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**ADVANCING *BEYOND TRANSFORMATION...*:  
SETTING THE CONDITIONS FOR IMPROVED CPO1/CWO EMPLOYMENT AT  
THE STRATEGIC LEVEL**

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**Master of Defence Studies**

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STRATEGIC LEVEL**

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

CF	Canadian Forces
CFCWO	Canadian Forces Chief Warrant Officer
CO	Commanding Officer
CPO1	Chief Petty Officer 1 <sup>st</sup> Class
CSM	Command Sergeant Major (United States Army)
CWO	Chief Warrant Officer
KP	Key Position
NCM	Non-Commissioned Member
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
PD	Professional Development
RSM	Regimental Sergeant Major
SA	Senior Appointment
<i>SEM</i>	<i>Beyond Transformation: The CPO1/CWO Strategic Employment Model</i>
SO	Strategic Objective
US	United States
WO	Warrant Officer

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## ABSTRACT

In parallel to the changing strategic situation and organizational restructuring of the Canadian Forces, an evolution in the roles and responsibilities of commissioned officers and non-commissioned members is occurring. The increasing complexity of military operations has necessitated the delegation of additional responsibilities normally associated with the commissioned officer cadre to non-commissioned members. In particular, non-commissioned member responsibilities are evolving from largely tactical level roles to ones with increased expectations at the operational and strategic levels. The Canadian Forces Professional Development System is tailored to produce non-commissioned members that are tactically excellent; however, it insufficiently prepares the few senior-most non-commissioned members who are destined for employment at the operational and strategic levels. To address this deficiency, in 2011 the Canadian Forces provided strategic direction aimed at developing a systematic and adaptable approach to the development, employment, and sustainment of its senior-most non-commissioned members toward strategic level employment in a publication titled *Beyond Transformation: The CPO1/CWO Strategic Employment Model*. A study focusing on two of the publication's strategic objectives reveals that several relatively cost-efficient steps can be taken now to begin operationalizing its aim. The Canadian Forces should issue joint command doctrine, should take further steps to promote non-commissioned member contributions to its professional journals, should reframe the 'command team' concept as the commander/senior non-commissioned leader team, and take measures to further empower Chief Petty Officers 1<sup>st</sup> Class/Chief Warrant Officers in Senior Appointments and Key Positions.

## INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the Cold War, the Canadian Forces (CF) have been in a state of perpetual transformation, beginning with a force reduction seeking to capitalize on the ‘peace dividend’ through to retired General Rick Hillier’s 2006 organizational restructuring known as CF Transformation and its current redux version.<sup>1</sup> In parallel to the changing strategic situation and organizational shifts within the CF, an evolution in the roles and responsibilities of commissioned officers and non-commissioned members (NCMs) is occurring. Traditionally, the roles of commander, planner, and policy maker are associated with the commissioned officer cadre.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, NCMs, specifically senior NCMs,<sup>3</sup> have traditionally been the immediate supervisors of soldiers, their mentors, and their trainers. They have been the small unit team-builders, the tactical and technical experts, the military’s primary disciplinarians, and the vital link between soldiers and the officer corps.<sup>4</sup> As Colonel Bernd Horn states, “Simply put, the senior NCO conducts the daily business of an army.”<sup>5</sup> However, the increasing complexity of military operations since the end of the Cold War-era has necessitated that the CF devolve additional responsibility to NCMs.<sup>6</sup> The result is a significant degree of overlap between the responsibilities within the two corps. In particular, NCM responsibilities are evolving from

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<sup>1</sup>Bernd Horn, "Crucible of Success: The Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Corps," in *"Grassroots": Perspectives of Senior Non-Commissioned Officers on Operations*, ed. Emily Spencer (Winnipeg: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2008), x; Department of National Defence, "Backgrounder. Canadian Forces Transformation: New Operational Command and Control Structure," last accessed April 7, 2013. <http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/news-nouvelles/news-nouvelles-eng.asp?id=4195>.

<sup>2</sup>Robert S. Rush, *NCO Guide*, 9th ed. (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2010), 36.

<sup>3</sup>The terms ‘senior NCMs’ or ‘senior non-commissioned officer’ (NCO) generally refer to NCMs of higher ranks who have leadership responsibilities. They usually include NCMs of the sergeant, warrant officer, and petty officer ranks.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 36; Department of National Defence. A-PA-005-000/AP-001, *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2009), 77; Department of National Defence. Directorate of Army Training, *The NCO: Backbone of the Army* (Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence, 2000), 4-5.

<sup>5</sup>Horn, *Crucible of Success: The Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Corps*, xiii.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, x-xiv.

largely tactical level roles to ones with increased expectations at the operational and strategic levels.

In order to prepare individuals for increased responsibility, the CF structures professional development (PD) activities at various stages in a member's career. These activities are designed to instil the expertise necessary for individuals to effectively undertake their duties.<sup>7</sup> However, despite an increasing overlap of roles, the CF has different approaches to the PD of officers and NCMs. The officer PD system identifies high-potential officers early in their careers; these chosen few are prepared for future operational and strategic responsibilities through exposure to a broader range of PD opportunities than their peers. Conversely, the NCM PD system is tailored for tactical excellence and ensures that all individuals in a peer-rank group are exposed to the same PD experience.<sup>8</sup> This is an appropriate and effective approach for the majority of NCMs, including most Chief Petty Officers 1<sup>st</sup> Class (CPO1s)/Chief Warrant Officers (CWOs)<sup>9</sup>, since the majority will serve at the tactical level for their entire careers. However, it insufficiently prepares those few CPO1/CWOs destined for employment beyond the tactical level.<sup>10</sup> In an effort to address this deficiency, the CF published *Beyond Transformation: The CPO1/CWO Strategic Employment Model* (the SEM), in 2011. This publication provides strategic direction aimed at developing a “systematic and adaptable approach to the development, employment and sustainment of CPO1/CWOs toward strategic level employment.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Department of National Defence, *The Canadian Forces Professional Development System Document: Guidance to the Staff and Line Institutions on the Operation of the Professional Development System (Version 34)* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, February 15, 2011), 8.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 41-46.

<sup>9</sup>The Chief Warrant Officer and its naval equivalent, the Chief Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class, is the highest NCM rank in the CF.

<sup>10</sup>Department of National Defence, *Beyond Transformation: The CPO1/CWO Strategic Employment Model* (Winnipeg, MB: 17 Wing Winnipeg Publishing Office, 2011), 20.

<sup>11</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . , 2.



The document outlines five strategic objectives (SOs) that aim toward realizing its goal:

- SO1 – Foster a Common Command and Leadership Culture
- SO2 – Maintain Stewardship of CPO1/CWO Professional Competencies
- SO3 – Strongly Contribute to CF Institutional and Operational Leadership
- SO4 – Enhance NCM Career Opportunity with Increased Flexibility
- SO5 – Support Strategic CPO1/CWO Professional Development<sup>12</sup>

The *SEM*'s description of the SOs has intentionally focused on requirements and rationale, and avoids explicitly indicating how SOs are to be realized, delegating these determinations to “the communities of interest and practice.”<sup>13</sup> The goal of this paper is to identify ways to progress toward operationalizing the *SEM*'s SOs. A review of the *SEM* reveals that the full realization of all five SOs and the implementation of the *SEM*'s “Progressive Model” of NCM career progression will require significant study and expenditure of resources.<sup>14</sup> In light of the fiscal pressures that the CF is currently facing, a full implementation of the *SEM* in the near term is unlikely. It is in these circumstances that this paper focuses toward identifying actions that can be taken now, with minimal expenditure, to begin implementing the strategic guidance contained within the *SEM*.

Both the *SEM* and the CFCWO (the senior-most NCM in the CF) have indicated that the CPO1/CWOs' (hereafter referred to collectively as CWOs) core competencies of experience, wisdom, professionalism, ethics, and integrity are essential and that the roles of Regimental Sergeants-Major, Coxswains, and Squadron CWOs are considered vital ground and should not change.<sup>15</sup> Since these competencies and roles are already well developed under the NCM PD

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<sup>12</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . ,13.

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

<sup>14</sup>Alan Okros, “*Beyond Transformation*” CWO Strategic Employment Model (CFC Toronto: Memorandum to Commandant, 21 March 2012).

<sup>15</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . , 2; Bob Cl  roux, *Chief Petty Officer 1st Class/Chief Warrant Officer Career Progression* (NDHQ Ottawa: file 5025-3 (CFCWO), July 2011).

system and in light of an extensive NCM PD Modernization Initiative<sup>16</sup> that is underway to revitalize it, this paper purposefully avoids a detailed foray into these areas (SO2 and SO5), as they are already under significant scrutiny. SO4 (enhancing NCM career opportunity with increased flexibility) is inextricably linked to SOs 2 and 5, and given the multitude of second and third order effects that require consideration, it merits its own study by career management experts.

By focusing on SO1 (fostering a common command and leadership culture) and SO3 (strongly contributing to CF institutional and operational leadership), this paper argues that several relatively cost-efficient steps can be taken now to begin operationalizing the *SEM*. Specifically, the CF should issue joint doctrine on *Command in the CF*, should take further steps to promote NCM contribution to the CF's professional journals, should reframe the 'command team' concept as the commander/senior non-commissioned leader team, and take measures to further empower Senior Appointment/Key Position<sup>17</sup> (SA/KP) CWOs.

In furtherance of its stated objective, this paper begins in the first chapter with an examination of SO1 by investigating ways to realize the *SEM*'s suggestions to improve the indoctrination of the mission command philosophy, to encourage a continuous, open, and candid discourse between the officer and NCM corps, and to pursue combined officer/NCM PD.<sup>18</sup> The second chapter is a focused investigation of a boundary issue between SO1 and SO3: the

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<sup>16</sup>"CF Modernizing NCM Professional Development," *The Maple Leaf* 16, no. 1, January 2013.

<sup>17</sup>*Senior Appointment* CWOs are integral to the senior 'command team' and act as highly trusted advisors to the most senior pan-environment or pan-CF commanders. *Key Position* CWOs are employed in leadership or staff positions that are normally either pan-environment or pan-CF and require specific skills and competencies; Department of National Defence. Chief Military Personnel, *NCM Senior Appointments and Key CPO1/CWO Positions Identification* (NDHQ Ottawa: CF Military Personnel Instruction 09/03, September 1, 2006 (Date Modified: May 27, 2009)).

<sup>18</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . ., 13-14.

institutionalization of the command team concept.<sup>19</sup> The third chapter continues efforts to realize aspects of SO3 through an investigation into the ability of the CF to further empower SA/KP CWOs by discussing sources of leader power, the importance of credibility, and potentially formalizing a NCM-specific channel that parallels the chain of command. This paper concludes with a summary of its major conclusions and recommendations, and with suggestions into areas for further study.

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<sup>19</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 11-16.

## CHAPTER 1 – FOSTERING A COMMON COMMAND AND LEADERSHIP CULTURE

The first SO outlined by the *SEM*, is to “foster a common command and leadership culture.”<sup>20</sup> Thematically, the *SEM*'s suggestions to achieve this SO are focused along four general lines: (1) improving the indoctrination of the ‘mission command’ leadership philosophy, (2) encouraging a continuous open and candid discourse between the officer and NCM corps, (3) pursuing further opportunities for common officer/NCM professional development, and (4) the early introduction and promotion of a command team concept.<sup>21</sup> This chapter will investigate the first three themes, while the latter one, by virtue of its affiliation with SO3, is discussed in the subsequent chapter. This chapter begins with an overview of mission command, highlighting the importance of explicit and implicit intent, and investigating the degree to which these aspects are part of the PD system. Subsequently, it addresses ways to promote a more open and candid dialogue between officers and senior NCMs. The chapter then focuses on the potential benefits and detriments of common officer/NCM education before concluding with a summary and recommendations.

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<sup>20</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 14; Department of National Defence. B-GL-300-003/FP-001, *Command in Land Operations* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2007), 2-5.

<sup>21</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 14.

## Improving Mission Command Indoctrination

### Mission Command Philosophy – An Overview<sup>22</sup>

The mission command approach is the CF's leadership philosophy, which promotes the decentralization of authority for the conduct of military operations and peacetime activities.<sup>23</sup>

The Canadian version of mission command has its roots in the German concept of *Auftragstaktik* and while developing a thorough understanding of its origin is instructional, it is beyond the scope of this paper and is ancillary to the focus of this section.<sup>24</sup> Most relevant to this discussion is an understanding of the philosophy from the CF perspective.

Mission command in the CF is essentially about decentralizing the authority and freedom to act toward a common purpose to the lowest practicable level. It emphasizes giving subordinates the authority to unilaterally take prudent risks in advancing a mission and seize opportunities in ambiguous situations. Thus, the philosophy accepts that honest mistakes will occur and is tolerant of honest error. The use of "mission-type" orders – which tell subordinates what needs to be accomplished and why, and then largely allows the subordinate to determine *how* it will be done – facilitates mission command. Critical to mission command is mutual trust and confidence between leaders and subordinates. Since the same degree of trust may not exist between a leader and each of their subordinates, authorizing varied degrees of freedom of action

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<sup>22</sup>This overview is a summary of: Department of National Defence, *CDS Guidance to Commanding Officers*, 2012 ed. (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2012), 7; Department of National Defence. A-PA-005-000/PA-004, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005), 123-124, 131; Department of National Defence. B-GJ-005-000/FP-001, *CFJP 01: Canadian Military Doctrine*, eds. Victor A. McPherson and J. J. L. Serge Pelletier (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2009), 4-3, 5-1, 5-7, 6-4; DND, *Command in Land Operations*, 2-4 to 2-11.

<sup>23</sup>DND, *CDS Guidance to Commanding Officers*, 7.

<sup>24</sup>For an overview of *Auftragstaktik* and a skeptical opinion on the Canadian Army's ability to apply it through mission command see: Chuck S. Oliviero, "Trust, Manoeuvre Warfare, Mission Command and Canada's Army," *The Army Doctrine and Training Bulletin* 1, no. 1 (Summer 1998), [http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol\\_01/iss\\_1/CAJ\\_vol1.1\\_05\\_e.pdf](http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_01/iss_1/CAJ_vol1.1_05_e.pdf).

to individual subordinates is still consistent with the philosophy. To function properly, mission command requires that superiors make timely decisions and allocate (and grant the authority to expend) the necessary resources to accomplish the task. Furthermore, to maximize subordinate freedom of action, leaders must minimize the number of controls they impose that restrict the options available to subordinates. Mission command is predicated on a shared understanding of the common purpose or goal. In the military, the basis of this understanding is established in a formalized “commander’s intent” statement, a discussion of which follows.

