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PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FOR THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

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JCSP 40

Exercise Solo Flight

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PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FOR THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

With the predominance of capitalist economies in Western nations and a corporate management focus in North American culture, Canadians have come to rely on concepts found within business best practices to determine the level of effectiveness and efficiency being delivered by activities within our lives. To assess effectiveness and efficiency, the concept of performance management is applied as a principle control mechanism. Within this mechanism the measurement of change is viewed as essential to assuring trustworthy, documented, outcomes in activities which can be compared over time.¹ As the measurement of performance has matured over several decades, the employment of numbers, a qualitative approach, has been emphasised as the primary method of measurement. This philosophy can be fundamentally reduced to the concept that if you do not measure results, you cannot tell success from failure.²

The evolution towards a performance management concept is common to many Western governments, and has been apparent in the early approaches to New Public Management (NPM).³ NPM recognized a need to reduce the highly bureaucratized micromanagement of government operations, seeking to increase public servants ability to enhance economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Thus, we have taken corporate best practice from the board room to the Treasury Board.

For the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), applying these concepts must be a focused endeavour, as any defence administration activity must be aimed at the

¹ Janice M. Calnan, *Shift: Secrets of Positive Change for Organizations and Their Leaders* (Carp: Creative Bound Inc., 2001), 25.

² David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, *Reinventing Government: How entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector* (New York: Plume, 1993), 146.

³ Peter Aucoin, "Politicians, Public Servants, and Public Management: Getting Government Right," in *Governance in a Changing Environment*, ed. Guy B Peters and Donald J. Savoie, 113-137 (Canadian Centre for Management Development, 1995), 127.

production and sustainment of military capabilities.⁴ Treasury Board (TB) fulfills a role as a central agency of the Government of Canada (GC), as the governments' management board.⁵ Within the fiscal and performance framework issued by TB, based on legislated responsibilities in article 10 of the Financial Administration Act (FAA)⁶, Deputy Minister's (DM) within departments of the GC have the responsibility for accountability of apportioned resources. The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), while having some similarities to a DM, such as identification under statute, specifically article 18 of the National Defence Act⁷, and access to the Prime Minister, is not a DM as defined in the FAA. TB apportions resources to the Department of National Defence (DND) and the CAF receives resources from the DM by extension. Thus the CDS, in his administration of the CAF, is bound to the DND and therefore to TB mandated approaches to performance measurement.

The CAF, as we have seen with the CDS above, is a unique entity within the GC; it legally exists independent of parliamentary legislation as an entity of the crown, presumed under the constitution.⁸ Given this unique existence, but with a dependency on parliamentary apportionment of resources, does the current strategic performance measurement approach within the CAF, designed to report to Treasury Board, effectively reflect the capabilities of the force? This essay will review the current direction and responsibilities for performance measurement within the DND and the CAF, which is

⁴ Douglas Bland, "The Public Administration of Defence Policy," in *The Public Management of Defence*, ed. Craig Stone, 9-18 (Toronto: Breakout Education, 2009), 15.

⁵ Alex Smith, *The Roles and Responsibilities of Central Agencies* (Ottawa: Library of Parliament, 23 April 2009), 7.

⁶ Financial Administration Act, R.C.S., c. F-11 (1985)

⁷ National Defence Act, R.S.C., c. N-5 (1985).

⁸ Philippe Legasse, "The Crown's Powers of Command-in-Chief: Interpreting Section 15 of Canada's Constitution Act, 1867" *Revue of Constitutional Studies* Vol. 18, No. 2 (2013): 206-207.

submitted for TB, with the aim of identifying the capabilities and issues of the current policy.

Building on the concept of performance measurement, we will look at its application across the GC and then focus specifically on its application to the CAF. Commencing with a review of TB's role, we will examine current policy, the focus audience of performance measurement, the linkages between the Performance Activity Architecture (PAA) and the performance management, and the applicability to the CAF. We will conclude with some key observations and an assessment of the findings.

