zealand. Given New Zealand's small size, the Māori are never truly isolated over large distances from their own communities. Additionally, because New Zealand is so small, the Māori are more homogeneous than Canada's Aboriginals. There are subtle differences among Māori between different regions, yet they share a common language and similar cultural and spiritual practices.<sup>136</sup> Reduced geographic isolation between Māori and other inhabitants of New Zealand also allows for better integration of the two cultures.

The New Zealand government has been more successful than Canada at integrating the Māori with the rest of the country. New Zealand was able to resolve land disputes and grievances creating better relations. As of 1986, the New Zealand government adopted a comprehensive approach to all government dealings with Māori businesses, initiatives and community issues.<sup>137</sup> Although not initially supported before 1960, the Māori language is now an official language.<sup>138</sup> There are several Aboriginal languages spoken within Canada and making them all official languages is impractical, if not impossible. However, government language policies for advancement and promotion

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<sup>136</sup> Scoppio, *Indigenous Peoples in the New Zealand Defence Force and the Canadian Forces*.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> Lackenbauer, Sheffield, and Mantle, *Aboriginal People and Military Participation*, 237.

should acknowledge the fact that Canadians speak languages other than French and English. By formally acknowledging other languages native to Canada, the CF could attain more diversity in its members.

The relationship between the NZDF and the Māori people serves as an excellent example of how the military and indigenous peoples can work well together through true understanding and genuine mutual accommodation. Although there are several differences between Canada and New Zealand, mainly due to geography, the CF can learn and implement various best practices of the NZDF.

With a better understanding of the pros and cons of various outreach programs used by organizations outside the CF, best practices and deficiencies in present CF programs can now be better identified. By examining present CF programs in the following chapter, additional benefits a program such as ALOY provides become noticeably apparent.

## **CHAPTER 5 – ABORIGINAL RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS IN THE CF**

Prior to the ALOY program, the CF implemented several Aboriginal initiatives and entry plans to raise awareness and interest towards enrolling in the CF. Such programs include The Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program (CFAEP), Bold Eagle, Black Bear, and Raven. Although each program has its successes, the continued low representation of Aboriginals in the CF reveals that something is still missing in CF recruiting efforts. By analysing each program for its strengths and weaknesses, a case can be made that the CF was missing a program to attract the best and brightest Aboriginal youth until the inception of the ALOY program.

### **The Canadian Forces Aboriginal Entry Program (CFAEP)**

Before the CFAEP, the Northern Native Entry Program aimed at “...recruiting Aboriginals from the far north and providing them with special preparatory training to adjust to the military and southern lifestyle.”<sup>139</sup> This program was unsuccessful as it only aimed at remotely populated Aboriginal communities in the north. Aboriginals from these areas encountered considerable amounts of culture shock for which the CF was not able to mitigate. In response to the lessons learned from the Northern Native Entry Program, the CFAEP was established. The CFAEP is a “...special recruiting program within the CF that offers full-time Regular Force training and employment opportunities

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<sup>139</sup> McCue, *Strengthening Relationships between the Canadian Forces and Aboriginal People*, 29.

to qualified Aboriginal people across Canada.”<sup>140</sup> In order to be qualified for the program candidates must be Aboriginal, a Canadian citizen, seventeen years of age, meet medical standards and have completed at least Grade 10.

This no-obligation program provides candidates interested in the CF with a chance to learn more about military life through a three-week pre-recruit training course held at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Esquimalt, British Columbia and CFB Borden, Ontario. The course curriculum consists of basic military skills including “...inspections, daily physical fitness and sports, navigation with a compass and maps, basic weapons training and drill.”<sup>141</sup> Candidates also learn about the proud history of Aboriginal participation in the military. They receive a \$1200 bonus upon completion of the course and have the option to enrol as a Regular or Reserve Force member.

Aboriginal counsellors who are full-time members of the staff address the issues of culture shock and feelings of isolation. They are available at any time to discuss concerns the recruits may have. Although the CFAEP allows candidates to experience the military first-hand in a no obligation setting, candidates only get exposure to teamwork, follower-ship and the fundamentals of military basic training skills. The CFAEP does not expose candidates to any form of post-secondary education experience or leadership. Programs such as the CFAEP appeal to young Aboriginals trying to attain employment and receive trade skills, but are not designed to attract motivated Aboriginals interested in leadership positions and university level education.