### Understanding Common, Explicit, and Implicit Intent

Because it promotes highly decentralized activity, mission command is reliant on unity of effort to accomplish the common goal. In order to provide the clear sense of purpose necessary for mission command to function, commanders formulate “a clear and concise statement of what the commander hopes to achieve.”<sup>25</sup> This is known as the commander’s intent statement. In the absence of a published joint doctrinal manual on *Command in the CF*<sup>26</sup>, the Canadian Army’s *Command in Land Operations* doctrine, CF leadership doctrine,<sup>27</sup> and work by Dr. Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann offer the best understanding about the explicit and implicit nature of a commander’s intent. The Pigeau-McCann framework for command and control consists of three elements: *command* (a portion of which appears in the next chapter), *control*, and *command and*

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<sup>25</sup>DND, *Command in Land Operations*, 2-7.

<sup>26</sup>To note, a *Command and Control* operating concept is in the validation stage and has yet to be published as doctrine; Department of National Defence. Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, *Command and Control Operating Concept* (Ottawa: Unpublished, 2012).

<sup>27</sup>CF leadership doctrine is expressed in four publications: *Leadership in the CF: Doctrine*, *Leadership in the CF: Conceptual Foundations*, *Leadership in the CF: Leading People*, and *Leadership in the CF: Leading the Institution*.

*control*.<sup>28</sup> Pigeau and McCann define *command and control* as “the establishment of common intent to achieve coordinated action”.<sup>29</sup> While this differs from the CF’s definition, it is useful in that it highlights the importance of common intent to military activity.

The Canadian Army has drawn from Pigeau and McCann’s explanation of the constituent elements of common intent (explicit and implicit intent) in formulating its command doctrine.<sup>30</sup> Doing the same in CF joint doctrine will assist in achieving the *SEM*’s aim to establish a shared command and leadership culture in the officer and NCM corps.<sup>31</sup> Common intent is “the sum of shared explicit intent as expressed in a commander’s verbal or written statement, plus operationally relevant shared implicit intent.”<sup>32</sup> A commander’s intent, while formalized in an intent statement, is also explicitly supplemented through “orders, briefings, questions and discussions.”<sup>33</sup> Explicit intent is supported by implicitly derived understanding (i.e. implicit intent) based on doctrine, training, tradition, shared ethos, social norms and personal expectations.<sup>34</sup> In the CF, the bases of common intent, while derived from a common foundation, are slightly different in each of the services because of the “distinct military functions associated with sea, land, and air operations.”<sup>35</sup> Thus, for the mission command approach to function effectively in joint operations (those involving more than one military service) or multinational

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<sup>28</sup>Carol McCann, Ross Pigeau and Allan English, *Using the Command and Control Framework to Analyse Command Challenges* (Toronto: Defence R&D Canada, 2002).

<sup>29</sup>Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann, "Redefining Command and Control," in *The Human in Command: Exploring the Modern Military Experience*, eds. Carol McCann and Ross Pigeau (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2000), 165.

<sup>30</sup>DND, *Command in Land Operations*, 2-12 to 2-14.

<sup>31</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 14.

<sup>32</sup>DND, *Command in Land Operations*, 2-12.

<sup>33</sup>McCann, Pigeau and English, *Using the Command and Control Framework to Analyse Command Challenges*.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*; DND, *Command in Land Operations*, 2-12; Pigeau and McCann, *Redefining Command and Control*, 168-173.

<sup>35</sup>DND, *Duty with Honour . . .*, 25.

coalitions, commanders have to be more explicit in their intent until the conditions for implicit understanding are developed.

Personnel continuity also serves to improve implicit intent. Leaders and followers who have worked together over time develop the ability to predict each other's behaviour in various situations and can more readily identify non-verbal cues which allow them to better interpret the leader's intent.<sup>36</sup> The *SEM* implies that by not emphasizing an understanding of both explicit and implicit intent in their training, our junior leaders experience difficulty when they are expected to translate implicitly communicated intent into explicit tactical action.<sup>37</sup> To determine why this occurs, the next section explains the disparity between the emphasis placed on clarity of intent in the NCM and officer PD systems.

### The Relative Importance of Intent

A review of the officer 'qualification standard'<sup>38</sup> reveals that instruction on the importance of the clarity of intent begins during officer basic training and continues to be emphasized at the General/Flag Officer level.<sup>39</sup> Conversely, clarity of intent is not emphasized explicitly within the NCM qualification standard, but rather is an implicit component of the performance objective (subject area) of Leading Subordinates which is first introduced to NCMs during Developmental Period 2.<sup>40</sup> Both qualification standards place emphasis on the CF military

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<sup>36</sup>DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 90.

<sup>37</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . , 10.

<sup>38</sup>A 'qualification standard' is an institutional document governing the content and quality of CF training and education programmes and courses; Department of National Defence. A-P9-050-000/PT-Z01 (1), *Glossary*, Vol. 1 (1) (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, 2003).

<sup>39</sup>Department of National Defence, *Qualification Standard: Officer Developmental Periods 1 to 5* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, 2010), 3-2 to 3-3.

<sup>40</sup>Department of National Defence, *Qualification Standard: Non-Commissioned Member Developmental Periods 1 to 5* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, 2011), 3-2 to 3-8. "A Developmental Period is a



ethos, the understanding of doctrine, and the need for effective communication, all of which are significant contributors to implicit understanding. However, neither refers to chapter 2 of *Command in Land Operations* in the detailed description of performance objectives, although this manual is the most authoritative doctrinal publication that addresses explicit and implicit intent directly.

In order to ensure that the officer and NCM corps, who each have their own unique cultural identities,<sup>41</sup> are operating within a common command culture, it is recommended that a CF joint doctrine manual on *Command in the CF* be published, to include an elaboration on the concepts of common, explicit, and implicit intent. The Vice Chief of Defence Staff's *Command and Control* operating concept, which is still in the validation stage, begins to do so,<sup>42</sup> but it requires an elaboration on the concepts to a similar degree as the Canadian Army has included in *Command in Land Operations*.

Once the CF's joint command doctrine is published, the NCM and officer qualification standards should be updated to equally emphasize an understanding of the importance of clarity of intent. This will ensure that all leaders, be they officers or NCMs, understand the two aspects of intent, which will in turn facilitate the unity of purpose necessary for mission command to function properly. Additionally, this will benefit SA/KP CWOs as communicators of strategic intent. As *Conceptual Foundations* indicates, generating support for strategic initiatives requires, among other things, "the persuasive use of words and images."<sup>43</sup> SA/KP CWOs, along with other institutional leaders, who understand the nature of explicit and implicit intent will be better

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timeframe in a career during which an individual is trained, employed and given the opportunity to develop specific occupational or professional skills and knowledge"; DND, *The Canadian Forces Professional Development System Document* . . . , 14.

<sup>41</sup>DND, *Duty with Honour* . . . , 21.

<sup>42</sup>DND, *Command and Control Operating Concept*, 36.

<sup>43</sup>DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 111.

prepared to purposefully leverage implicit understanding through such things as imagery, tradition, and the military ethos. Similarly, an open and continuous dialogue between the officer and NCM corps enables the CF to cooperatively cultivate its strategic vision.

### **An Open, Candid, and Continuous Discourse**

The *SEM* suggests that “encourag[ing] an open, continuous and candid discourse between [the officer and NCM] corps”<sup>44</sup> is an important step in establishing a common command and leadership culture. This echoes the CF’s professional philosophy as expressed in the cornerstone document *Duty with Honour*, and is consistent with its leadership doctrine. In particular, *Duty with Honour* considers openness as one of four key principles to guide the evolution of the profession of arms in Canada.<sup>45</sup> Openness, according to the CF, is about becoming a learning organization. To become so, the CF must promote the open exchange of new ideas and accept constructive criticism regardless of their origin.<sup>46</sup> This is particularly important for institutional leaders like SA/KP CWOs and General/Flag Officers who, by promoting and accepting unfiltered communication, will be able to “identify and address gaps, barriers, and failures” that would have otherwise remained opaque.<sup>47</sup> Implementing a learning organization approach as a philosophical underpinning in the CF requires inquiry into some of the barriers that might still exist (or are perceived to exist) that are preventing an open, candid, and continuous dialogue between officers and NCMs.

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<sup>44</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 14.

<sup>45</sup>DND, *Duty with Honour . . .*, 67-69.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 68; DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 85, 117; Department of National Defence. A-PA-005-000/AP-006, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading the Institution* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2007), 49, 107, 111.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, 68, 111.

## Barriers to Effective Officer/NCM Discourse

Traditionally, barriers such as class, education, and status inhibited open and candid discourse between officers and NCMs, but as members of a 1999 symposium on NCMs in the future army indicated, these “are no longer as important or obvious as they were once.”<sup>48</sup> Although, as Professors Christopher Dandeker and Donna Winslow have indicated, “deference to authority figures, especially in institutional organizations, has waned,”<sup>49</sup> the inculcation of duty and loyalty as critical Canadian military values<sup>50</sup> in CF personnel results in a significant degree of latent deference to those of higher rank. Assertions that “the non-commissioned officer corps is mostly a creature of the officer corps’ ideas, attitudes, and interpretations of what is right for non-commissioned officers and the army”<sup>51</sup> and “[that] the NCO corps is not a self-governing group. . . . The officer corps acts as the regulatory body through the application of authority, policy, procedures and law”<sup>52</sup> are certainly not helpful in breaking down the barriers to candid discourse between the two corps. Assertions such as these, which were made in 2000 and 2005 respectively, do not bear out as true upon further investigation. A specific case in point is the almost exclusive role played by NCMs in the development and review of NCM qualification standards. The 2008 end-to-end review of NCM PD was done by eight senior NCMs, three civilian employees and only one commissioned officer.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the Senior Appointments

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<sup>48</sup>DND, *The NCO: Backbone of the Army*, 18.

<sup>49</sup>Christopher Dandeker and Donna Winslow, "On 'The Need to be Different': Recent Trends in Military Culture," in *Backbone of the Army: Non-Commissioned Officers in the Future Army*, ed. Douglas L. Bland (Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 58.

<sup>50</sup>DND, *Duty with Honour* . . . , 32-33.

<sup>51</sup>Douglas L. Bland in *Backbone of the Army: Non-Commissioned Officers in the Future Army*, ed. Douglas L. Bland (Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), xii.

<sup>52</sup>Stephan R. Smith, "Reform and the Non-Commissioned Officer," *Canadian Military Journal* 6, no. 2 (Summer 2005), 34, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vo6/no2/doc/mp-pm-eng.pdf>.

<sup>53</sup>Department of National Defence. A-P2-727-K00/PC-H01, *Qualification Standard: Intermediate Leadership Qualification* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, 2009), Annex E; Department of National Defence. A-P2-728-K01/PC-H01, *Qualification Standard: Advanced Leadership Qualification* (Kingston, ON:

Program 2008 qualification standard writing board consisted of nine senior NCMs, two civilian employees and one commissioned officer.<sup>54</sup> Undertakings such as these, which demonstrate the confidence that the CF has in its NCMs, reinforce the trust between officers and NCMs and promote an environment of open and candid dialogue between the two corps. Similar demonstrations of trust must continue in order to refute, as Sergeant Major (US Marine Corps) Bryan Battaglia indicates, “those few [individuals] who still argue that the only members in our uniformed *profession* are between the ranks of ensign and general [emphasis added].”<sup>55</sup>

Despite the perceived barriers, a healthy dialogue, albeit generally conducted in a somewhat private manner, already exists within the CF. Officers expect and rely upon NCMs generally and CWOs specifically for their candid, yet tactful feedback and advice. Methods to improve communication within specific officer/NCM pairings is discussed in the next chapter. A potential mechanism to improve inter-corps communication, in the general sense, is to promote an increased emphasis on public discourse. The use of the CF’s military journals as a public forum for well-considered, respectful, and constructive debate among officers and NCMs is a vehicle that could be better leveraged. The increased use of CF journals by NCMs could provide additional insight into NCM challenges, ideas and opinions, and promote innovative thinking across all ranks.

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Canadian Defence Academy, 2009), E-1; Department of National Defence. A-P2-729-K02/PC-H01, *Qualification Standard: CPO1/CWO Qualification* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, 2009), E-1.

<sup>54</sup>Department of National Defence, *Qualification Standard: Senior Appointment - Chief Petty Officer 1st Class/Chief Warrant Officer* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, 2010), D-1.

<sup>55</sup>Bryan B. Battaglia, "The Enlisted Force and Profession of Arms," *Joint Force Quarterly* 62 (3rd Quarter 2011), 18, [http://www.ndu.edu/press/lib/images/jfq-62/JFQ62\\_18-19\\_Battaglia.pdf](http://www.ndu.edu/press/lib/images/jfq-62/JFQ62_18-19_Battaglia.pdf).

## Improving Inter-Corps Discourse

A method to improve the degree of public inter-corps discourse is by promoting the use of CF military journals such as the *Canadian Military Journal*, *The Royal Canadian Air Force Journal*, and the *Canadian Army Journal* by NCMs. This suggestion is not new. *The Canadian Forces Non-Commissioned Member in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (NCM Corps 2020)*, the strategic guidance issued in 2002 outlining changes to the NCM PD system to better prepare NCMs for 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges, recommended the active promotion of NCM contributions to CF journals as one of its key initiatives.<sup>56</sup> However, a review of the three aforementioned journals from 2008 to 2012 reveals that officers and academics remain, by far, the most frequent contributors; NCMs have contributed or co-authored only twenty-five of the approximately 465 articles and letters.<sup>57</sup> All three journals offer venues in which interested parties can offer opinion, comment, and rebuttal on articles. Unfortunately, over the last five years these have been dominated by officers (serving and retired) and academics commenting on one another's opinions and have not been enriched by the inclusion of a significant number of NCM perspectives. This begs the question, why are NCMs not contributing more? It is suggested that there are likely two reasons: a perceived emphasis on experience vice education for the NCM corps and a potential lack of confidence by NCMs.

Colonel Horn and retired Lieutenant-Colonel Dr. Bill Bentley wrote in 2007 that following the publication of *NCM Corps 2020* “there was, and still is, considerable resistance to

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<sup>56</sup>Department of National Defence, *The Canadian Forces Non-Commissioned Member in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Detailed Analysis and Strategy for Launching Implementation (NCM Corps 2020): Strategic Guidance for the Canadian Forces Non-Commissioned Member Corps and the NCM Professional Development System* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2002), I-30.