CURRENT POLICY

It is not surprising that the GC, as one of the largest organizations within Canada, looked to ensure performance and efficiency of all of its programs through the application of private sector best practices. The significant progress towards this was personified in the Public Sector Reform Act in 1992, where corporate concepts and structures were formally implemented within the GC.⁹ This concept was reinforced by the President of the Treasury Board in 2000 within *Results for Canadians* where it was stated that “public and private sector organizations that measure and evaluate the results of their work find that this information transforms and empowers them.”¹⁰

TB has placed a clear focus on the demonstration of efficiency and economy as a fundamental concept.¹¹ A focus on financial performance has its roots in the business environment, where the bottom line of profit, or share value, is the means of judging corporate performance. In government, where the bottom line does not exist, there is a

⁹ Donald Savoie, *Whatever Happened to the Music Teacher: How Governments Decide and Why* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 124.

¹⁰ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, *Results for Canadians: A Management Framework for the Government of Canada* (2000), 10.

¹¹ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, *Assessing Program Resource Utilization When Evaluating Federal Program*, (Centre of Excellence for Evaluation, 2013), 3.

focus on delivering maximum public good from defined resources. It has been recognized that to be effective, governments adopting the spirit within the NPM concept, must look to different performance measures. A focus on financial performance is not congruent with measuring public good and TB has taken this into account within the Management Accountability Framework (MAF). The MAF aims to establish the expectation for “sound public sector management practices and performance.”¹² A focus on quantitative numbers alone has been noted as ineffective in managing an organization and its change. Qualitative measurement, those non-numeric items which related to internal calibration of the organization, are needed to manage change.¹³ In the new millennium, the GC has begun to move away from purely budgetary based measurements, and it is noted that there is an opportunity, and even expectation, to make use of “both financial and non-financial data”.¹⁴ This recognizes that not only is profit not congruent with public goods, but that reliance on financial input – output comparison, while applicable to areas such as manufacturing businesses, does not provide a good indication of the production of public goods. This expanded perspective offers the possibility to provide greater context for performance measurement.

Within the NPM concept is the intent to move towards results-based management, which is in turn founded upon accurate and timely performance information. To implement performance measurement, TB instituted several Modern Comptrollership elements in the late 1990’s. As part of this, DND was one of five departments in 1997 that was directed to implement a trial management framework which looked to instill

¹² Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, “Management Accountability Framework,” last modified 11 June 2011, <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/maf-crg/index-eng.asp>.

¹³ Janice M. Calnan, *Shift: Secrets of Positive Change for Organizations and Their Leaders* . . . , 26.

¹⁴ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, *Assessing Program Resource Utilization When Evaluating Federal Program*, . . . , 10.

habitual measurement and evaluation of program results.¹⁵ The CAF was integrated into the DND reporting, despite the differing legal status of the CAF, as its resource allocations flowed from the DM. TB has been very specific in directing responsibility for performance measurement and has indicated that “Departments and agencies need to implement an information regime that measures, evaluates and reports on key aspects of programs and their performance in core areas.”¹⁶ As a public institution, TB has also looked to emphasise the core public service values and has also been clear that it holds managers, specifically the DMs, accountable for achieving results with a focus on ensuring “unbiased analysis, showing both good and bad performance.”¹⁷ Thus TB has put in place a performance measurement requirement, focused on departmental hierarchies, and directed to DM’s.

To achieve the required coordination and standardisation between departments, the TB has implemented a number of standard terms and activities to support performance measurement. Implemented in 1997, as part of the overall intent of the trial of the new management framework, is the adoption of standard reporting based around the departmental Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP) and the Departmental Performance Report (DPR).¹⁸ The RPP describes, in a standard fashion, the activities that the department is going to undertake for a fiscal year, while the DPR provides the summary of the results of the fiscal years activities. Key to the reporting is the documentation of a standard set of tasks that the department performs; this is known as the Performance

¹⁵ Ross Fetterley, “Budgeting within Defence – Who gets what,” in *The Public Management of Defence*, ed. Craig Stone, 53-91 (Toronto: Breakout Education, 2009), 77.

¹⁶ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, *Results for Canadians: A Management Framework for the Government of Canada* (2000), 11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, *Performance Report for the period ending March 31, 1997: Improved Reporting to Parliament – Pilot Document* (Ottawa: 1997, Forward.