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<sup>140</sup> McCue, *Strengthening Relationships between the Canadian Forces and Aboriginal People*, 29.

<sup>141</sup> Department of National Defence, "Forces.Ca," <http://www.forces.ca/en/home/>; Internet; accessed 2 Feb 2011.

### **Bold Eagle, Raven and Black Bear**

Bold Eagle, Raven and Black Bear are unique summer training programs for Aboriginal youth located in CFBs Wainwright (in Alberta), Borden, and Esquimalt, respectively. These programs aim to "...build bridges into the Aboriginal communities in Canada and to make Aboriginal youth aware of potential military or civilian careers in the Department of National Defence."<sup>142</sup> Offered over the summer, these programs are broken into two parts. The first portion of the programs is a four-day culture camp used to ease Aboriginal youth into the military lifestyle, taught by Elders from various First Nations and Aboriginal groups. The Culture Camp focuses on Aboriginal culture and spiritual beliefs. Following the Culture Camp is six-weeks of military recruit training. The courses offer candidates the standard Army Reserve Basic Military Qualification on subjects including general military knowledge, weapons handling, navigation, first aid, drill and survival skills.<sup>143</sup> Candidates receive the standard pay rate of a Private recruit, which is approximately \$3500 for the summer. Eligibility for Bold Eagle, Raven and Black Bear is the same as the CFAEP.

Similar to the CFAEP, these programs offer candidates the opportunity to experience the military first-hand in a no obligation setting. Also similar to the CFAEP, these programs are follower-based programs, not designed to attract potential recruits to the office cadre by exposing them to post-secondary education benefits or officer-level leadership.

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<sup>142</sup> Department of National Defence, "Forces.Ca," <http://www.forces.ca/en/home/>; Internet; accessed 2 Feb 2011.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

The previous five chapters identified the need for the CF to develop an innovative program different from past initiatives. In addition to appealing to young Aboriginals who will find a career in the CF both challenging and fulfilling, this program must attempt to attract the Aboriginal leaders of tomorrow. In response to these requirements, the CF developed the ALOY program to give future Aboriginal leaders a chance to experience the CF while in a university setting. By attracting Aboriginal youth to programs such as ALOY, the CF can take advantage of the growing number of Aboriginal youth who are interested in becoming leaders in the CF, in society and within their communities. ALOY aims at giving bright, qualified Aboriginal youth the opportunity to succeed in leadership positions while also providing the CF with the talent needed to move forward.

## CHAPTER 6 – THE ABORIGINAL LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY YEAR

Having identified the requirement for the CF to provide a program specifically designed at producing officers, the latest Aboriginal outreach initiative is the ALOY program, which commenced in 2008. ALOY is a one-year program offered by the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC), providing Aboriginal youth with the opportunity “...to socialize, interact, learn in a multicultural environment and to develop and foster leadership skills in a uniquely diverse context.”<sup>144</sup> ALOY is very distinct from any of the military Aboriginal outreach programs previously discussed in that its primary aim is to prepare Aboriginal youth for post-secondary education in a university environment while preparing them for positions of leadership.<sup>145</sup>

This chapter discusses the history of the ALOY program and explains the program, curriculum and what separates it from other CF outreach programs. An examination of ALOY will demonstrate how the CF responded to the increased desire of Aboriginal youth to acquire post-secondary education and attain positions of leadership. The ALOY program builds upon the cultural similarities previously discussed and possesses robust measures to mitigate the difficulties Aboriginal youth experience when adapting to military and western ways. Results from the pilot-year of the program in 2008 demonstrated a need for a number of changes, which RMC responded to before the commencement of its second year. The changes led to excellent results in ALOY’s

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<sup>144</sup> Royal Military College of Canada, *Background: RMC Aboriginal Leadership Opportunity Year*, (Kingston: Royal Military College of Canada, 2007).