<sup>57</sup>These journals are publicly available at: <http://www.journal.dnd.ca/>, <http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/>, [http://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/CFAWC/eLibrary/Journal\\_e.asp](http://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/CFAWC/eLibrary/Journal_e.asp).

the new construct that envisages a much higher educational component in NCM PD.”<sup>58</sup> The perception of anti-intellectualism toward NCMs was found to hold true in a 2010 study by Dr. Grazia Scoppio et al., which aimed to benchmark the progress of NCM PD system improvements since the publication of *NCM Corps 2020*. Many of the respondents<sup>59</sup> to the study indicated that they “felt that higher education was seen [by the CF] as being essential for Officers but was not viewed as valuable for NCMs.”<sup>60</sup> The CF NCM PD Modernization Initiative, when implemented, will go a long way toward eliminating this perception. The three objectives of this initiative are to modernize the professional military education of NCMs, to create accredited academic opportunities, and to enable recognition for occupational certifications.<sup>61</sup> Through this initiative, the CF is demonstrating the importance it places on education for both the officer and NCM corps. However, Colonel Horn warns that with budgetary pressures rising, the importance of higher education may wane: “The CF once again seems to be slipping back to its preferred experiential paradigm, which marginalizes the importance of education.”<sup>62</sup> With the recent identification that the CF Education Reimbursement program may face significant funding reductions<sup>63</sup>, it remains to be seen whether funds for the implementation of the NCM PD Modernization Initiative may be cut as well.

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<sup>58</sup>Bernd Horn and Bill Bentley, "The Road to Transformation: Ascending from the Decade of Darkness," in *Institutional Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Contemporary Issues*, ed. Robert W. Walker (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 21.

<sup>59</sup>Respondents of the study consisted of CPO1s/CWOs, subject matter experts and students from specific serials of the Intermediate Leadership Qualification, Advanced Leadership Qualification, and Chiefs' Qualification programs; Grazia Scoppio et al., *Maintaining the Track: Benchmarking NCM Corps 2020 Progress* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2011), 2.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>61</sup>"CF Modernizing NCM Professional Development", 11.

<sup>62</sup>Bernd Horn, "Education - the Key Component to the Development of the Next Generation of Military Leaders," in *Developing the Next Generation of Military Leaders: Challenges, Imperatives and Strategies*, eds. Julie Belanger and Psalm Lew (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2011), 28.

<sup>63</sup>Department of National Defence, "Potential Education Reimbursement Funding Restriction FY 13/14," last accessed March 13, 2013, <http://www.cda.forces.gc.ca/j3ops/ilpaccess-eng.asp>.

Dr. Albert Palazzo, a Senior Research Fellow with the Australia Army's Land Warfare Studies Centre, wrote a paper about the lack of a public "Future of War" debate within the Australian Defence Force.<sup>64</sup> Palazzo partially attributes the lack of public discourse to the confidence of Australian officers; he implies that the academic credentials possessed by the debate's key American protagonists intimidate Australian officers who *perceive* they lack the intellectual capacity to participate.<sup>65</sup> Drawing a parallel from this argument, it is suggested that confidence may be another prohibitive barrier to NCM public discourse in CF journals, since officers, generally, possess higher educational qualifications than most NCMs. However, NCMs by virtue of their experience and training have much to offer to the readership of CF journals. As the *SEM* implies, while officer and NCMs are not required to be academic equivalents, they are equivalent intellectually and emotionally.<sup>66</sup>

In order to make further progress toward the *NCM Corps 2020* initiative of promoting NCM contribution to CF journals and the *SEM*'s vision of a more open, candid and continuous dialogue, three specific recommendations are offered. Firstly, the CF should undertake a concerted effort to repeatedly highlight the objectives of the NCM PD Modernization Initiative, even if its implementation is predicated on future budgetary increases. A proactive information operation campaign in this area will facilitate eliminating the myth that NCM education is of secondary importance in the CF and reinforce the value of NCM input. Secondly, additional contributions to CF journals by CWOs and other senior NCMs will likely increase the confidence of others to do the same. Along the same vein, the public recognition of contributions

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<sup>64</sup>Albert Palazzo, *The Future of War Debate in Australia: Why has there not been one? Has the need for one now arrived?* (Duntroon, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia, 2012).

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>66</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 15.

by junior NCMs, who are increasingly more educated than in the past,<sup>67</sup> will encourage others to follow their example. Thirdly, it is suggested that publishing discourse between senior officers and SA/KP CWOs in a manner similar to the 2004 *Canadian Army Journal* debate between Lieutenant-Colonels Harry Bondy and Dave Banks<sup>68</sup> would stimulate similar occurrences between officers and NCMs, promoting the learning environment that *Duty with Honour* espouses. Clearly, such discourse would have to be pre-arranged to ensure that the strategic message is maintained but could showcase the interdependence of the NCM and officer corps. Another suggestion indicated in the *SEM* and elsewhere that may contribute to improving inter-corps communication and facilitate an improved common command and leadership culture, is the pursuit of common officer/NCM PD opportunities. This is the focus of the next section.

### **Combined Officer/NCM PD**

The complexity of modern military operations has resulted in an increasing overlap of responsibilities that were traditionally differentiated between officers and NCMs. This has led the CF to correctly identify that the PD of officers and NCMs must also increasingly overlap.<sup>69</sup> *NCM Corps 2020* and the *SEM* suggest that officer and NCM PD should be combined at specific developmental points in their careers.<sup>70</sup> Combined officer/NCM PD is beneficial in that it can

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<sup>67</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . , i.

<sup>68</sup>LCols Bondy and Banks debated their individual visions of a potential future for the combat arms. See: Harry Bondy, "The New Regimental System," *Canadian Army Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2004), 76-85, [http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol\\_07/iss\\_1/CAJ\\_vol7.1\\_10\\_e.pdf](http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_07/iss_1/CAJ_vol7.1_10_e.pdf), Dave Banks, "A Comment on 'The New Regimental System'", *Canadian Army Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2004), 86-90, [http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol\\_07/iss\\_1/CAJ\\_vol7.1\\_11\\_e.pdf](http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_07/iss_1/CAJ_vol7.1_11_e.pdf), Dave Banks, "A Single Combat Branch?" *Canadian Army Journal* 7, no. 2 (Summer 2004), 26-33, [http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol\\_07/iss\\_2/CAJ\\_vol7.2\\_07\\_e.pdf](http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_07/iss_2/CAJ_vol7.2_07_e.pdf), and Harry Bondy, "Comments on 'A Single Combat Branch' by LCol Dave Banks," *Canadian Army Journal* 7, no. 2 (Summer 2004), 34, [http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol\\_07/iss\\_2/CAJ\\_vol7.2\\_08\\_e.pdf](http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_07/iss_2/CAJ_vol7.2_08_e.pdf).

<sup>69</sup>DND, *Duty with Honour* . . . , 77-78.

<sup>70</sup>DND, *NCM Corps 2020* . . . , I-35; DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . , 14.



achieve economies of effort. A single syllabus for a single combined course reduces the amount of staff effort needed to identify and separate the overlapping objectives for delivery to the two corps separately. Similarly, combined officer/NCM PD is appealing for its potential for fiscal savings. Combining some officer/NCM PD may achieve instructor economies for both corps and as a result could free up staff to instruct on other courses. This may be offset somewhat by the requirement to run multiple serials of the same combined officer/NCM course. Certainly, combined PD would enhance common understanding between the officer and NCM corps; the study by Scoppio et al. found that “combined officer/NCM PD is well received and is important in preparation for Officer/NCM pairings.”<sup>71</sup> While there are benefits to combined officer/NCM PD, there is also some risk.

Drawing from the literature on goal orientation theory,<sup>72</sup> there are several factors at play that determine the emphasis that candidates place on mastery and performance approaches to learning. In brief, a candidate who is “mastery-oriented” (or learning-oriented) is focused on true understanding; the deep learning that is essential to, what Dr. Murray Simons coins in his Doctor of Education thesis on “Holistic Professional Military Development” as ‘learning the profession,’ a “comprehensive understanding of ‘the big picture.’”<sup>73</sup> Candidates that are “performance-oriented” focus on *demonstrating* superior competence relative to others (performance-approach orientation) or *demonstrating* that they are not incompetent (performance-avoid orientation).<sup>74</sup> It has been determined that mastery-oriented individuals “are more likely than individuals with a performance orientation to strive to understand new things and to increase their competence and

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<sup>71</sup>Scoppio et al., *Maintaining the Track* . . . , 4.

<sup>72</sup>For an overview of goal orientation theory see: Michael Yough and Eric Anderman, "Goal Orientation Theory," last accessed March 14, 2013, <http://www.education.com/reference/article/goal-orientation-theory/>.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*; Murray Simons, "Holistic Professional Military Development: Growing Strategic Artists" (Doctor of Education, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand), 38.

<sup>74</sup>Yough and Anderman, "Goal Orientation Theory".

skills.”<sup>75</sup> Candidates undertaking PD already face pressure from institutions who emphasize ‘learning the profession’ as well as self-induced pressure to look competent in front of their peers. By having officers and NCMs evaluated on the same course, additional performance-oriented pressures are introduced. This may inadvertently create an environment that causes candidates to subconsciously emphasize looking competent in the eyes of their future superiors or subordinates (a performance-avoidance orientation) over developing the competence for which the course is intended (the desired mastery-orientation).

A second risk, identified by Scoppio et al., is the convergence of perspectives from the officer and NCM corps. As will be discussed in the next chapter, “the distinctiveness of the NCM and Officer Corps and the synergy produced when they work together are what make leadership teams and every day [Department of National Defence] workplaces so effective.”<sup>76</sup> Combined PD may have the unintended consequence of narrowing the divergence of perspective that is so critical to CF effectiveness.

Combined Officer/NCM PD is already occurring at later stages in officers’ and NCMs’ careers through courses such as the Command Team Course and the Executive Leaders Program which are assessed as positive.<sup>77</sup> *NCM Corps 2020* recommends that the CF “ensure that individual training [is] followed by [combined] officer/NCM team training.”<sup>78</sup> While determining exactly how this should occur at junior levels requires a detailed analysis beyond the scope of this paper, a recent initiative by the Canadian Land Force Command and Staff College may provide some insight. In 2013, the college is delivering an Introduction to the Operational

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<sup>75</sup>Melinda Key-Roberts, Stanley Halpin and Jason M. Brunner, *Technical Report 1310: Leader Identity, Individual Differences, and Leader Self-Development* (Fort Belvoir, VA: United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 2012).

<sup>76</sup>Scoppio et al., *Maintaining the Track* . . . , 40.

<sup>77</sup>*Ibid* ., 43.

<sup>78</sup>DND, *NCM Corps 2020* . . . , A-5.

Planning Process for Warrant Officers (WOs) that will see the NCM-candidates participate in the culminating exercise for the officers' Army Operations Course.<sup>79</sup> The results of this initiative should be rigorously examined to determine the impact of and lessons learned for the implementation of combined officer/NCM PD at this level from both the officer and NCM perspective.

### **Summary and Recommendations**

This chapter aimed to identify ways to foster a common command and leadership climate within the officer and NCM corps of the CF. It began with an overview of mission command and the importance of improving the understanding of the explicit and implicit aspects of commander's intent. This led to the recommendation that a *Command in the CF* doctrinal manual be published that emphasizes the explicit and implicit aspects of intent and that when it is published, the officer and NCM qualification standards should correspondingly be updated to equally emphasize the importance of clarity of intent. The resulting affect will allow future institutional leaders (officers and NCMs alike) to be better able to purposefully leverage implicit intent when communicating strategic vision.

Subsequently, improving open and candid inter-corps discourse was investigated. It was suggested that promoting increased discourse between officers and NCMs in CF journals would be a public way of promoting the CF as a learning organization. It was recommended that the CF seek to eradicate the perception that the educating of NCMs is a secondary concern through a significant information operations campaign promoting the emphasis that the NCM PD

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<sup>79</sup>J. M. J. P. Champagne, *AOC Intro OPP WO (Reg F): Joining Instructions* (Canadian Land Force Command and Staff College, Kingston, ON: file: 4500-3 (A/Ops O), 11 Jan 2013).

Modernization Initiative places on NCM education. Additionally, to encourage additional participation by NCMs in CF journals, the most senior NCMs should set the example and contributions by junior NCMs should be publically recognized. Furthermore, to increase professional debate between the corps, it was recommended that institutional leaders consider the planned publication of discourse between senior officers and SA/KP CWOs within the pages of the journals.

Finally, some of the benefits and risks of combining officer and NCM PD were considered. It was recommended that a current Canadian Land Force Command and Staff College initiative be studied to determine the appropriateness of combined PD at lower levels than is already occurring. As indicated at the outset of this chapter, the *SEM*'s suggestions to achieve SO1 are focused along four lines. This chapter addressed the first three: improving mission command indoctrination, encouraging open discourse between the officer and NCM corps, and pursuing combined officer/NCM PD opportunities. The fourth, the early introduction and promotion of the command team concept, is a boundary issue between SO1 and SO3 and is the focus of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 2 – FORMALIZING THE CONCEPT OF THE ‘COMMAND TEAM’

The third strategic objective of the *SEM*, to “strongly contribute to CF institutional and operational leadership,”<sup>80</sup> seeks to improve the conditions by which the CF can leverage the experience and capabilities of CWOs. The *SEM* outlines several strategies that should be implemented to meet this objective. Thematically, these strategies largely centre around two aspects. They are primarily concerned with formalizing the command team concept and they seek to formally empower CWOs “to exercise and exploit their tremendous personal authority.”<sup>81</sup> In this paper’s effort to operationalize the *SEM*, these two themes will be investigated. The former, which is linked directly to SO1, is the focus of this chapter, while the latter is discussed in the following chapter. This chapter begins with general discussion about authority and command in the CF context and subsequently outlines disconnects between the stated version of the command team and its practical application in the three services. It then considers the importance of officer/NCM relationships: first at the tactical level, then at higher levels to draw out the underlying idea behind the concept of the command team. Finally, the chapter suggests reframing the concept and offers a more doctrinally accurate title before concluding with a summary of the chapter’s main deductions and recommendations.

### Authority and Command

CF leadership doctrine defines authority as “[t]he legal right to make decisions, to direct the activities of subordinates with the expectation of being obeyed, and to hold subordinates

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<sup>80</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . , 15.

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.

accountable for their actions and performance.”<sup>82</sup> The use of the term ‘personal authority’ in the *SEM* creates confusion, particularly with respect to the legal aspect of the doctrinal definition of authority. Thus, the idea of personal authority necessitates clarification and once understood it needs to be expressed in doctrinal terms. Dr. Ross Pigeau and Carole McCann have studied command in considerable depth and developed a human-centred theoretical model to describe command: the Competency-Authority-Responsibility model. While a thorough description of the model is outside the scope of this paper, a brief review of their Authority component is useful to achieve the clarity being sought.<sup>83</sup>

Pigeau and McCann postulate that an individual’s authority has two sources: legal and personal authority. Legal authority, in their model, is “the power to act as assigned by a formal agency outside the military, typically a government . . . as expressed explicitly in laws and regulations.”<sup>84</sup> This concept is expressed in CF doctrine as position power.<sup>85</sup> Personal authority in the Pigeau-McCann model on the other hand, is the informal, implicit, and emergent power that is earned over time based on the values, ethics, and courage that has been personally demonstrated.<sup>86</sup> In Canadian doctrine, this is called personal power.<sup>87</sup> Thus, in the interests of clarity, this paper considers authority as the formal basis from which position power originates. Similarly, the term personal authority is avoided and the doctrinally accurate expression personal power is used. With the ambiguity surrounding the use of the term authority in the *SEM* clarified,

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<sup>82</sup>DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 129.