Alignment Architecture (PAA). The PAA is specifically intended to be a stable structure that “is an inventory of all the programs undertaken by a department.”¹⁹ Implementation of PAA based performance measurement requires that the department plan, budget, track and report planned and actual expenditures against the PAA structure.²⁰

Performance Measurement within the GC is linked to the TB Management, Resources and Results Structure (MRRS) Policy and relies heavily on departmental PAA’s.²¹ There is a presumption that goals are known and precisely measureable, with clear means-ends relationships, and transparent business plans.²² The greatest appeal of this is that the process is quantifiable and performance indicators can be compared between expectations and results, thus bolstering legitimacy.²³ Entrepreneurial governments promote competition and focus on the outcomes of measurements, not incomes of the organizations.²⁴

Within TB, performance is defined as “the extent to which effectiveness, efficiency and economy are achieved in federal government programs.”²⁵ The DND and the CAF are jointly reported upon as a single entity, with a focus on metrics, where “A comprehensive regime of performance metrics and targets to be in place and employed to measure and assess improvements, guide resource allocation decisions, and ensure

¹⁹ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, “Policy on Management, Resources and Results Structures,” last modified 01 April 2012 <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=18218>, Appendix – Definitions.

²⁰ Department of National Defence, “Management, Resources and Results Structure including the Program Alignment Architecture,” last modified 04 March 2015, <http://vcds.mil.ca/sites/intranet-eng.aspx?page=4430>, Section 3.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Introduction.

²² Ruth Hubbard and Gilles Paquet. *The Black Hole of Public Administration* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2010), 206.

²³ *Ibid.*, 207.

²⁴ David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, *Reinventing Government: How entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector . . .*, 19.

²⁵ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, *Assessing Program Resource Utilization When Evaluating Federal Program, . . .*, 26.

accountability.”²⁶ The DND and the CAF in the DPR define three key terms related to performance measurement:²⁷

performance: What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve and how well lessons learned have been identified.

performance indicator: A qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of an organization, program, policy or initiative respecting expected results.

performance reporting: The process of communicating evidence- based performance information. Performance reporting supports decision making, accountability and transparency.

What is clear in these definitions is a focus on an input-outcome analysis by central agencies over time. This requires a very stable measurement criteria and strongly focuses on evidence based indicators, which, while open to qualitative reviews, demands some level of quantitative focus.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AUDIENCE

Despite increasingly inclusive concepts on performance measurement, the question remains on what to measure and who should report. As part of the machinery of the GC, each department is a hierarchical organization, with responsibilities that flow vertically to ministers.²⁸ As funding is the principle means of controlling government departments, and the FAA directs DMs to hold their departments’ financial accountability, it logically flows that the DM must report on performance. As each department is an independent hierarchy, each DM can be given independent measures of

²⁶ Department of National Defence, *Defence Renewal Charter* (Ottawa, October 2013), 6, 20.

²⁷ Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. *2013-14 Departmental Performance Report* (Ottawa, 2014), Appendix - Definitions.

²⁸ Donald Savoie, *Whatever Happened to the Music Teacher: How Governments Decide and Why* . . . , 109-110.

performance, thus ensuring that performance measurement is achieved within each department and submitted to TB.

For defence, the purpose and process of reporting is now well established to apply performance measurement as a means of reporting on the activities, successful or otherwise, of the department. The audience of performance measurement appears to be two fold as part of the MAF: to inform TB and to inform the DM about management capacity.²⁹ As a mechanism to report to TB the RPP and DPR present an assessment of the state of policy implementation and therefore are intended to allow for continuous management improvement. As a guide to the DM, performance measurement provides an organization wide view of the state of practices and performance. The DM's view allows integration with parliamentary committees and engagement with the ministers.³⁰

LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTH OF PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

The employment of performance measurement has matured since the 1980's, where numerous measures were available to the public to demonstrate GC success. During maturation, a move from a vast array of indicators, to a more directed approach, focused on a smaller number of key measures. In this process, the quantitative was easy to report and display, while the qualitative was more difficult and therefore underrepresented.³¹ Reporting staff are not provided incentives to report more comprehensively, and the effect of the current measurement policy is one where the government, through TB, educates the public service on what needs to be reported, and

²⁹ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, "Management Accountability Framework," last modified 11 June 2011, <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/maf-crg/index-eng.asp>.