<sup>145</sup> The author of this research paper is the former Royal Military College Chief Instructor (2008-2010) and was responsible for the overall delivery of the ALOY program.

second year, paving the way for future success. Finally, suggested improvements and recommendations are presented to help ensure ALOY's success in the future.

### **History of ALOY**

The ALOY program was designed with the assistance of the Canadian Defence Academy (CDA), RMC, Aboriginal communities throughout Canada and serving Aboriginal members within the military. From its inception, the CF sought to ensure success through buy-in from all stakeholders. The purpose of ALOY was to have a program that fosters leadership and personal growth in a supportive and challenging learning environment; therefore, RMC was the logical choice. While at the college, the ALOY cadets form their own squadron, integrating with RMC's thirteen other Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP) and Reserve Entry Training Plan (RETP) squadrons. By conducting ALOY at RMC, Aboriginal cadets get exposure to both a university and military setting, while having the opportunity to interact with some of Canada's brightest future leaders.

Each year, the ALOY program consists of approximately twenty Aboriginal youth selected from across Canada who enrol in the CF as officer cadets. While at RMC, ALOY cadets receive full subsidization including free tuition and books. The program is obligation free and members may cease participation at any time without penalty. Upon successful completion of the program, ALOY members have the opportunity to apply to RMC or civilian universities as regular students under the ROTP or RETP. ALOY cadets



uninterested in CF careers can use their training and academic credits to apply to other schools, apply for civilian jobs or return to their home communities.

### **The ALOY Program**

The ALOY program is very similar to the ROTP/RETP offered at RMC. The ROTP/RETP is comprised of four primary components required for leadership within the CF, namely academics, second language training, physical fitness and military leadership. ALOY also builds upon these four components with one distinct difference. ALOY replaces the second language-training component with an Aboriginal culture component. The ALOY cadets then integrate with ROTP/RETP cadets for the remaining three components allowing them to build bonds with other non-Aboriginal students at RMC.

### **Academics**

The academic portion of the ALOY program is comprised of a combination of university preparatory courses and first year undergraduate courses. Each candidate receives an individual learning plan based on an initial assessment provided by RMC's academic faculty. The learning plans incorporate student learning levels and interests.<sup>146</sup> Small group tutorials are always available for students encountering difficulties or in need of added assistance.

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<sup>146</sup> Royal Military College of Canada, *Backgrounder: RMC Aboriginal Leadership Opportunity Year*.

In addition to ALOY specific learning plans, RMC offers Aboriginal courses as part of its university curriculum to its entire student body. Courses offered such as ‘Aboriginal People in Canada: A History’ emphasise historical relationships between Native and Non-Native groups including “...military alliances, political relationships, civilization, education, culture and language and Aboriginal rights and self-government.”<sup>147</sup> Similar to Brock University’s initiatives, courses such as these demonstrate RMC’s commitment to Aboriginal people and its ALOY students. Offering Aboriginal based courses also demonstrates RMC’s commitment to educating non-Aboriginals on their culture, history and importance to Canada.

### Physical Fitness

Like all military courses and programs, physical fitness plays an important role in the ALOY program. ALOY cadets participate in various organized physical fitness classes and activities. They are also required to partake in the CF Express test, which is the CF’s physical fitness standard for all members. If they fail to meet the minimum standard of the CF Express test, ALOY cadets must partake in supplementary training three times a week with other ROTP/RETP cadets who failed to meet the same CF standard. The supplementary training allows cadets the opportunity to raise their physical fitness levels to the CF’s minimum standard.

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<sup>147</sup> Royal Military College of Canada, "Royal Military College of Canada: Undergraduate Calendar 2010-2011," <http://www.rmc.ca/aca/ac-pe/ug-apc/his/index-eng.asp>; Internet; accessed 5 Feb 2011.

ALOY cadets participate in the ROTP/RETP intra-mural sports program and play organized sports as members of the ROTP/RETP squadrons. By becoming members of other squadron intra-mural sports teams, ALOY cadets have the opportunity to integrate with the other students at RMC. ALOY students are also eligible to join any of the RMC varsity sports programs providing them added exposure to the university lifestyle and an opportunity to see other universities within Canada. Through the ALOY physical fitness component, ALOY students become physically fit, are better able to cope with stress, learn to work as a team and bond with the student population at RMC.