<sup>83</sup>For a comprehensive description of the entire Competency-Authority-Responsibility model see: Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann, "Re-Conceptualizing Command and Control," *Canadian Military Journal* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2002), 53-63, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vo3/no1/doc/53-64-eng.pdf>.

<sup>84</sup>*Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>85</sup>Position power is “the capacity or potential to influence others on the basis of authorities conferred by organizational position or rank.”; DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 131.

<sup>86</sup>Pigeau and McCann, *Re-Conceptualizing Command and Control*, 59.

<sup>87</sup>Personal power is “the capacity or potential to influence others on the basis of personal characteristics and attributes.”; DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 131.

a review of command in the CF context is necessary before determining how formalizing the command team concept and/or empowering of CWOs might be undertaken.

Canadian military doctrine stipulates that “command is based on formally delegated authority and is the authority vested in an individual of the armed forces for the direction, coordination, and control of military forces.”<sup>88</sup> In the context of the CF, command authority has its origin in Canadian law, specifically the *National Defence Act*.<sup>89</sup> This authority may be delegated; however, when doing so, the delegating commander must clearly indicate what authority has been delegated, to what extent, and to whom.<sup>90</sup> It is important to note that while commanders may delegate their authority, they remain accountable for the manner in which others exercise it.<sup>91</sup> If a commander is an individual who has been formally empowered by Canadian law and is already able to delegate their authority to other individuals while remaining accountable, one is led to question the *SEM*'s emphasis on the command team concept. What is a command team? What value would formalizing the concept offer? To answer these questions, this chapter will now examine how the term is currently applied in the CF.

## **The Command Team Concept**

### **Current Disconnects**

The *SEM* asserts that within the CF, a command team “is widely accepted as the combination of a Commander and CPO1 or CWO.”<sup>92</sup> This statement is largely true in the Royal

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<sup>88</sup>DND, *CFJP 01: Canadian Military Doctrine*, 5-2.

<sup>89</sup>National Defence Act, R.S.C., c. N-5, Part II, paragraph 19 (1985).

<sup>90</sup>DND, *CFJP 01: Canadian Military Doctrine*, 5-3.

<sup>91</sup>DND, *CDS Guidance to Commanding Officers*, 17-18.

<sup>92</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 11.

Canadian Air Force where it is applied at the formation, wing, and squadron level. The *SEM*'s "widely accepted" definition is less accurate within the Canadian Army. Certainly, the term command team applies to the pairing of an army Commanding Officer (CO) and a Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM), who is usually a CWO, as evidenced by the Command Team Course that is mandatory for designated COs and RSMs.<sup>93</sup> However, the term is increasingly finding its way into Canadian Army lexicon to refer to the pairing of a commander and the senior-most NCM at lower levels within the organization. For example, an artillery troop commander and the troop sergeant major (usually a WO) are a troop command team.<sup>94</sup> Similarly, an infantry company commander and sergeant major (usually a master warrant officer) are a company command team. The Royal Canadian Navy's interpretation is different from that of both the Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Air Force.

As CWO Stéphane Guy indicates in his 2010 article championing the command team concept, in the Royal Canadian Navy, the unique relationship between a ship's CO, its Executive Officer, and its Coxswain, expands the idea of a command team consisting of a commander and a CPO1 to include a third party, the Executive Officer.<sup>95</sup> In the navy, this threesome was previously referred to as the ship's "command triad" but has been relabelled as its command team.<sup>96</sup> Canada's extant operational level headquarters, the Canadian Joint Operations Command

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<sup>93</sup>The Command Team Course runs under the guidance of the Canadian Land Force Command and Staff College in Kingston. While this course is commonly referred to as the Command Team Course, and appears as such on the College's website, its official title is the Commanding Officer Course; Department of National Defence. Directorate Land Personnel Management 7-2, *Land Force Command Order 24-23: Directed Pre-Command Training for Commanding Officers (COs)* (Land Force Command Headquarters Ottawa: file LFC 5000-7-2 (DLPM 7-2), March 2001 (Modified May 2007)); Department of National Defence, "CLFCSC (Staff College) Courses," last accessed February 6, 2013, <http://www.army.gc.ca/iaol/143000440002006/index-Eng.html>.

<sup>94</sup>David W. Grebstad, "The Role of the Artillery in Afghanistan," *Canadian Army Journal* 10, no. 3 (Fall 2007), 21, [http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol\\_10/iss\\_3/CAJ\\_vol10.3\\_07\\_e.pdf](http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_10/iss_3/CAJ_vol10.3_07_e.pdf).

<sup>95</sup>Stéphane Guy, "The Command Team: A Key Enabler," *Canadian Military Journal* 11, no. 1 (Winter 2010), 57, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol11/no1/doc/12-guy-eng.pdf>.

<sup>96</sup>M. E. Clark, "The Court Martial of Lieutenant-Commander Dean Marsaw: Lessons on Culture, Leadership, and Accountability for the CF" (Master of Defence Studies paper, Canadian Forces College, 2007), 29. Also, the



Headquarters, has a command team of *nine people* that consists of the commander, the command CWO, three deputy commanders and their respective command CWOs and the headquarters' chief of staff.<sup>97</sup> Clearly, the composition of a command team, as outlined in the *SEM*, is not universally understood or applied within the CF. Even the draft *Strategic Staff NCM* discussion concept identifies that officer/NCM command teams exist “from platoon level to [the] [Chief of Defence Staff].”<sup>98</sup> Clarification of the concept is clearly necessary and the *SEM* makes an initial attempt to do so. Unfortunately, it complicates matters further by indicating that, for practical purposes, command teams only exist at the operational and tactical levels, and at the strategic level, the concept evolves into a “Senior Leadership Team.”<sup>99</sup>

The senior leadership team, as defined in the *SEM*, consists of the commander, his or her CWO, and the command teams at the operational and tactical levels.<sup>100</sup> In line with the concept of a senior leadership team, retired Naval Captain, Dr. Alan Okros suggests that all General/Flag Officers and senior appointment CWOs should be considered as the “strategic leadership cadre,” given their collective responsibility for stewardship of the institution.<sup>101</sup> This suggestion has merit and deserves further investigation, but is separate from the current inquiry about the command team. There is no doubt that subordinate commanders, staffs and senior NCMs provide valuable support to strategic level commanders, just as they do at all levels. However, different

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majority of the RCN's ships' websites have been updated to reflect the use of the term “command team”. They are accessible through [http://www.navy.forces.gc.ca/cms/8/8\\_eng.asp?category=51](http://www.navy.forces.gc.ca/cms/8/8_eng.asp?category=51).

<sup>97</sup>Department of National Defence, "Canadian Joint Operations Command: Command Team," last accessed February 10, 2013, <http://www.cjoc-coic.forces.gc.ca/wwh-qqc/ct-ec-eng.asp>.

<sup>98</sup>Department of National Defence, *Institutional Concept: Strategic Staff NCM Concept*, Draft Version 2.0 Working 3 ed. (Ottawa: Chief of Force Development, Draft 2009), 11.

<sup>99</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 11.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, 11-12.

<sup>101</sup>Alan Okros, "The Command Team: A Valuable Evolution or Doctrinal Danger?" *Canadian Military Journal* 13, no. 1 (Winter 2012), 21, <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vol13/no1/doc/Okros%20EN%20page1522.pdf>.

labels at the various levels (strategic, operational, or tactical) inhibit the institutionalization of the *idea* behind the command team concept.

This idea, as indicated in the *SEM*, is essentially about codifying the relationship between a specifically appointed NCM and a commander. Once codified, the labelling of this idea is important. As Okros points out, formalizing the idea under the title of command team could be doctrinally dangerous, particularly in light of the definition and understanding of command.<sup>102</sup> Before proposing more appropriate nomenclature, the essence of the idea needs further inquiry. While the *SEM* is primarily concerned with the relationship between a CWO and his or her commander, the command team concept will be most useful and more fully accepted if it is applicable across all levels. While the applicability of the command team concept can and should begin at much lower levels where commanders are NCMs<sup>103</sup>, for the purposes of this paper, which aims toward the employment of CWOs within a command team, a start point of inquiry at the officer/NCM interface is most relevant.

#### The Officer/NCM Relationship – The Tactical Level

Much has been written about the officer/NCM relationship. In nearly every issue of the United States (US) Army's *NCO Journal*, at least one article is dedicated to this topic. Similarly, the subject is often discussed in the *Canadian Military Journal*, the *Canadian Army Journal*, and the professional journals of allied militaries. This is indicative of the importance of the relationship from both the officer and NCM perspectives. As noted in *Duty with Honour*,

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<sup>102</sup>Okros, *The Command Team: A Valuable Evolution or Doctrinal Danger?*, 21.

<sup>103</sup>The applicability of the command team at the lowest levels is supported by the *SEM* and is articulated in a citation on page 12. The source of this citation, however, is erroneously attributed in the *SEM* and attempts to locate the primary source have been unsuccessful; DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 12.

historically NCMs in the CF have “been assigned a greater scope of responsibility than their colleagues in many other militaries, and this characteristic of how the officer and NCM team has evolved in recent history will prevail into the future.”<sup>104</sup> Of the responsibilities of NCMs, arguably one of the most fundamental is the assistance that they provide in the development of junior officers. The infantry battalion provides a useful illustrative example.

Freshly minted junior officers often arrive at their battalions on completion of their basic infantry officer course and are thrust into command positions with a clear absence of experience. Their platoon second-in-command, who is usually a sergeant or WO, provides the much needed experiential base that the commander is lacking. While field grade officers are responsible for the development of the junior officers under their command, they are reliant on assistance from others. More experienced junior officers such as company seconds-in-command and unit adjutants play a key role. So do NCMs. Since a junior officer spends the bulk of his time in contact with NCMs, in particular with their platoon second-in-command, it follows that NCMs have greater opportunity to affect an officer’s initial development. Shane Brennan, a former battalion commander, suggests that the NCMs’ “relationship with young officers is likely the most influential mark on developing junior officers. Who conducts the bulk of basic officer instruction? It is the senior NCOs.”<sup>105</sup> In an infantry battalion, the pairing of an officer and a NCM is not limited to command alone. As Table 1 illustrates, almost every officer position in an infantry battalion is paired with a NCM. A similar situation exists in the Royal Canadian Navy

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<sup>104</sup>DND, *Duty with Honour* . . . , 77.

<sup>105</sup>Shane Brennan, "Time for Consideration: One Combat Arms Classification," *Canadian Army Journal* 8, no. 2 (Summer 2005), 56, [http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol\\_08/iss\\_2/CAJ\\_vol8.2\\_07\\_e.pdf](http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_08/iss_2/CAJ_vol8.2_07_e.pdf).

where Divisional Officers/Divisional Chief Petty Officers and Divisional Supervisors/Divisional Petty Officers are paired.<sup>106</sup>

<b>Officer</b>	<b>NCM Counterpart</b>
Platoon Commander	Platoon Second-in-Command <sup>107</sup>
LAV Captain	Company Operations WO <sup>108</sup>
Company Second-in-Command	Company Quartermaster Sergeant
Officer Commanding a Company	Company Sergeant Major
Maintenance Officer	Engineer Technical Quartermaster Sergeant
Quartermaster	Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant
Assistant Adjutant	NCO IC of the Battalion Orderly Room
Adjutant	Chief Clerk
Intelligence Officer	Intelligence WO
Training Officer	Training WO
Operations Officer	Operations Master Warrant Officer
Deputy Commanding Officer	Quartermaster Sergeant Instructor <sup>109</sup>
Commanding Officer	Regimental Sergeant Major

Table 1: Officer-NCO Pairings in an Infantry Battalion

These pairings are invaluable to the effectiveness of a unit. Drawing from the literature of substitutes for leadership theory introduced by Steven Kerr and John Jermier,<sup>110</sup> substitutes for leadership are “individual, task, and[/or] organizational characteristics . . .” that can “. . . negate the leader’s ability to either improve or impair subordinate satisfaction and performance.”<sup>111</sup> The experience of senior NCMs acts as a substitute for the inexperience of the junior officer and can prevent them from adversely affecting the organization and, in particular, the performance of subordinates. Furthermore, a specific officer’s tenure in any one position is relatively transient in comparison to their NCM counterparts. Thus, officer/NCM pairing seeks to leverage the relative

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<sup>106</sup>Department of National Defence, *Guide to the Divisional System (Amendment #10, 10 March 2005)* (Ottawa: DND, 2001).

<sup>107</sup>With the exception of the reconnaissance platoon which has an officer as the second-in-command and a separate position of Platoon Warrant Officer.

<sup>108</sup>Prior to the creation of the Company Operations WO position, the LAV Captain in a PPCLI battalion was paired with the Company Transportation Sergeant.

<sup>109</sup>Also referred to as the Drill Sergeant Major in some Canadian infantry regiments.

<sup>110</sup>Steven Kerr and John M. Jermier, "Substitutes for Leadership: Their Meaning and Measurement," *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 22, no. 3 (December 1978), 375-403, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(78\)90023-5](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(78)90023-5).

<sup>111</sup>*Ibid.*, 377.

stability of NCMs, their associated familiarity with standard operating procedures, and their experience to offset the comparative inexperience of officers. This idea is formalized within the US Army in its leadership manual that states, “when junior officers first serve in the Army, their NCO helps to train and mold them.”<sup>112</sup> Until an officer learns the intricacies of their command, the unit must accept some risk to its efficiency and effectiveness.

In addition to assisting superior officers with the development of junior officers, officer/NCM pairing at the lowest level also serves as a mitigation mechanism. The pairing makes the NCM’s experience readily available to the officer who is often learning on-the-job. This is not only important to ensure unit effectiveness, it is also critical to the long-term development of the officer corps and the promotion and maintenance of a healthy officer/NCM relationship within the CF overall. The importance of an officer’s first pairing with a NCM can have long lasting effects as Command Sergeant Major John Woodyard eloquently highlights in his 1993 *NCO Journal* article aimed at US Army Platoon Sergeants:

As you begin working with “your” [lieutenant], your first concern will be to provide the very best leadership possible for the platoon. But at the same time, you’re training a future commander or staff officer and making an impression that will influence his/her relationship with NCOs for years to come.<sup>113</sup>

While the positive impact that a NCM can have on an officer is most pronounced during an officer’s initial command appointment, officer/NCM pairings during subsequent staff and command appointments are also important and reinforce the value of the officer/NCM relationship. Since NCMs can have such an important long-term effect, it is essential that the CF

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<sup>112</sup>Department of the Army, *Army Doctrine Reference Publication no. 6-22: Army Leadership* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 2012), 2-2.