³⁰ Privy Council Office, *Accountable government: a guide for ministers and ministers of state* (Ottawa: 2011), 47.

³¹ Peter Aucoin, "Politicians, Public Servants, and Public Management: Getting Government Right," . . . , 215.

the public service, in each department, reports what is wanted to be seen, not necessarily what is helpful to decision makers.³²

To address these types of issues, an extensive redesign of the PAA was conducted in concert with TB. The new PAA structure for the DND and the CAF is composed of five programs plus Internal Services. While the business of Defence remains unchanged from the former PAA, the articulation of that business is fundamentally altered in the new PAA. Defence Research & Development Canada supported the development of the PAA and the initial development of a high-level Defence Business Model.³³ The activities associated with the Programs were aligned, and in many cases regrouped. Overall, the PAA redesign initiative incorporated a more functional view of defence, with a smaller number of PAA programs, expresses an integrated means by which the outputs and outcomes of Defence are achieved, thus better reflecting the business of Defence. The new PAA structure came into effect in FY 2014-15.

Maintenance of a stable PAA allows evaluation over time, for the purpose of trend analysis, so the redesign of the DND's PAA will take a few years to be properly assessed by those reviewing the DPR; unfortunately, this impacts the usability of performance measurement in the short term.

The DND focusses on the inputs to the system, and while appearing to look at the outcomes of programmes, it still assesses departments on the amount of input provided with no incentive to improve based on the results achieved. The controlling aspect of any management activity requires that iterative loops are followed to allow corrective

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. *2013-14 Departmental Performance Report*. . . , 133-134.

action.³⁴ Current reporting is out of step with this at the strategic level as the RPP is issued up to two years in advance of the issue of the DPR and the Policy on Management, Resources, and Results Structures (MRRS) does not include any formal aspect of corrective action and review once submissions are made.³⁵

This becomes clear in the production of PRR's by departments prior to DPR's being completed; there is an absence of a control loop to reward, or correct, as part of a control function within the performance measurement process. The policy on Management, Resources, and Results Structures (MRRS) does not include any formal aspect of corrective action and review once submissions are made. This is typified in the findings by Savoie that people prepare inputs in support of the MAF, based on the PAA, but do so to "feed the beast"; people do not take the production of this information seriously.³⁶ This generally can be seen as part of a larger issue, identified by Bland, where he has stated that it is not essential to accept the argument that "public accountability demands a system that must spend great sums to achieve the desired result."³⁷

One of the premises of the NPM was the concept that by providing a competitive environment between small groups within government, with clear outputs and performance measures, would reveal better standards and lower costs as units tried to outperform others. This concept however is difficult to apply in the defence realm as there are no comparable organizations that can be part of a comparative review, and the size of the defence department does not allow for the concept of small group

³⁴ Teri McConville, "The principles of management applied to the defence sector," in *Managing Defence in a Democracy*, ed. Laura R. Cleary and Teri McConville, 109-124 (London: Routledge, 2006), 116.

³⁵ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, "Policy on Management, Resources and Results Structures," last modified 01 April 2012 <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=18218>, Section 6.

³⁶ Donald Savoie, *Whatever Happened to the Music Teacher: How Governments Decide and Why* . . . , 115.

³⁷ Douglas Bland, "The Public Administration of Defence Policy," . . . , 13.

competition.³⁸ This competitive process could apply in some functions however, such as training, medical, engineering, procurement, or logistics. The objective of the GC and the DND however has been to centralise these functions, as seen with Shared Service Canada and the DND consolidation of all Real Property Management in ADM(IE), not to look for competition. The PAA, on which performance is measured, does not support any competition for process improvement between parts of the organization; rather it blends the organizations into an indistinguishable entity. NPM was meant to move away from many of the centralisation tendencies of pre-NPM processes; however performance measurement requires many of the old cultural aspects of public administration such as centralisation, control, risk aversion, and the mandatory nature of the process. The merger of reporting between the DND and the CAF has added to the dilution of responsibility as more and more actors become involved in the decision and accountability process, eroding the value of performance measurement based on departmental responsibilities and accountabilities.