### Military Training

When ALOY cadets arrive at RMC in late summer for the commencement of the program, they participate in the same Recruit Camp as their ROTP/RETP counterparts. During this intense three-week period, cadets learn basic military skills including service knowledge, drill and basic leadership. Once the academic school year commences, ALOY cadets receive continued military and leadership training every Wednesday morning as part of their primary military training (PMT) curriculum. During PMT, ALOY cadets receive classes in military history, leadership, ethics, effective communications, CF regulations, planning activities, first aid and drill.<sup>148</sup> Throughout the program year, ALOY cadets are assessed on their officer like qualities including integrity, loyalty, conduct, courage and dedication as part of their military training.

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<sup>148</sup> Royal Military College of Canada, *Course Training Plan: Aboriginal Leadership Opportunity Year*, (Kingston: Royal Military College of Canada, 2010).

The ALOY military training component culminates in a year-end practicum field exercise. Unique to ALOY, the practicum occurs during a four-week period after the end of the academic year. The practicum commences with three weeks of training in planning, preparing and conducting tasks based on the CF Task Procedure Model.<sup>149</sup> Also included in the training are water safety, first aid and leadership. The practicum training ends with a seven-day field exercise requiring participants to plan, prepare and lead a portion of a canoe expedition through the Rideau Canal system. The practicum allows ALOY cadets to apply all of the training they receive throughout the year to adventure training with strong Aboriginal roots.

### Cultural Component

A unique portion of the ALOY program is its Cultural component. Besides Aboriginal courses in the academic curriculum and the practicum, the ALOY program provides additional cultural activities to its cadets through the Queen's University Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre (FDASC) and a contracted Aboriginal Elder.

The FDASC provides ALOY cadets with Aboriginal programming in addition to access to other community Elders, sharing circles and Aboriginal based courses. The courses offered at the FDASC include drum making, spiritual customs, and Aboriginal culture and communication styles. ALOY cadets attend the FDASC once a week and have the opportunity to interact with other non-military Aboriginals attending Queen's University. As members of the FDASC, ALOY cadets also have the opportunity to

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<sup>149</sup> Royal Military College, *Aboriginal Leadership Opportunity Year Practicum General Instructions*, (Kingston: Royal Military College of Canada, 2009).

partake in various optional events including feasts and symposiums offered at Queen's University.

Recognizing the importance of mitigating cultural and spiritual isolation in Aboriginal cadets, RMC contracts a local Elder to address these issues. The Elder is a member of the RMC staff and is able to identify difficulties ALOY cadets experience throughout the year and ensure the cultural aspects of the program are representative of all Aboriginal groups. Other responsibilities of the Elder include interacting with ALOY cadets on a traditional and spiritual basis, assisting them in facing difficulties, providing emotional and social support and addressing behavioural issues. In addition to responsibilities to the ALOY cadets, the Elder liaises with RMC staff on potential issues and provides Aboriginal awareness training. All RMC staff members who are a part of the ALOY program receive formal Aboriginal awareness training through the Elder. The RMC Aboriginal Elder also provides staff with informal cultural activities and team building experiences such as Aboriginal sweat lodges.

In addition to formal Aboriginal cultural curriculum offered through RMC or the FDASC, ALOY cadets are encouraged to participate in local Aboriginal events and feasts, attend Aboriginal symposiums and demonstrate Aboriginal culture during regular RMC parades and ceremonies. RMC has integrated Aboriginal cultural activities such as traditional drumming, singing and dancing into several formal events including ROTP/RETP graduation ceremonies. Acceptance and inclusion of Aboriginal cultural events and activities not only demonstrates RMC's commitment to ALOY, but also provides the future leaders (ROTP/RETP cadets) of the CF with added cultural awareness of Aboriginal people early in their careers.