<sup>113</sup>John D. Woodyard, “My LT and Me,” *The NCO Journal* 3, no. 1 (Winter 1993), 11, <https://usasma.bliss.army.mil/NCOJournal/Archives/1991-1997/93winter.pdf>; This sentiment is also reflected in Department of the Army, *Field Manual 7-22.7: The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 2002).

prepare its NCMs for this role. This is a critical step to ensuring the long-term viability of the idea of the command team concept.

In the CF, NCMs are trained to assist and coach junior officers during NCM Developmental Period 3 and specifically on the Intermediate Leadership Program (ILP) course.<sup>114</sup> Despite this fact, most of the respondents in the 2010 study by Scoppio et al. indicated that no formal training occurs to prepare NCMs for an officer/NCM pairing.<sup>115</sup> As a result, the respondents felt that the success of an officer/NCM pairing is “dependent largely on the individual personalities of those involved.”<sup>116</sup> Respondents indicated that possible improvements to this situation could include conducting combined (officer/NCM) training prior to being part of a pairing and that preparation for officer/NCM pairings should occur at the rank of sergeant/petty officer 2<sup>nd</sup> class.<sup>117</sup> These comments are indicative of several issues that, while having immediate effect on junior officer/NCM pairings, could serve as long-term impediments to the viability of institutionalizing the *SEM*'s command team concept. Fortunately, they could be addressed fairly quickly and at relatively little additional expense.

Firstly, the content and delivery of the portion of the ILP devoted to assisting and coaching junior officers should be reviewed. The fact that NCMs who were undertaking or had already completed the ILP indicated that no formal training exists, indicates that the content and/or the delivery of this material is insufficient. The NCM PD Modernization Initiative is

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<sup>114</sup>DND, *CDS Guidance to Commanding Officers*, 60; DND, *Qualification Standard: Intermediate Leadership Qualification*, 2-2; DND, *Qualification Standard: Non-Commissioned Member Developmental Periods 1 to 5*, 3-7 to 3-8.

<sup>115</sup>Scoppio et al., *Maintaining the Track* . . . , 42.

<sup>116</sup>*Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>117</sup>*Ibid.*, 41.

addressing this issue.<sup>118</sup> It is important that the NCM PD Modernization Initiative, when implemented, ensures that this vital aspect of preparation is delivered in an effective manner.

Secondly, the desire to conduct combined officer/NCM PD must be closely examined, particularly when the topic of officer/NCM pairing is the focus. As discussed in the previous chapter, combined officer/NCM PD presents potential benefits and risks. A detailed study, beyond the scope of this paper is necessary.

Thirdly, to ensure that NCMs are educated properly prior to forming part of an officer/NCM pairing, the ILP should be delivered at the sergeant rank. While it is designed to occur during NCM Developmental Period 3 at the rank of sergeant/petty officer 2<sup>nd</sup> class (hereafter referred to collectively as sergeant),<sup>119</sup> many candidates attending the course have already been promoted (acting/lacking)<sup>120</sup> to WO/petty officer 1<sup>st</sup> class (hereafter referred to collectively as WO). With officer/NCM pairing occurring as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant/sergeant rank, the CF must make a concerted career management effort to eliminate the backlog of WOs that are acting/lacking as a result of not having completed the ILP and determine the appropriate timing (by trade) for sergeants to attend this course.

Finally, as an interim measure, initial education about officer/NCM pairing must be undertaken at the unit level while the timing and delivery of the ILP is adjusted. From the officer perspective, field grade and senior officers must reinforce to new junior officers the lessons from basic officer training that explain the dual role of senior NCMs and outline how these special

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<sup>118</sup>Department of National Defence, *NCM PME Program Outline* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, Draft 2012), 8-9, last accessed February 18, 2013, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/89637303/NCMPD-Modernization-SITREP-201-1>.

<sup>119</sup>DND, *Qualification Standard: Non-Commissioned Member Developmental Periods 1 to 5*, 1-5; DND, *Qualification Standard: Intermediate Leadership Qualification*, 1-1.

<sup>120</sup>A member may be granted an acting/lacking appointment or rank if the member has met all promotion requirements with the exception of a qualification level or formal course, if a vacancy exists; Department of National Defence, *Canadian Forces Administrative Order 49-4: Career Policy Non-Commissioned Members Regular Force* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1991), Annex C.

relationships are cultivated in their particular unit. They must also demonstrate the importance of the relationship through their interaction with their NCM counterpart in a visible manner to junior officers. Moreover, they must take immediate corrective action, in conjunction with their NCM counterpart, to address any specific officer/NCM pairing that is problematic. From the NCM perspective, the unit CWO must play a key role. The unit CWO, in conjunction with the CO, must determine an appropriate mechanism to educate NCMs prior to their appointment to an officer/NCM team. The methods to do so are numerous and the most appropriate method will be different for each unit. In order to best ensure that the method chosen meets the immediate requirement and supports the long-term viability of the command team concept, it is recommended that the unit CWO lead the initiative personally and consult with the unit's other WOs and its sub-unit commanders to ensure consistency. As indicated previously, the *SEM's* idea of the command team is about codifying the relationship between a specifically appointed NCM and a commander. Having stressed the importance of preparing for officer/NCM pairings at lower levels as a foundation for the command team concept, the groundwork has been set for a critical analysis of the value of commander/NCM pairing at higher levels.

#### The Officer/NCM Relationship – Higher Levels

The detailed tactical experience that a NCM brings to a commander/NCM pairing is of vital importance at lower levels. Its importance is, arguably, essential throughout the tactical level. Again returning to the Canadian Army as an illustrative example, CWOs as RSMs or Brigade Sergeants-Major have, by in large, spent an overwhelming proportion of their careers in field units, whereas their associated commanders have usually served both within and out of the field force. The experiential advice of CWOs in these roles is of particular value to the



commander. However, when considering commander/NCM pairings at the operational and strategic level, it becomes the officer who usually has the greater experience. Unlike the NCM PD system, the officer PD system specifically identifies officers with potential to command at these levels relatively early in their careers. They are subsequently ‘groomed’ for operational and strategic level command through formal courses such as the Joint Command and Staff Program (JCSP) and the National Security Program and employment in operational and strategic level headquarters. The *SEM* acknowledges that the NCM PD system, while tailored for tactical excellence, does not currently facilitate the PD of NCMs destined for SA/KPs to the same degree as officer PD.<sup>121</sup> While including high-potential NCMs in the officer PD programmes that prepare them for operational and strategic level employment appears to be a logical solution, the same risks of combined officer/NCM PD indicated in the previous chapter remain. Similarly, the officer programmes are designed to occur incrementally and at the specific points in an officer’s career that allow for the intensity and duration that these studies require. The decision to include NCMs in these programmes requires an understanding of the consequences to both the officer and NCM corps from the PD, employment, and career management perspectives and necessitates its own study.

Similarly, the *SEM* acknowledges that only a limited number of employment opportunities for NCMs exist at the operational or strategic level prior to their assignment to SAs/KPs.<sup>122</sup> Thus, it is possible that a CWO’s first real exposure to these levels will occur when they assume a SA or KP. By virtue of the likelihood of their greater experience in positions beyond the tactical level, other officers, and not the CWO, may be the best advisors for commanders at these levels. This fact leads to specific questions about the utility of SA/KP

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<sup>121</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . , 20.

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

CWOs: Is a commander/NCM pairing still relevant at senior levels in the CF? Does their relationship still deserve the “special status” that exists at the tactical level? In essence, does the SA/KP CWO offer senior commanders something that other officers do not? If the answer to these questions is no, then the idea of the command team concept and attempts to effectively institutionalize it are seriously flawed.

So what do CWOs offer a commander that officers do not? CWO Kevin West’s article, “The Role of the Chief Warrant Officer within Operational Art” suggests that CWOs view problems from a different perspective than officers. He suggests that this is due, in large part, to the additional experience that NCMs have with leading people.<sup>123</sup> It is this unique perspective that makes the senior CWO of vital importance to a commander. As West indicates, the different perspectives of officers and CWOs are complementary and as such they “enabl[e] a more in-depth analysis[,] creating more effective decisions.”<sup>124</sup> West also highlights that uncertainty about the CWO’s role at the operational level exists and is problematic for officers and NCMs: “without clear definitions of roles . . . , a grey area will continue to exist between the [officer and NCM] corps.”<sup>125</sup> This lack of clear understanding about the role of the senior-most NCM of a command is, perhaps, the most relevant point. That a SA/KP CWO is alluding to ambiguity about the CWO’s role at the operational and strategic level is likely indicative of a state of general ignorance across the CF.<sup>126</sup> Respondents to the Scoppio et al. study caution “that the CF has to be careful about the extent to which it expands the role of the [CWO] in order to avoid

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<sup>123</sup>Kevin West, "The Role of the Chief Warrant Officer within Operational Art," *The Canadian Air Force Journal* 3, no. 1 (Winter 2010), 44-55, [http://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/CFAWC/eLibrary/Journal/Vol3-2010/Iss1-Winter/Sections/07-The\\_Role\\_of\\_the\\_Warrant\\_Officer\\_within\\_Operational\\_Art\\_e.pdf](http://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/CFAWC/eLibrary/Journal/Vol3-2010/Iss1-Winter/Sections/07-The_Role_of_the_Warrant_Officer_within_Operational_Art_e.pdf).

<sup>124</sup>*Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>125</sup>*Ibid.*, 47, 49.

<sup>126</sup>CWO Kevin West, who was the first NCM Commandant of the NCM PD Centre, is currently the RCAF CWO, and has been designated as the next CFCWO, was the 8 Wing/CFB Trenton WCWO (a CWO senior appointment) at the time the article was written.

confusion.”<sup>127</sup> Increasing instances where CWOs are employed at higher echelons in staff positions traditionally associated with commissioned officers is another complicating factor. Together, these are indicative of a general uneasiness with the description of CWO roles beyond the tactical level.

The CF has attempted to inform its members about the roles of SA/KP CWOs. The publication of job based specifications, articles in *The Maple Leaf* and the *Canadian Forces Personnel Newsletter*, the CF message system, and internet webpages are all used as communication vehicles by the CF to explain the role of senior CWOs.<sup>128</sup> However, confusion remains by virtue of the ambiguity that is inherent in the descriptions. This is not surprising since their roles are usually articulated to include: advising their commander on virtually any issue that affects the CF (with particular emphasis on the service conditions of NCMs), monitoring and influencing the achievement of the commander’s objectives, monitoring compliance with CF policies, independently communicating the commander’s intent, and acting as a custodian of the NCM corps and a co-steward of the profession of arms.<sup>129</sup> This ambiguity is not unique to the CF; similar, generic descriptions are also common among Canada’s allies.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup>Scoppio et al., *Maintaining the Track* . . . , 50.

<sup>128</sup>For example, see: Department of National Defence. A-PD-055-002/PP-001, *Job Based Specifications for the Canadian Forces Chief Petty Officer 1st Class/Chief Warrant Officer Senior Appointments List*, Vol. 2 Part 2 (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2007); Marco Comisso and Peter Ryan, "Meet the New CF Chief Warrant Officer," *The Maple Leaf* 10, no. 24, 22 August 2007; Mike Nassif, "CPO1/CWO Revitalization Project on Time, on Track," *Canadian Forces Personnel Newsletter*, 6 June 2007; Department of National Defence, *Implementation Plan (IP) for Creation of a Chief Petty Officer First Class/Chief Warrant Officer Senior Appointments List* (NDHQ DGMP Ottawa: DPGR 023/07, 031754Z Oct 07); Department of National Defence, "The Role of the Canadian Forces Chief Warrant Officer (CFCWO)," last accessed February 24, 2013, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/ocds-bcemd/cwo-adju/index-eng.asp>.

<sup>129</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . ; DND, *Job Based Specifications for the Canadian Forces Chief Petty Officer 1st Class/Chief Warrant Officer Senior Appointments List*, 1-3 to 1-5, 2-11; DND, "The Role of the Canadian Forces Chief Warrant Officer (CFCWO)".

<sup>130</sup>For an Australian perspective see: Australian Army, "Other Ranks," last accessed February 24, 2013, <http://www.army.gov.au/Who-we-are/Ranks/Other-Ranks> and Royal Australian Navy, "Senior Leadership Group," last accessed February 24, 2013, <http://www.navy.gov.au/about/senior-leadership-group>. For roles in the US see: Department of Defence. Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff: Roles & Responsibilities," last accessed February 24, 2013, <http://www.jcs.mil/page.aspx?ID=54>, Department of the

In the 1970s, the US Army was similarly struggling to understand the roles of Command Sergeants-Major (CSM), the senior enlisted advisors to commanders at the battalion and higher levels, following the authorization of the CSM program in 1967. The United States Military Academy's 1976 review of the roles of the CSM<sup>131</sup> offers some insightful suggestions that could be applied in the CF. The study cautions against attempts to reduce confusion by itemizing the specific responsibilities of CSMs, as this would limit "the flexibility of the commander to make appropriate use of the CSM."<sup>132</sup> Additionally, the review indicates that should the duties of the CSM be enumerated, the duties must be so generic that they provide no real clarification or be written specifically for each individual CSM position which in turn contributes to further confusion about the role of CSMs in the general sense.<sup>133</sup> Of more value to this discussion is the study's conclusion that "the most effective course of action in the long term is probably a specific effort to increase understanding of the CSM's present functional areas of responsibility, rather than . . . attempting to specify discrete duties by regulation."<sup>134</sup> The goal of the specific effort that the review suggests is to "preserve the commander's flexibility in employing [their] CSM . . ." and is best accomplished by including formal education on the actual and potential

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Navy. Chief of Naval Operations, *Command Master Chief Program* (Washington, D.C.: file OPNAV Instruction 1306.2G, 4 April 2012), 4-1 to 4-5, Department of the Navy. Headquarters United States Marine Corps, *Marine Corps Order 1200.17: Military Occupational Specialties Marine Corps Manual* (Washington, D.C.: file MCO 1200.12, C 469, 23 May 2008), 3-576 to 3-578, Department of the Army, *Army Regulation 600-20: Army Command Policy* (Washington, D.C.: file AR 600-20, 18 March 2008/RAR 20 September 2012, 20 September 2012), 17, and Department of the Air Force. Secretary of the Air Force, *Air Force Instruction 36-2618: The Enlisted Force Structure* (Washington, D.C.: file AFI36-2618, 27 February 2009 (Certified Current 23 March 2012)), 16-17. For a NATO perspective see: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Non-Commissioned Officer Bi-SC Strategy and Recommended Non-Commissioned Officer Guidelines* (SHAPE, Belgium/Norfolk, VA, USA: file SH/DOM/SWM/10-270697, 1000 TSC GXX 0200/TT-6327/Ser:NU, 13 October 2010), A-2.