APPLICATION TO THE DND AND THE CAF

The current RPP includes strategic outcomes for five core business programs, and one internal services program, down to the sub-sub-program level³⁹. In total there are 75 sub-sub-programs within the PAA, each described in terms of financial requirements, personnel requirements, and performance measurement. Some sub-sub-programs have multiple performance indicators within each performance measurement section and in total the DND and the CAF are responsible for performance reporting on a total of 146 performance indicators that provide strategic performance measurement criteria and

³⁸ Teri McConville, "The principles of management applied to the defence sector," . . . , 121.

³⁹ Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. *2014-15 Report on Plans and Priorities* (Ottawa, 2014), 25-129.

standards. As strategic items, they focus on broad themes and rely heavily on the details provided in other documents to give specific measures. Determining purely CAF responsibilities from the combined DND and CAF PAA structure is impossible for many programs as corporate support, centrally managed resources, and merged staff is employed in most sub-sub-programs. Some programs, such as 1.0 Defence Combat and Support Operations, can be assessed as principally related to the CAF. All other programs within the PAA have varying degrees of integration between both the DND and the CAF.

The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), as the senior military officer within the CAF, does not have a formal reporting responsibility to TB, as all financial accountability flows through the DM. The CDS directs readiness levels, and has done so since 2012, through the CDS Directive for CAF Force Posture and Readiness (FP&R), which is referenced in the DPR.⁴⁰ This FP&R directive includes a formal readiness reporting process, separate from the corporate performance measurement. Force posture and readiness describes the CAF “in terms of what it is, where it is what it is doing, and what it is ready to do.”⁴¹ The Internal Services heading within the PAA further indicates that there has only just recently been an alignment between Force Posture and Readiness, under the CDS, and the PAA under the DM.⁴² As this only was reported in the 2013-14 report, and the 2014-15 is not yet available, it is not possible to see how these linkages have been able to be applied. In interviewing a member of the Strategic Joints Staff’s (SJS) Directorate of Strategic Readiness, it was noted that alignment between the two systems, readiness and performance measurement was difficult due to poor quality within the PAA measures and

⁴⁰ Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. *2013-14 Departmental Performance Report*. . . , 3.

⁴¹ Chief of the Defence Staff, *CDS Directive for CAF Force Posture and Readiness 2013* (Ottawa, 28 June 2013), 1.

⁴² Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. *2013-14 Departmental Performance Report*. . . , 131.

the classifications involved; readiness status is classified while performance measurement is unclassified due to its transparent reporting requirement.⁴³

Readiness reporting however is focused on current capabilities at a point in time and can be analysed for trends in readiness and to alert to possible future capability limitations of current forces. This does not match the TB required concept of performance which looks at what an organization did with its resources to achieve its results against its intended outcomes. Based on this, the CAF has no Performance Measurement process independent from the DND reporting in the DPR.

CONCLUSION

CAF performance measurement is ultimately unavailable for analysis as the current reporting processes do not provide a means to differentiate between the CAF and the DND. The lack of differentiation makes control processes difficult, if not impossible, because of the lack of separation between parts of the DPR results. While performance measurement, developed within a business environment for delivering profit, can be applied to the delivery of public goods such as defence, it is difficult to see the value to Canadian society from the measurement criteria currently in place. The lack of congruence between CDS readiness reporting and DM level performance measurement has made the representation to the public impossible. The performance measurement reporting, relying on metrics, but without a foundation based on evidence linked to capabilities provides a false impression of efficiency to the Government of the performance of the CAF. CAF performance measurement is being improved through the

⁴³ Dale Caseley, Strategic Joint Staff, Directorate of Strategic Readiness, telephone conversation with author focused on recently identified alignment issues between MRRS / PAA and readiness reporting and the suitability of Programme Management Framework indicators in use for fiscal year 2015-2016, 18 May 2015.

new PAA structure; however, this has not resulted in positive reviews from SJS staff, with an ongoing observation on the poor alignment of the PAA to capabilities.

Performance measurement for the CAF is therefore not currently contributing to the goals of TB.

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