## ALOY Results 2008-2010

Nine cadets of a class of twenty-four graduated from the ALOY program during its inaugural year in 2008. Of the nine graduates, four applied and were accepted into the ROTP/RETP programs, two were accepted in the University Training Plan Non-Commissioned Member (a commissioning program for NCMs), two reverted to NCM, one enrolled in a college police services program and one found employment with an Aboriginal security firm.<sup>150</sup> Despite these successes, the ALOY program lost fourteen cadets throughout its first year; therefore, only 38% of the ALOY cadets completed the program. CDA conducted a lessons learned and identified several improvements for the following year's program as shown in Table 6-1.

<b>Deficiency</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>
Cadets lacking the necessary academic background accepted into the ALOY program.	Better vetting of ALOY applicant files by the Canadian Forces Recruiting Group, CDA and RMC
ALOY needed a dedicated Squadron Commander (The Squadron Commander for ALOY was also responsible for eighty ROTP/RETP cadets).	Hire a Squadron Commander whose only responsibility was ALOY.
No formal written training plan for ALOY existed.	CDA and RMC formalize an ALOY course-training plan.
ALOY cadets were often separated from ROTP/RETP events creating feelings of exclusion.	ALOY to be included in a majority of RMC events as members of the college.

**Table 6-1. – ALOY Lessons Learned (2009)**

Source: Canadian Defence Academy

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<sup>150</sup> Royal Military College of Canada, Operations and Training Branch. *Aboriginal Leadership Opportunity Year Report*. Report Prepared for Commander Joint Education, Training and Warfare Australian Defence College. (Kingston: Royal Military College of Canada, 2010), 3.

RMC implemented all of these changes and the second year of the program met with greater success. In the second year of the ALOY program, eight of the original eleven ALOY cadets graduated from the program. This was a 72% completion rate compared to 36% the year before. The significant increase from the previous year was attributable to the program changes made. Even more significant is the fact that of the eight graduates, six applied and were accepted into the ROTP/RETP program; while one other applied and was accepted to a civilian university.<sup>151</sup>

### **ALOY Improvements – The Way Ahead**

ALOY is still a young program and although it is improving with maturity, future success can be ensured with improvements including early acceptance of applicants, changes in bilingualism standards, the continuity of dedicated and knowledgeable staff with Aboriginal experience and finally, expansion.

The second year of the ALOY program saw its number of accepted participants drop from twenty-four to eleven. Although this may be attributable to high attrition rates from the programs first year and word-of-mouth, another probable cause was late acceptance offers to ALOY candidates. By delaying acceptance offers to the ALOY program, Aboriginal youth interested in post-secondary education made commitments to other schools and programs when their future at RMC was unclear. After providing timely acceptances for the programs third year, RMC was able to fill all twenty ALOY

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<sup>151</sup> Data provided with permission from Chief Warrant Officer J.C. Young Aboriginal Desk Officer, CDA, email 12:19pm 7 February 2011.

positions in 2010. Continued vigilance in advertising, recruiting and timely acceptance offers to ALOY candidates is vital for the programs future success.

Although Canada recognizes only English and French as its two official languages, exceptions must be made in the ROTP/RETP Qualification Standard for Aboriginals (and other visible minorities) who speak neither English nor French as their first official language. The present standard for the ROTP/RETP program require cadets to become functionally bilingual in their second language before graduating. When referring to one's "second language", the Qualification Standard and the CF are referring to only English or French.<sup>152</sup> If the CF wishes to attract and retain increased numbers of Aboriginal cadets after graduating from ALOY, it must recognize that some Aboriginal's primary language is neither English nor French. When English or French are not a candidate's first official language, realistic allowances must be made in order to allow Aboriginal's to learn Canada's two official languages in an acceptable timeframe. This may include language training after the ROTP/RETP programs are complete and should not affect cadets from graduating with their classmates. The ROTP/RETP programs are extremely challenging and time-consuming. By adding the burden of having to learn or improve a second and third language, the ROTP/RETP programs may not be attractive to Aboriginal youth with other options outside the CF.