<sup>131</sup>United States Military Academy, *Role of the Noncommissioned Officer* (West Point, NY: file MACC-M, 16 July 1976).

<sup>132</sup>*Ibid.*, 6

<sup>133</sup>*Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>134</sup>*Ibid.*, 7; This recommendation is echoed in John C. Bahnsen and James W. Bradin, "The Army's Command Sergeant Major Problem," *Parameters* XVIII (June 1988), 16, <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/Parameters/Articles/1988/1988%20bahnsen%20bradin.pdf>.

organizational functions of the CSM into specific officer and NCM courses.<sup>135</sup> Given the state of confusion surrounding the roles of SA/KP CWOs, this recommendation should be applied in the CF to strengthen the institutionalization of the command team concept. Some work by the Canadian Defence Academy in this respect is already underway.

The NCM PD Modernization Initiative recommends introducing a discussion about the roles of NCMs in the command team during NCM Developmental Period 2 and reinforcing the discussion during subsequent Developmental Periods.<sup>136</sup> The officer corps must take complementary steps with officer PD. Firstly, officer candidates should understand the importance of the (junior) officer/NCM relationship and be ready to accept the coaching of senior NCMs by the time they have completed basic officer training and are posted to their first unit. Currently, no mention of the officer/NCM team is associated with basic officer training in the CF officer qualification standard. Only during the early stages of Developmental Period 2 (the lieutenant and captain rank levels) does it indicate that officers should be “accepting the role of the senior NCM as a coach”.<sup>137</sup>

Secondly, officer PD should be updated to ensure that training is adjusted to the extent that an understanding of the roles of the NCM in officer/NCM pairings, up to unit level, occurs early in officer Developmental Period 2. This will ensure that by the time officers are ‘senior captains’, they are already actively promoting the officer/NCM team “by working together through a shared sense of responsibility and purpose and mutually supporting expertise, but recognizing the distinct officer and NCM roles within the profession of arms,”<sup>138</sup> which is

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<sup>135</sup>USMA, *Role of the Noncommissioned Officer*, 6.

<sup>136</sup>DND, *NCM PME Program Outline*, 6-8.

<sup>137</sup>DND, *Qualification Standard: Officer Developmental Periods 1 to 5*, Chapter 3.

<sup>138</sup>DND, *Qualification Standard: Officer Developmental Periods 1 to 5*, 3-25.

currently identified as a requirement of Developmental Period 3 (the major and lieutenant-colonel rank levels).<sup>139</sup>

Finally, a comprehensive understanding of the roles of SA/KP CWOs should be considered for inclusion in the curriculum goals of the JCSP<sup>140</sup>, given that its Major and Lieutenant-Colonel candidates are being prepared for leadership and staff roles at the strategic and operational levels. These proposals, in conjunction with those of the NCM PD Modernization Initiative, seek to promote a better understanding of the officer/NCM relationship at all levels earlier in members' careers. Realizing this goal will facilitate the institutionalization of the idea behind the command team by improving the general state of knowledge about the important roles that SA/KP CWOs play. Nested within the changes to officer and NCM PD, is the requirement to define exactly what the command team concept is and what it has as its major outcome.<sup>141</sup> It is to this task that this paper will now turn.

### **Reframing the Concept**

In order for the idea of the command team concept to be effectively institutionalized within the CF, it must be adequately expressed and, more importantly, universally understood. Scoppio et al.'s study determined that the command team and leadership team concepts are not well understood and recommended that the CF complete a "Command in the Canadian Forces doctrine manual to include an agreed upon chapter describing the command team concept."<sup>142</sup> As

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<sup>139</sup>DND, *Qualification Standard: Officer Developmental Periods 1 to 5*, 3-25

<sup>140</sup>The inclusion of education about the functional roles of CSMs in Staff College curriculum was also a suggestion in the 1976 USMA review. USMA, *Role of the Noncommissioned Officer*, 6.

<sup>141</sup>Defining the command team is a key recommendation of Scoppio et al., *Maintaining the Track . . .*, 71, DND, *Qualification Standard: Officer Developmental Periods 1 to 5*, B-2, and West, *The Role of the Chief Warrant Officer within Operational Art*, 47.

<sup>142</sup>Scoppio et al., *Maintaining the Track . . .*, 68, 71.

indicated previously, the *SEM* considers the command team to be generally accepted as the pairing of a commander and CWO, a perspective echoed by CWOs Stéphane Guy and Kevin West.<sup>143</sup> The *SEM*, however, makes the provision that at the strategic level the concept evolves into the Senior Leadership Team that includes several other individuals.<sup>144</sup> As the section on ‘disconnects’ highlights, different labels that are applied differently by various organizations make the institutionalization of the idea behind the command team concept difficult. The preceding sections have highlighted two specific aspects that are applicable at all levels: firstly, officer/NCM pairings are absolutely essential at lower levels and remain quite valuable at higher levels. This aspect is succinctly expressed in *The (US) Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide*: “Although the officer is held accountable for all that the unit does or fails to do, only by working together with the NCO can he assure the job will get accomplished.”<sup>145</sup> Secondly, a special relationship exists between a *commander* and their senior-NCM counterpart, which, in addition to their shared sense of responsibility for their entire organization, is attributable to the discretionary manner with which commanders can choose to focus the efforts of their partner. Thus, the idea behind the command team concept is much narrower than the *SEM* posits by suggesting that the command team expands to the senior leadership team. While the senior leadership team (or strategic leadership cadre), as a collective, has very important institutional stewardship responsibilities, the narrower idea behind the command team concept still applies; strategic commanders and their senior-most NCM advisors still have a special relationship. Thus, to be more universally applicable, the concept should be reframed along narrower lines than the *SEM* implies. As a starting point for a larger debate that leads to the consensus that Scoppio et al.

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<sup>143</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . , 11; Guy, *The Command Team: A Key Enabler*, 57; West, *The Role of the Chief Warrant Officer within Operational Art*, 47.

<sup>144</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . . , 11.

<sup>145</sup>Department of the Army, *Field Manual 7-22.7: The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide*, 2-17.

recommend for inclusion in a *Command in the CF* doctrine manual, this paper offers that the concept is fundamentally about *recognizing and promoting* the special status of the relationship between a *commander* and the *senior non-commissioned leader* of any CF organization. As the *SEM* indicates, these two individuals together represent the highest level of leadership of an organization for both the officer and NCM corps.<sup>146</sup> While this discussion, in light of this paper's overall aim, has focused on the concept when officers are the commander, this starting point allows for future detailed inquiry into the applicability of the concept at lower levels when NCMs, who will likely have very similar experiential bases, are filling both roles. With the concept more appropriately framed, its label should be revisited.

To be credible, any nomenclature used to express the concept should be consistent with existing doctrine. As Dr. Okros points out, the term command team is inconsistent with the doctrinal definition of command.<sup>147</sup> Returning to the discussion of command at the beginning of this chapter, it is beneficial to re-emphasize that “[c]ommand is vested in an individual who has total responsibility”<sup>148</sup> and that staff members and advisors, unlike subordinate commanders, “have no authority by themselves; they derive authority from the commander and exercise it in his [or her] name. Therefore, all of their activities are undertaken on the commander’s behalf.”<sup>149</sup> Since the majority of NCMs in the specific commander/senior non-commissioned leader pairings are advisors<sup>150</sup> and, like staff, are external to the chain of command, it is inappropriate to label this type of pairing as a command team. Since command authority rests solely with commanders, the term command team, to be consistent with doctrine, should only include commanders. This

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<sup>146</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation . . .*, 11.

<sup>147</sup>Okros, *The Command Team: A Valuable Evolution Or Doctrinal Danger?*, 16.

<sup>148</sup>Department of National Defence. B-GJ-005-500/FP-000, *CFJP 5.0: The Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process*. Change 2. (Ottawa: MND/MDN Canada, 2008), 1-1.

<sup>149</sup>*Ibid.*, 1-1 to 1-2.

<sup>150</sup>A notable exception exists in the Canadian Army at the platoon/troop level and below where the senior-most NCM is the second-in-command as well as an advisor.



statement in no way seeks to diminish the importance of the functions of the senior non-commissioned leader nor to understate the responsibilities of staff and other advisors in their command support role, but rather to stress the importance of the ultimate accountability that resides solely with the specified commanders within the chain of command. As Sergeant Major (US Marine Corps) Robert S. Mastriano puts it, “Ultimately, there is only one CO, and the sergeant major must be the steadfast guarantee of this fact.”<sup>151</sup> So what would be a more appropriate nomenclature to refer to the special relationship between a commander and the senior non-commissioned leader of any CF organization?

Dr. Okros’ suggestion, the “command team leadership philosophy”<sup>152</sup> has merit. This suggestion certainly avoids many of the growing pains associated with replacing terminology already in frequent use (albeit poorly understood), particularly in that it could be abridged in common use as the ‘command team’ so long as the associated doctrine fully articulates “how command and how leadership in support of command are to be understood and exercised.”<sup>153</sup> However, it will not resolve the perception problems regarding the inappropriate association of command authority to the senior non-commissioned leader.<sup>154</sup> This paper suggests that the “commander/senior non-commissioned leader team” is a label that most accurately reflects doctrine and gets to the heart of the idea that the *SEM* is seeking to promote. While this label does not have the same panache as the command team and faces the habitual obstacles associated with the introduction of new terminology, it has much to offer. It has applicability at all levels, leverages the importance and understanding that already exists in the CF regarding the

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<sup>151</sup>Robert E. Mastriano, "Defining the Marine Corps Sergeant Major," *Marine Corps Gazette* 89, no. 4 (April 2005), 49, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/221441482/fulltextPDF/13D0CF6840442D61A75/1?accountid=9867>

<sup>152</sup>Okros, *The Command Team: A Valuable Evolution Or Doctrinal Danger?*, 21.

<sup>153</sup>*Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>154</sup>This line of reasoning is drawn from Claude W. Abate and Warren P. Giddings, "What is a Sergeant Major?" (Military Studies Program Paper, United States Army War College), 27.

officer/NCM relationship, avoids the command perception problems, and implicitly recognizes that a commander and the senior non-commissioned leader have a special relationship that is important to the CF and that this relationship needs to be cultivated and promoted.

### **Summary and Recommendations**

The aim of this chapter was to investigate how the institutionalization of the command team concept could assist in fostering a common command and leadership culture within the officer and NCM corps (*SEM SO1*) and contribute to CF institutional and operational leadership (*SEM SO3*). It began with a review of authority and command in the context of the CF, which highlighted that commanders are formally empowered by Canadian law as individuals and that they, while remaining ultimately accountable, are authorized to delegate their authority to other individuals.

This was followed by a presentation on how the stated composition of the command team differs from how it is applied in the various services and at different levels. This led to the assertion that the inconsistent use of the command team label by various services, combined with different labels being applied at higher levels, inhibits the institutionalization of the idea behind the concept. Subsequently, the chapter investigated officer/NCM pairing at tactical and higher levels. Several recommendations resulted from this inquiry. Firstly, the content and delivery of the ILP's module concerning the coaching and assisting of officers needs review, and a concerted career management effort should be applied to ensure that this course is taken at the sergeant rank. Secondly and echoing a recommendation from the previous chapter, more study on the delivery of combined officer/NCM PD at junior levels is necessary to determine whether it is an appropriate way to better prepare individuals for specific officer/NCM pairings. Thirdly,

as an interim measure, unit level education for both officers and NCMs about the importance of the officer/NCM relationship will have to cover the gap while the ILP is updated. Finally, officer PD should be updated in concert with the NCM PD Modernization Initiative to ensure that an understanding of the roles of NCMs within commander/senior non-commissioned leader teams are taught earlier in members' careers, including its potential inclusion in the JCSP curriculum.

The chapter then concluded by reemphasizing that for the concept to be institutionalized across the CF, it should be applicable at all levels and consistent with doctrine. It was suggested that as a starting point for further debate, the “commander/senior non-commissioned leader team” was a more appropriate label for the concept, which aims to recognize and promote the special status of the relationship between a commander and the senior non-commissioned leader of any CF organization. By explicitly outlining the aim of the concept, this chapter encourages additional debate that will lead to eventual consensus and inclusion in CF joint doctrine on *Command in the CF*. This doctrine will then form the basis of the necessary updates to NCM PD and officer PD, thereby fostering a common command/leadership culture and strongly contributing to CF institutional and operational leadership. A second theme of SO3, as indicated at the start of this chapter, is the further empowerment of SA/KP CWOs, which is the subject of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 3 – EMPOWERMENT OF SENIOR APPOINTMENT/KEY POSITION CWO

The *SEM* repeatedly indicates that SA/KP CWOs require further empowerment in order for the CF to more effectively leverage their experience and capabilities.<sup>155</sup> The *SEM*'s suggestions for improvement in this area follow three general themes: (1) enhancing CWO skill sets, (2) providing them greater autonomy of action, and (3) improving the use of SA/KP CWOs as a collective body.<sup>156</sup> This chapter focuses on the latter two themes, while the former, for reasons explained in the section on personal power below, requires a degree of analysis beyond the scope of this paper. The chapter will begin with an expansion of the discussion of leader power introduced in the previous chapter, highlighting the vital importance of credibility. It then investigates the utility of formalizing a NCM-specific communication apparatus in the CF by evaluating the US Army's NCO Support Channel, and concludes with a summary of the main deductions and recommendations.

### Leader Power

As discussed earlier, the authority of SA/KP CWOs, as advisors, is drawn from their commander and they exercise it in his or her name. This does not mean that CWOs have no power; in fact, by virtue of their rank, competence, and experience, SA/KP CWOs have considerable leadership power. CF leadership doctrine describes sources of leader power as originating from two areas: position power and personal power.<sup>157</sup> The Acting Director of Academics at the Canadian Forces College, Dr. Alan Okros, in his monograph *Leadership in the*

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<sup>155</sup>DND, *Beyond Transformation* . . .

<sup>156</sup>*Ibid.*, 4-5, 12, 15-16, 22.

<sup>157</sup>DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, Chapter 5.

*Canadian Military Context*, suggests that a third form of power exists in the CF: professional power.<sup>158</sup> A short overview of these three types of power is appropriate before proceeding further.