It is extremely important to the credibility and stability of the ALOY program that staff members be knowledgeable and sensitive of Aboriginal culture. Ideally, having staff members of Aboriginal decent is preferable, but not always practical in the military. RMC must continue to attract staff members that are dedicated to the success of ALOY

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<sup>152</sup> Royal Military College, *Regular Officer Training Plan: Qualification Standard*, (Kingston: Royal Military College of Canada, 2009) 37.



and sensitive to Aboriginal culture and issues. Ensuring the right personnel are part of ALOY program will be particularly vital to its early success.

If the number and quality of Aboriginal applicants increase in the coming years, the ALOY program needs to expand if the CF hopes to attract enough Aboriginals to solve its upcoming human resource crisis. RMC is presently unable to expand the ALOY program due to limited infrastructure; therefore, the CF should look to expand the ALOY program into other military facilities such as the College Royale Militaire (CMR) in St Jean. If the demand for Aboriginal programs such as ALOY continues to grow, the CF must expand accordingly so as to not jeopardize success.

The ALOY is a cutting-edge Aboriginal outreach program incorporating lessons-learned from other outreach programs and leveraging the positive aspects. The ALOY program focuses on cultural similarities between the CF and Aboriginals, including common values, teamwork, community and the growing desire of young Aboriginals to attain university educations. Most importantly, the program addresses cultural differences and barriers with robust measures. Cadets are exposed to various transformational leadership styles throughout the program, exposing them early in their careers to facilitative, supportive and participatory leadership influence behaviours, which are more common among Aboriginal culture. Cultural and spiritual isolation issues are mitigated through cadet involvement with local Aboriginal communities, participation at the FDASC and having an Elder on staff. RMC has also embraced ALOY by providing Aboriginal courses as part of its curriculum and the inclusion of Aboriginal culture in its formal and social events.

The ALOY program is the first step towards creating a more positive relationship between the CF and Aboriginals, similar to the bond enjoyed by the NZDF and the Māori. In addition to exposing Aboriginals to military culture, ALOY exposes non-Aboriginal ROTP/RETP cadets (the future leaders of the CF) to Aboriginal culture early in their careers. This ingrained familiarity with Aboriginal culture will help create acceptance and a sense of normalcy between Aboriginals and the senior leadership of CF.

With each successful year of the ALOY program, prior graduates will progress through the ranks of the CF's officer cadre increasing the number of role models in Aboriginal communities and creating positive word-of-mouth. Aboriginal youth will see that the CF offers opportunities to become professionals and Canada's next leaders, versus only a job opportunity or a chance to learn a trade. The ALOY program will increase Aboriginal recruiting and retention efforts over the next ten to twenty years creating a win-win situation for Aboriginal youth, their communities and the CF.

## CHAPTER 7 - CONCLUSION

Since 1996, the CF has been dealing with a human resource crisis precipitated by the FRP and ASD initiatives of the mid 1990's. Attracting sufficient skilled personnel to meet the CF's staffing requirements was a challenge until recently. The CF averted its human resource crisis, but an investigation into future Canadian demographics reveals an upcoming shortage in the Canadian labour pool within the next ten to twenty years. This shortage will create another critical manning crisis for the CF.

As was detailed in Chapter 2, Canada has an ageing workforce influenced by the 'baby-boom' generation approaching retirement age and low birth rates. By the year 2020, there will be more people retiring than joining the work force. The CF faces an enormous workforce outflow rate in the next ten to twenty years with a declining pool of potential recruits to replace those retiring. For an organization that relies heavily on the recruitment of young Canadians, a reduced recruiting pool could cripple the CF if recruiting efforts do not expand outside of traditional sources.

Despite declining birth rates, Canada's overall population is still increasing due to both immigration and an Aboriginal population explosion. Canada maintains its civilian workforce through immigration. Unfortunately, statistical data confirms visible minorities are not attracted to careers in the CF. Visible minorities make up 17% of the total population of Canada, yet comprise only 5% of the military. The CF has experienced difficulties recruiting visible minorities in the past and this trend will likely continue in the near future for a number of reasons. Visible minorities want to live in urbanized centres to be close to family and friends, they desire to live in better climates

and they want to be near people of their own culture. Several visible minorities also attach cultural stigmas to service in the CF including an unfavourable image of the military, perceptions of low fiscal status, and a lack of patriotism to their new country of residence. These stigmas will continue to be an issue in the short term, but may become redundant once future generations of immigrants become ingrained within Canadian culture.

Historical sources of immigrants to Canada are also experiencing ageing populations similar to Canada, decreasing the number of immigrants and increasing the competition with other countries to attract these immigrants. The CF's ability to simply improve its outreach programs to attract a better representation of visible minorities is not a viable sole-solution for its near-term manning shortages. The CF solution to its future personnel shortage lies within Canada's Aboriginal population.

Since 1996, the Aboriginal population in Canada has increased nearly 45% compared to 8% for non-Aboriginals. This explosion in the Aboriginal population, with a large percentage approaching the ideal recruiting age in the next ten to twenty years presents a viable solution to the CF's future staffing crisis. Unfortunately, present Aboriginal representation and interest in the CF is comparable to that of visible minorities. Although Aboriginals represent 3.8% (and growing) of Canada's population, they make up only 1.9% of the CF. The number of Aboriginal officers in the CF is even lower at 1.35%. This data demonstrates that although Aboriginal representation is much lower than the CF's strategic goals, it is particularly ineffective at attracting Aboriginals into the officer cadre by a ratio of almost two to one. Officer recruitment needs to be a priority in CF Aboriginal outreach initiatives.

Unlike the problems the CF faces with recruiting visible minorities, a significant increase in Aboriginal recruiting is possible. Historical data demonstrates Aboriginals have been willing to fight for Canada throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but loyalties have waned in the later part of the century due to negative government policies. In recent years, the relationship between Aboriginal people and the government has improved; therefore, improved Aboriginal recruiting should be possible. As shown throughout this paper, present Aboriginal outreach programs within the CF have proven to be ineffective at attracting young Aboriginals in greater numbers. The CF has been particularly ineffective at attracting bright, young Aboriginal youth interested in leadership positions within the officer cadre. The CF needs to attract more Aboriginals with the potential to be officers by offering programs that promote university education and leadership training. The ALOY program detailed in Chapter 6 is the ideal means of attracting these future leaders.

A major factor affecting Aboriginal recruiting and retention within the CF is the differences in culture. In order for any Aboriginal outreach program to be successful (including ALOY), considerations for Aboriginal culture must be made. Although Aboriginals, as all members of the CF, have to conform to the military in varying degrees, the CF needs to be willing to accommodate certain aspects of Aboriginal culture if it wishes to be an attractive career option. Developers of CF outreach programs aimed at Aboriginal recruiting must capitalize on similarities between Aboriginal culture and the military to include aspects of common values shared, the emphasis of teamwork, and the importance of community. While leveraging cultural similarities is important, bridging cultural differences and barriers is even more vital to the success of any CF

Aboriginal outreach program. Key cultural differences and barriers that need addressing include different leadership systems and spiritual and cultural isolation issues. By properly mitigating these cultural issues, the CF can increase interest in joining the CF.

As illustrated in earlier chapters, there is great value in learning from programs offered by Canadian organizations outside the CF. The RCMP has been able to deal with cultural and spiritual isolation issues with the APTP by providing its candidates hands-on experience in their home communities while working with local RCMP police officers. By offering CF outreach programs in close proximity to Aboriginal communities, student's feelings of isolation are reduced. Reducing feelings of isolation is particularly important in the early stages of an Aboriginal recruit's career.

Brock University serves as a brilliant example of an institution dedicated to meeting the demands for Aboriginal postsecondary education. It strives to improve its programs to better adapt to the cultural differences and difficulties Aboriginals experience in adjusting to western ways. Brock University is now at the leading edge of providing postsecondary education to Aboriginals through specialized research, support, and degree programs. Brock University serves an excellent example and role model of how the CF can improve Aboriginal outreach programs in regards to university education.