### Position Power

Position power “reflects attributes of an appointment or rank within a larger social structure of authority and power” and because it is directly associated with the organizational function an individual fills, it is mostly temporary in nature.<sup>159</sup> It is comprised of legitimate, reward, coercive, information, and ecological power.<sup>160</sup> *Legitimate power* is largely associated with authority and is “the capacity to *impose* a sense of obligation or duty on another [emphasis added].”<sup>161</sup> As such, SA/KP CWOs are limited to the legitimate powers a commander assigns to them or their position. Since SA/KP CWOs are not commanders in their own right, the legitimate power that they exercise is predominantly on behalf of the commander. *Reward power* “is the capacity to provide others with things they desire or value.”<sup>162</sup> While the capacity to provide tangible or symbolic rewards is associated with legitimate power, social rewards such as praise and recognition are not.<sup>163</sup> As such, SA/KP CWOs, by virtue of their personal and professional power (discussed below), have the ability to leverage a significant degree of reward power. *Coercive power* involves the ability to “take away rewards and privileges or administer sanctions

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<sup>158</sup> Alan Okros, *Leadership in the Canadian Military Context* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy, Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2010), 15-17.

<sup>159</sup> DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 58.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

and punishment” and is generally, although not exclusively, a function of legitimate power.<sup>164</sup> In the CF, coercive power is derived from three primary sources:

1. superior rank and the latent disciplinary power it represents;
2. the formal duty of every officer and NCM to enforce the *Code of Service Discipline*, either by laying a charge or by reporting an offence to someone with the authority to lay charges; and
3. the discretionary authority of superiors to assign tedious or unappealing duties to subordinates, to withdraw privileges, or to adversely influence career recommendations and decisions.<sup>165</sup>

While the latter two of the aforementioned sources certainly highlight the potential coercive power of SA/KP CWOs, realistically, they are more applicable as a function of ‘leading people’ vice ‘leading the institution’ and thus, are less useful as tools for institutional leaders. SA/KP CWOs, by virtue of their position within the commander/senior non-commission leader team, have tremendous *information power*: “the capacity to access and distribute important information.”<sup>166</sup> Increasing the information power of SA/KP CWOs by formalizing a distribution method will be discussed in a subsequent section. *Ecological power* involves the ability to adjust the physical and cultural work environment; the SA/KP CWO’s ability to do so across the CF is generally limited to influencing institutional decisions and acting as an exemplar,<sup>167</sup> both of which are functions of their personal power.

## Personal Power

*Personal power* “reflects the socially valued or useful qualities of an individual” and because it is associated with the qualities that a specific individual has developed over time and

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<sup>164</sup>DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 59.

<sup>165</sup>*Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>166</sup>*Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>167</sup>*Ibid.*, 59; Okros, *Leadership in the Canadian Military Context*, 15.

not the job position they occupy, it is much more portable than position power.<sup>168</sup> Personal power consists of expert, referent and connection power.<sup>169</sup> *Expert power* is the ability to provide expert advice stemming from an individual's "unique knowledge, skill, or experience."<sup>170</sup> The SA/KP CWO certainly possesses trade and environmental<sup>171</sup> specific expert power by virtue of their extensive occupation-related training and experience. Furthermore, collectively, the SA/KP CWO cadre represents *the* expert power in the CF for the PD and employment of NCMs. Improving the SA/KP CWOs' strategic level expertise will improve their individual and collective expert power. Mechanisms to do so, such as the possibility of including high-potential NCMs on the officers' preparatory courses, which was briefly discussed in the preceding chapter, is not as simple an undertaking as it appears. Similarly, given the detailed work being done by the NCM PD Modernization Initiative to update the NCM PD system, any analysis or recommendations that could be offered within the confines of this paper to improve SA/KP CWO expert power would be entirely superficial in comparison. This area requires its own study.

*Referent power* is the influence that a leader exerts by leveraging their ability to provide a sense of worth or approval to followers.<sup>172</sup> Drawing again from Pigeau and McCann's Competency-Authority-Responsibility model, referent power – for which being viewed as a role model is key – is earned over time based on the values, ethics and courage that have been personally demonstrated.<sup>173</sup> As such, it is imperative that for SA/KP CWOs to have effective referent power they must continuously act as conduct and moral exemplars.<sup>174</sup> *Connection power*

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<sup>168</sup>Okros, *Leadership in the Canadian Military Context*, 15; DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 58-59.

<sup>169</sup>*Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>170</sup>DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 60.

<sup>171</sup>Environmental in the CF context refers to the three armed services of the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

<sup>172</sup>DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 60; Okros, *Leadership in the Canadian Military Context*, 15.

<sup>173</sup>Pigeau and McCann, *Re-Conceptualizing Command and Control*, 59.

<sup>174</sup>For a detailed discussion on the need for NCMs to be moral exemplars see: Kenneth R. Williams, "The Noncommissioned Officer as Moral Exemplar," *Military Review* 89, no. 5 (September-October 2009), 110-117.

is similar to information power in that it involves the ability to access and distribute useful information. Unlike information power, which derives its access to information from the position the individual occupies, connection power is based on access to information from the people the individual personally knows – their personal network.<sup>175</sup> The degree of SA/KP CWOs' connection power varies from individual to individual, but generally is quite high given their longevity of service and the degree of interaction that they have likely had with a wide range of individuals throughout their careers.

### Professional Power

Dr. Okros, drawing on the idea of “swift trust” introduced by Meyerson, Weick and Kramer,<sup>176</sup> suggests that the military seeks to create ‘swift power’ through symbolic means to signal the status that the individual has earned and carries with them from one job to the next.<sup>177</sup> This *professional power* is associated with an individual by virtue of rank, honours and awards, qualifications, and previous appointment to high status positions (such as a RSM, Coxswain, or other SA/KP CWO positions).<sup>178</sup> Since professional power associates competence with, what is in essence, a résumé, it is highly portable and “can serve as a temporary [power] bridge while the incumbent acquires or re-builds essential elements of position and personal power.”<sup>179</sup> This type of power is highly pertinent to the newly appointed SA/KP CWO who, on departure from the tactical level, may find that their new co-workers possess more relevant personal power (expert,

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<sup>175</sup>DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 60.

<sup>176</sup>Debra Meyerson, Karl E. Weick and Roderick M. Kramer, "Swift Trust and Temporary Groups," in *Trust in Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*, eds. Roderick M. Kramer and Tom R. Tyler (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1996), 166-195.

<sup>177</sup>Okros, *Leadership in the Canadian Military Context*, 16.

<sup>178</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>179</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.



referent, and connection) than the CWO.<sup>180</sup> Since professional power, personal power, and to a somewhat lesser degree, position power<sup>181</sup> are predicated on an individual's credibility, the issue of credibility perception must now be highlighted.

## Credibility

Since the majority of a SA/KP CWO's potential leader power is based on personal and professional power, the establishment and maintenance of their personal credibility is key. SA/KP CWOs, like their SA officer counterparts, face a perpetual 'perception of credibility' issue that is common to all institutional leaders who are prevented from regular interaction with the bulk of their subordinates. As Master Warrant Officer Stephan Smith indicates in the *Australian Defence Force Journal*:

At the national level, NCOs need to have positive role models whose influence is seen and felt. Most Army NCOs view the Regimental Sergeant Major's position as the pinnacle of their career. This may explain why senior NCOs in appointments such as area, brigade, division, command or Army are seen as political rather than leadership figures.<sup>182</sup>

This perception echoes the opinion of Major Paul Payne:

Very soon, the perception amongst the field force will be that there are the "have" and the "have not"—those who have deployed to Afghanistan, and those who have not. Those who "have not", are perceived to lack the credibility and the credentials required for key appointment and senior leadership employment.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>180</sup>Okros, *Leadership in the Canadian Military Context*, 16.

<sup>181</sup>While position power is generally associated with authority, credibility is still an important aspect of reward and information power.

<sup>182</sup>Stephan R. Smith, "A View from Canada - 'Reform and the Non-Commissioned Officer'," *Australian Defence Force Journal*, no. 187 (March/April 2012), 56, [http://www.adfjournal.adc.edu.au/UserFiles/issues/187%202012%20Mar\\_Apr.pdf](http://www.adfjournal.adc.edu.au/UserFiles/issues/187%202012%20Mar_Apr.pdf).

<sup>183</sup>Paul Payne, "Wartime Trainers: Adaptable, Agile, and Critical to Success," *Canadian Army Journal* 10, no. 4 (Winter 2008), 131, [http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol\\_10/iss\\_4/CAJ\\_vol10.4\\_22\\_e.pdf](http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/caj/documents/vol_10/iss_4/CAJ_vol10.4_22_e.pdf).

While perceptions such as these are not based on fact, the challenge of “connecting with subordinates – convincing them, motivating them, and leading them – without the benefit of direct contact on a day-to-day basis”<sup>184</sup> remains. For this reason, not only is it essential that the CF retain the requirement that, prior to employment in a SA or KP, CWOs have excelled and normally have served as a coxswain, RSM, squadron or school CWO,<sup>185</sup> but it is also essential that SA/KP CWOs are and remain visible exemplars of the military ethos.<sup>186</sup> As Chaplain (Major) Kenneth Williams indicates in a 2009 *Military Review* article: “Failure to live up to these standards is to be a mountebank, a charlatan who does not understand the most basic requirements of the profession.”<sup>187</sup> With the aforementioned perceptions about senior appointments being political rather than leadership positions, SA/KP CWOs must continue to be selected from the best CWOs that the CF has to offer and any ethical shortcomings should result in immediate and public removal from the SA/KP. Returning to leader power more generally, it is important to highlight that, in addition to the compromising effect that poor performance or unacceptable conduct can have on leader power, “[t]he amount of influence that can be generated from each of the types of power can diminish if used inappropriately or excessively.”<sup>188</sup> Thus, leadership credibility is a function of performance, conduct *and* the appropriate and balanced use of the sources of leader power at an individual’s disposal. Having reviewed the sources of leader power and underscored the importance of credibility, this paper will examine the utility of

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<sup>184</sup>Bernd Horn, "Institutional Leadership: Understanding the Command, Management and Leadership Nexus," in *Institutional Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Contemporary Issues*, ed. Robert W. Walker (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 99.

<sup>185</sup>DND, *Job Based Specifications for the Canadian Forces Chief Petty Officer 1st Class/Chief Warrant Officer Senior Appointments List*, 1-6 to 1-7.

<sup>186</sup>For a detailed discussion on the importance of ethics to institutional leadership see: Daniel Lagace-Roy, "Institutional Leader Ethics," in *Institutional Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Contemporary Issues*, ed. Robert W. Walker (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 109-121.

<sup>187</sup>Williams, *The Noncommissioned Officer as Moral Exemplar*, 112.

<sup>188</sup>DND, *Conceptual Foundations*, 58-59; Okros, *Leadership in the Canadian Military Context*, 16.

formalizing a NCM-specific communication vehicle as a potential SA/KP CWO empowerment mechanism by evaluating the US Army's NCO Support Channel.

### **The NCO Support Channel**

In the CF, NCM-specific networks are largely informal and are empowered primarily through information and connection power; a notable exception is the CFCWO's Council that has specific mandate.<sup>189</sup> Conversely, the US Army has created a NCM-only network that parallels the traditional chain of command. This "NCO Support Channel" has been formalized in US Army Regulations since December 1976.<sup>190</sup> As such, the NCO Support Channel offers a practical case study to investigate whether formalizing a network of NCMs within the CF is an appropriate empowerment mechanism. This section will begin with an outline of the NCO Support Channel focused on describing the changes to US Army command policy that occurred when it was formalized, and then provide an overview of potential benefits and shortcomings of a formalized NCM network.

#### The NCO Support Channel – An Overview

Prior to 1977, the NCO channel was considered comparable to staff and technical communication channels. It was an informal network that originated with a commander and extended in a hierarchical manner from the commander's sergeant major through other NCMs to

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<sup>189</sup>The CFCWO's Council is required to periodically meet to "discuss, review and recommend amendment(s) . . . on all matters which affect NCM's [sic]"; DND, *Job Based Specifications for the Canadian Forces Chief Petty Officer 1st Class/Chief Warrant Officer Senior Appointments List*, JD 001 - CFCWO.

<sup>190</sup>Department of the Army, *Field Manual 7-22.7: The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide*, 2-14.

all the enlisted personnel of a major unit or installation.<sup>191</sup> The manner with which the channel operated was determined by the commander and was often used to ensure that certain routine tasks and responsibilities were accomplished.<sup>192</sup> After 1977, the network was formalized as the NCO Support Channel and its association with staff or technical networks was severed. Additionally, the NCO Support Channel was assigned the responsibility of assisting the chain of command in “administering the NCO professional development program” and with the “supervision of unit operations within established policy guidelines.”<sup>193</sup> In the most recent version of the *US Army Command Policy*, commanders still “define [the] responsibilities and authority of their NCOs,”<sup>194</sup> but the NCO Support Channel now begins at the NCM level with the CSM instead of the commander. Furthermore, the channel is considered essential to the effective promotion of the Army ethic and representing the interests of the NCM corps.<sup>195</sup> Formalizing a parallel NCO Support Channel that reinforces the chain of command and acts as both a communication and supervisory tool is considered by the US Army as having empowered NCMs by highlighting the essential nature of NCM participation within the organization.<sup>196</sup> Having outlined the US Army’s NCO Support Channel in sufficient detail for the purposes of the subsequent discussion, this paper will next evaluate whether a formalization of a similar NCM-specific network in the CF is an appropriate empowerment mechanism for SA/KP CWOs.

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<sup>191</sup>Department of the Army, *Army Regulation 600-20: Army Command Policy* (Washington, D.C.: file AR 600-20 \*C6, 18 December 1969), 5.

<sup>192</sup>*Ibid.*, 5; Department of the Army, *Army Regulation 600-20: Army Command Policy and Procedure* (Washington, D.C.: file AR 600-20 \*C 8, 27 October 1965), 5.

<sup>193</sup>Department of the Army, *Army Regulation 600-20: Army Command Policy and Procedures* (Washington, D.C.: file 20 August 1986 Update - AR 600-20, 20 August 1986), 4.

<sup>194</sup>Department of the Army, *Army Regulation 600-20: Army Command Policy*, 15.

<sup>195</sup>*Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>196</sup>*Ibid.*, 16-17; Department of the Army, *Field Manual 7-22.7: The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide*, 2-17.