Research into programs outside of Canada also offers valuable insight between their militaries and Indigenous populations. Australia and New Zealand have Indigenous populations that share two very different relationships with their militaries. The ADF programs are very similar to the CF's and centre on NCM based recruiting efforts, aimed at providing employment and trade skills. Although the ADF addresses the importance

of education for Indigenous people, it does not have any innovative programs directed at attracting young leaders interested in university level education. The low representation of Indigenous people in the ADF is reflective of its lack of innovation in recruiting efforts. The ADF initiatives to recruit their Indigenous people serve as a reminder to Canada that the CF cannot attain its desired goals by maintaining the status quo.

The relationship between the NZDF and its Indigenous population, the Māori, serves as an excellent example of how a military and its indigenous people can work well together through true understanding and mutual accommodation. The NZDF is 'diversity smart' and takes several steps to integrate portions of Māori culture into its own military culture. Māori recruits do not have to sacrifice their own cultural ethnicity when they join the NZDF and as a result, Māori representation in the military is higher than the national workforce average. The NZDF should represent the desired strategic end-state for the CF where Aboriginal representation meets or exceeds national averages and outreach programs are no longer necessary.

Excluding ALOY, present CF initiatives such as the CFAEP, Bold Eagle, Black Bear, and Raven are programs that address cultural concerns and build pride in being Aboriginal and members of the CF. Unfortunately, these programs have been insufficient in attracting Aboriginal people to the CF in significant numbers, particularly the officer cadre. These programs do not address the changing demographics in Aboriginal youth, particularly the increased desire to further postsecondary education and become community leaders. By building upon the successes and lessons learned from these programs and then expanding on formal post-secondary education and leadership training, the CF created the ALOY program.

ALOY is a one-year program offered by RMC providing Aboriginal youth the opportunity to socialize, interact, and learn in a multicultural environment and to develop and foster leadership skills in a uniquely diverse context. ALOY is very distinct from any other military Aboriginal outreach program previously discussed in that its primary aim is to prepare Aboriginal youth for post-secondary education in a university environment; therefore, preparing them for positions of leadership within the CF and Canadian society. The ALOY program was developed in conjunction with the CF, Aboriginal communities and serving Aboriginal members of the CF. By involving all stakeholders, the CF hopes to make ALOY a win-win program for Aboriginal communities, its participants and the CF.

The ALOY program is similar to the ROTP/RETP program offered at RMC and has four key components, which are academics, physical fitness, military leadership and Aboriginal culture. ALOY cadets integrate with ROTP/RETP cadets for three of the components (the exception being the cultural component) allowing them to build bonds with other non-Aboriginal students at RMC. The ALOY program successfully addresses cultural issues by having Aboriginal culture an equal part of its curriculum and supporting it through a staff Elder and access to the local Aboriginal community outside of RMC.

There were many lessons learned throughout the first two years of the ALOY program, but results have shown that a growing number of ALOY cadets are applying to become officers in the CF and leaders within their communities. As the program matures, more Aboriginal officers will fill the ranks of the CF, providing role models for future generations of Aboriginals to join the CF. As popularity of the ALOY program



increases among Aboriginal communities, the CF should look to expand ALOY outside of RMC. CMR would be the next logical location as it has the necessary resources to support ALOY and will have the ability to better attract Aboriginal youth in Francophone parts of Canada.

Without programs similar to ALOY, aimed at recruiting Aboriginals into the officer cadre, continued low Aboriginal recruitment results must be expected in the future. Motivated Aboriginal youth with the desire to lead will find alternative employment to the CF; therefore, reducing the number of Aboriginal role models to inspire future generations to join. In addition to increased Aboriginal recruiting, ALOY also provides the future leaders of the CF (ROTP/RETP officer cadets) with crucial early career exposure to Aboriginal culture creating an atmosphere of acceptance within the CF.

This paper clearly illustrates the CF is destined for another human resource crisis. If the CF wishes to weather the upcoming personnel shortage and be more representative of the country it serves, it must continue to think outside the box and look for non-traditional ways of recruiting Aboriginal members, particularly in the officer cadre. ALOY is such a program and gives the CF the best opportunity to effectively access a pool of recruits that it has been ineffective at attracting in the past. With ALOY's continued success and expansion, Aboriginal interest in military careers will increase, helping the CF better prepare for the upcoming human resource crisis.

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