## Potential Benefits

Since SA/KP CWOs' "contact with the workforce is less immediate and face-to-face; and may be primarily maintained through the other [senior] NCO ranks,"<sup>197</sup> a robust network is essential to their ability to influence others and promote organizational efficiency. Colonel Claude Abate and Lieutenant Colonel Warren Giddings suggest that since the 'way of war' is evolving, commanders that can leverage the NCO Support Channel to oversee more than just simple and routine matters will be able to focus more broadly toward mission accomplishment.<sup>198</sup> A NCO Support Channel, by virtue of formalized legitimate power, can resolve several issues on its own and afford commanders more time for uninterrupted reflection.<sup>199</sup> Furthermore, Abate and Giddings suggest the NCO Support Channel offers commanders additional mechanisms for upward, downward, and lateral communication.<sup>200</sup> Drawing from the previous discussion on leader power, a formalized NCM network allows a commander to not only exert indirect influence through the senior non-commissioned leader's connection power, but, arguably, could further legitimize the SA/KP CWO's information power. While there are potential benefits to a formalized NCO Support Channel in the CF, such an initiative also has at least two significant shortcomings.

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<sup>197</sup> Australian Defence Force. ADDP 00.6, *Leadership in the Australian Defence Force* (Canberra, ACT: Defence Publishing Service, 2007), 6B-3.

<sup>198</sup> Abate and Giddings, *What is a Sergeant Major?*, 29.

<sup>199</sup> This line of reasoning is drawn from USMA, *Role of the Noncommissioned Officer*, 3 and the quote from Brigadier General John Johns in John G. Meyer, *Company Command: The Bottom Line* (Washington, D.C.: National Defence University Press, 1990), 31.

<sup>200</sup> Abate and Giddings, *What is a Sergeant Major?*, 13.

## Significant Shortcomings

The first shortcoming relates to potential for the chain of command and the formalized NCM channel to issue conflicting direction. Lieutenant Colonel John McNulty III, in a US Army War College paper, argues against the need for a formal NCO Support Channel. He opines that a functional chain of command negates the requirement for a second chain of information flow, saving time, and reducing the risk of misinterpretation.<sup>201</sup> Similarly, the United States Military Academy evaluated that:

The existence of parallel lines of information flow . . . is superfluous and counterproductive. Any such state of affairs which increases the number of exchanges of information from one recipient to another merely increases the number of opportunities for confusion and misinterpretation.<sup>202</sup>

Even the *US Army NCO Guide*, which champions the formal NCO Support Channel, warns that the chain of command and NCO Support Channel might issue conflicting orders if they are not properly harmonized.<sup>203</sup> The maintenance of an informal NCM network in the CF could alleviate this problem. While conflicting instructions cannot realistically be eradicated whether the NCM network is formalized or not, the primacy of the chain of command as the sole legitimate channel for the issuance of orders reduces the ambiguity associated with conflicting direction.

The second significant shortcoming of formalizing a NCM-specific information network is a paradoxical one. One of the purposes of the NCM network and SA/KP CWOs is to represent the interests of NCMs to commissioned officers. Yet, “the very presumption of a need for an agent at the [officer/NCM] boundary may in many cases serve to widen that gap”<sup>204</sup> and further

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<sup>201</sup>John J. McNulty III, "The CSM and the NCO Support Channel" (Military Studies Program Paper, United States Army War College), 9.

<sup>202</sup>USMA, *Role of the Noncommissioned Officer*, 4.

<sup>203</sup>Department of the Army, *Field Manual 7-22.7: The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide*, 2-16.

<sup>204</sup>USMA, *Role of the Noncommissioned Officer*, 4.

prevent officers from achieving effective communication with NCMs.<sup>205</sup> Any mechanism, such as formalizing a NCO Support Channel in the CF, that “creates or dramatizes such a gulf may be more destructive in the long run.”<sup>206</sup> As such, initiatives to further empower SA/KP CWOs by formalizing their network requires careful consideration of the second order effects.

### **Summary and Recommendations**

By expanding on the understanding of leader power and investigating the utility of formalizing a NCM-specific communication channel, this chapter sought to evaluate how the CF can further empower SA/KP CWOs by potentially providing them with greater authority for autonomous action and improving the CF’s ability to leverage SA/KP CWOs as a collective. The discussion on position power determined that the degree of legitimate power that a SA/KPs CWOs can autonomously employ is predicated on the amount of authority that their commander decides to delegate to them. As such, any additional autonomy provided to SA/KP CWOs is necessarily associated with the trust they develop with their commanders. Recommendations along this vein echo those in the preceding chapter about institutionalizing the commander/senior non-commissioned leader team concept. SA/KP CWOs have a significant degree of informal reward power at their individual disposal. In contrast, by virtue of their role as institutional leaders, SA/KP CWOs have limited relevant coercive power. Certainly, they do have the ability to use coercive power, however it was determined that the use of this power was less useful at the institutional level. The SA/KP CWO was determined to have a significant amount of information power by virtue of their place in the commander/senior non-commissioned leader

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<sup>205</sup>Bahnsen and Bradin, *The Army's Command Sergeant Major Problem*, 15.

<sup>206</sup>USMA, *Role of the Noncommissioned Officer*, 4.

team. This was discussed further in the section on the NCO Support Channel. The ability of SA/KP CWOs to exercise pan-CF ecological power was determined to be limited to indirect influence exercised through their personal power.

The review of personal power highlighted that SA/KP CWOs individually have discrete trade and environmental expert power, but collectively they are *the* experts regarding the NCM corps. Implied here, is that the CF should continue to leverage the collective expertise of SA/KP CWOs in the development and review of NCM PD, and that their role as the collective custodian of the NCM corps is appropriately placed. It was suggested that improving their collective strategic expertise would empower them further and that this should be the subject of an additional study. SA/KP CWOs have the potential for high degrees of referent power, but the ability to maintain or increase this power rests solely within the control of the individual. The degree of connection power varies from individual to individual and because it is based on personal relationships, the CF is not realistically able to affect an increase in this element of leader power.

The review of professional power determined that SA/KP CWOs benefit greatly from the ‘swift power’ that their accomplishments bestow to them. This was determined to be particularly useful upon the CWO’s first appointment to a SA/KP when their co-workers could very likely possess more immediately relevant expert, referent, and connection power. Since professional power is generated symbolically by personal achievements during an individual’s career, the CF is only realistically able to increase the professional power of SA/KP CWOs by ensuring they have been employed in high status positions.

The discussion of credibility highlighted that SA/KP CWOs, like their officer counterparts, face the largely unavoidable and untrue perception of being viewed as political



rather than leadership figures. Based on this enduring perception and with aim of providing as much professional power as possible, it was recommended that SA/KP CWOs continue to be selected from the cream of the crop of former RSMs, coxswains, and squadron or school CWOs. Furthermore, it was recommended that SA/KP CWOs continue to act as visible moral exemplars of the CF ethos. This chapter then focused on the US Army's NCO Support Channel as a practical case study to assess the benefits of formalizing a NCM-network in the CF as a potential SA/KP CWO empowerment option.

This section began by summarizing changes that occurred in US Army command policy when the NCO Support Channel was formalized before identifying the benefits and risks associated with such an option in the CF. A formalized NCM channel was determined to potentially offer commanders more time for detailed reflection and provide them with additional indirect influence capacity down, up, and laterally. It was also indicated that a formalized channel could potentially further legitimize the SA/KP CWO's information power. This assertion, while theoretically possible, probably has minimal application in practice. As discussed in the section on position power, SA/KP CWOs already possess significant information power. When combined with a more robust understanding of the commander/senior non-commissioned leader team concept across the CF that was proposed in chapter 2, it is unlikely that a formalized NCM channel would provide any additional legitimacy to a SA/KP CWO's information power.

Risks associated with formalizing a CF equivalent to the NCO Support Channel were identified in two areas. Firstly, two formal information channels were assessed as being redundant and likely to increase the likelihood of confusion. Secondly, it was cautioned that the mere formalization of an already existing network that represents the interests of NCMs to

officers could, in effect, widen the officer/NCM ‘perception gap’ and therefore be detrimental to officer/NCM relations in the long-term. In sum, a formalized NCM network in the CF could potentially be beneficial to commanders. However, it presents no immediately discernible SA/KP CWO empowerment benefit. A study of potential *prestige* aspects of introducing a CF version of the NCO Support Channel is beyond the scope of this paper and additional inquiry into the second and third order effects of such an initiative is recommended as an area for further research.

In conclusion, the CF can take measures to empower SA/KP CWOs to act more autonomously. The CF should institutionalize the commander/senior non-commissioned leader team concept as outlined in the previous chapter. It should ensure that SA/KP CWOs have the essential professional power necessary for independent action by retaining the prerequisite requirement of having attained the unit level high status appointment of RSM, coxswain or squadron/school CWO. The CF should continue to leverage the collective expert power of the SA/KP CWO cadre as custodians of the NCM corps and individually as trade and environmental experts. Additional empowerment could occur by improving their collective strategic expertise. Once a more detailed understanding of the NCM PD Modernization Initiative is available, its plans to increase SA/KP CWO strategic/institutional expertise may prove a valuable area for further inquiry.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to determine relatively cost-effective ways to operationalize portions of two of the *SEM*'s strategic objectives, specifically, SO1: to foster a common command and leadership culture and SO3: to strongly contribute to CF institutional and operational leadership. The implementation of these initiatives will serve as a means of moving forward with the strategic guidance the *SEM* provides in a climate of fiscal restraint that likely precludes a full-scale push toward all of the *SEM*'s goals.

Chapter 1 focused on SO1 and the *SEM*'s themes of indoctrinating the CF's mission command philosophy, encouraging a more continuous, open and candid dialogue between the officer and NCM corps, and the pursuit of combined officer/NCM PD opportunities. Several deductions were drawn and recommendations offered.

Firstly, it was identified that although a *Command and Control* operating concept is in the works, the only doctrinal manual that explicitly discusses the explicit and implicit nature of intent is the Canadian Army's *Command in Land Operations* manual. It was recommended that a *Command in the CF* joint doctrine manual be published that includes a similar discussion and once published, that officer and NCM qualification standards be updated to equally emphasize the importance of clarity of intent and the understanding of the explicit and implicit nature of intent. This will promote the common command and leadership climate that the *SEM* seeks and will better prepare future institutional leaders to purposefully leverage implicit intent in their communication of strategic vision.

Secondly, it was suggested that an open dialogue already exists between officers and NCMs, particularly between members of the commander/senior non-commissioned leader team. However, it was implied that a more public demonstration of candid discourse between the corps

would exemplify the CF as a learning organization. It was recommended that CF professional journals could become the medium for this demonstration. Having observed that NCMs were not frequently contributing to CF journals, it was suggested that latent anti-intellectualism toward NCMs and a lack of confidence by NCMs may be perceived barriers to their participation. A robust information operations campaign highlighting the emphasis the NCM PD Modernization Initiative places on NCM education was proposed as a measure to reduce the former perceived barrier. To reduce the latter, it was recommended that CWOs should set the example and contribute more frequently, and that junior NCMs that contribute to CF journals should be recognized.

Furthermore, it was suggested that a planned debate in the pages of CF journals between senior officers and SA/KP CWOs would encourage similar discourse between the two corps and foster a more open and candid dialogue between officers and NCMs overall. Lastly, the idea of conducting combined officer/NCM PD at lower levels as a means of fostering a common command and leadership climate was investigated and it was recommended that because of the potential risks this may pose, it should be the subject of a more intense study than this paper permits.

Chapter 2 focused on the recommendation to formalize the command team concept – a boundary issue for both SO1 and SO3. This chapter reviewed authority and command in the CF context, investigated officer/NCM pairings at the tactical and higher levels, and proposed the reframing and renaming of the concept as a start point for further debate. It was proposed that the more doctrinally correct label of the “commander/senior non-commissioned leader team” allows for a more universal application of the concept, which has as its aim the recognition and promotion of the special status of the relationship between a commander and the senior non-

commissioned leader of any CF organization. This proposition seeks to encourage a healthy debate that leads to a consensus on terminology and intent of the concept. Once the consensus is reached, this paper echoes a recommendation from the study by Scoppio et al. to have a chapter in a *Command in the CF* joint doctrine manual dedicated to the subject. Similar to the recommendations in Chapter 1, this manual would then serve as the basis for updating qualification standards so that they emphasize the concept and promote an understanding of the roles of NCMs within the various levels of commander/senior non-commissioned leader teams at earlier stages in officers' and NCMs' careers.

Chapter 3 investigated the ability of the CF to further empower SA/KP CWOs to more independently contribute to CF institutional and operational leadership. This chapter expanded on the understanding of leader power as introduced in Chapter 2, evaluated SA/KP CWO position, personal and professional power. It emphasized the importance of maintaining credibility, and investigated the formalization of a NCM-specific channel that parallels the chain of command as a potential empowerment tool. This chapter made several determinations about the extent of SA/KP CWO power and the ability for the CF to enhance it.

It was determined that the delegation of additional authority by commanders to SA/KP CWOs would increase their legitimate power. This is, of course, predicated on the degree of mutual trust between the specific commander and the SA/KP CWO. Implied here is that should commanders be comfortable in delegating additional authorities to SA/KP CWOs, in keeping with the mission command approach, the CF should encourage it. It was also determined that SA/KP CWOs, individually, have high expert power in their individual trades and environments and, collectively, they are *the* expert power regarding the employment and PD of the NCM corps. The analysis also suggested that their expert power could be increased by providing them

with additional strategic/institutional expertise. Any analysis or recommendations that could have been offered within the confines of this paper were assessed to likely be too superficial in comparison to the detail of work being done by the NCM PD Modernization Initiative to merit inclusion. Once a more detailed understanding of the NCM PD Modernization Initiative is available, its plans to increase SA/KP CWO strategic/institutional expertise may merit additional study. The investigation into professional power and the importance of credibility determined that the only mechanism by which the CF can realistically affect SA/KP CWO professional power is by ensuring they continue to be selected from the best RSMs, coxswains, and squadron or school CWOs. SA/KP CWOs were assessed as having tremendous information power by virtue of their position within the commander/senior non-commissioned leader team. To increase SA/KP CWO information power, the option of potentially formalizing a NCM network in the CF that parallels the chain of command was studied.

By using the US Army's NCO Support Channel as a case study, the chapter went on to evaluate the potential benefits and risks of formalizing such a network in the CF. Ultimately, it was determined that a formalized NCM network in the CF presents no immediately discernible SA/KP CWO empowerment benefit. A study of potential prestige aspects of introducing a CF version of the NCO Support Channel was recommended as a potential area for further research.

In conclusion, by focusing on the *SEM*'s strategic objectives of fostering a common command and leadership culture and strongly contributing to CF institutional and operational leadership, this paper has demonstrated that immediate, relatively cost-effective steps can be taken toward operationalizing the *SEM*. Specifically, by publishing joint doctrine on *Command in the CF*, taking further steps to promote NCM contribution to the CF's professional journals, reframing the command team concept as the commander/senior non-commissioned leader team,

and taking measures to further empower SA/KP CWOs, the CF can make measureable progress toward implementing a systematic and adaptable approach to the development, employment, and sustainment of SA/KP CWOs.

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