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## SEIZING MOMENTUM TO PROVIDE GREATER VICTIM SERVICES

Major Eric Leblanc

**JCSP 44**

***Exercise Solo Flight***

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**SEIZING MOMENTUM TO PROVIDE GREATER VICTIM SERVICES**

By Major Eric Leblanc

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## SEIZING MOMENTUM TO PROVIDE GREATER VICTIM SERVICES

### Introduction

#### Background

Since the release of Madame DesChamps, External Review Report on Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in March of 2015,<sup>1</sup> the CAF has made significant policy and practical improvements to the Military Justice System (MJS), its administrative systems, and supporting policy instruments. Changes to the MJS occur cyclically but the release of this report created a need for more urgent review and action. The subsequent release of Operation HONOUR<sup>2</sup> by the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) created tools and organizations that did not exist in the past that were charged with fostering and implementing changes in the CAF and the Department of National Defence. While this essay will not focus solely on Sexual Misconduct<sup>3</sup> or Harmful and Inappropriate Sexual Behavior (HISB),<sup>4</sup> it will use the constructs created through Operation HONOUR as a base from which to expand upon.

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<sup>1</sup> Marie DesChamps, “External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces.” National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. March 27 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Department of National Defence. Chief of the Defence Staff, Operation Honour. Canadian Armed Forces. 14 August 2015.

<sup>3</sup> “Sexual Misconduct is defined as of one or more acts that: are either sexual in nature or committed with the intent to commit an act or acts that are sexual in nature; and constitutes an offence under the Criminal Code or Code of Service Discipline (CSD). Note - Sexual misconduct includes offences such as sexual assault, indecent exposure, voyeurism and acts involving child pornography.” Department of National Defence. Defence Administrative Orders and Directives, “5019-5, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Disorders,” Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/defence-administrative-orders-directives/5000-series/5019/5019-5-sexual-misconduct-and-sexual-disorders.html>

<sup>4</sup> Department of National Defence. Operation Honour, “Briefing Materials on Sexual Misconduct CSRT-SM CAF Response to Sexual Misconduct,” Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/op-honour/brief-materials-sexual-misconduct-notes-junior.pdf> Sometimes used interchangeably with sexual misconduct, HISB refers to the range of behaviors associated with Sexual Misconduct from perpetuation of gender stereotypes, unacceptable jokes, through to sexual harassment and criminal sexual behavior. Briefing

Some of the proposed improvements made to the MJS, as well as personnel administration policy instruments that reside within the realm of the provision of victim services,<sup>5</sup> acknowledges one of the key findings of Madame DesChamps report, which stated:

While an impressive number of programs and services appear to be offered to support victims of inappropriate sexual conduct in the CAF, the reality is that many of these services are only available in a few locations, or are inadequate and ineffective.<sup>6</sup>

As a response to the DesChamps report, the Sexual Misconduct Response Centre (SMRC) was created, in September 2015, and provides victim services, including referrals and support through a centralized organization in Ottawa. The SMRC's 2017 Charter articulates that it provides services to CAF members, though it also supports Department of National Defence (DND) civilians, Cadet Instructors Cadre (CIC) members, and at times others who are unknown (callers do not have to identify themselves).<sup>7</sup> The core function of the SMRC is aligned with strengthening the state of victim services and supports within the CAF, but there is a gap in policy created whereby some victims of service offences proceeding by way of the MJS would not receive, at least in policy, the same level of services otherwise offered to others (CAF members and DND employees).

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<sup>5</sup> Canada. Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, "Types of Victim Services," Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://www.victimsfirst.gc.ca/serv/tvs-tsv.html> Victim Services definition depend on the nature of whom is providing them. There are a many types including system-based, police based, court based, community based, and volunteer based. In general, they all provide a service of linking a victim with the supports they need which could include referrals to specialists, provision of information, counselling, and liaison work.

<sup>6</sup> Marie Deschamps, Programs and External Resources Section. No page number.

<sup>7</sup> Department of National Defence. "Sexual Misconduct Response Centre Charter," October 2017. Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. [http://www.forces.gc.ca/assets/FORCES\\_Internet/docs/en/caf-community-support-services/2017-11-23-smrc-charter-signed.pdf](http://www.forces.gc.ca/assets/FORCES_Internet/docs/en/caf-community-support-services/2017-11-23-smrc-charter-signed.pdf). Pg 4.

This essay will demonstrate that the CAF should strive to emulate a model similar to the Province of Ontario's Victim and Witness Assistance Program (VWAP)<sup>8</sup> in order to achieve greater success with its victim service. Creating a policy framework program similar to VWAP would assist the CAF in aligning victim services with Strong, Secure, Engaged (SSE), Canada's Defence Policy initiative, and more importantly provide a greater and more consistent service to the vulnerable regardless of the situation or their status. Providing victim services all the way through the prosecution of crimes, court processes, and sentencing will in turn lead to a greater confidence in the MJS, improved investigative processes, and most importantly, improved public confidence. Though not a legal requirement at this time, creating a stronger framework will also assist the CAF to meet the spirit of the *Canadian Victims' Bill of Rights*<sup>9</sup> setting it up for success should *Bill C-77*,<sup>10</sup> a bill containing a Declaration of Victims' Rights<sup>11</sup> similar in content to the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*, become law.

This essay will use Ontario's loosely interconnected network of victim service delivery frameworks, including police service, transition to VWAP, and transition to corrections, as a model that the CAF (and DND) could potentially emulate and expand upon through policy. An expansion of current initiatives in policy would better meet ongoing SSE initiatives, namely 18 through 21, which succinctly frame the elimination of harmful behaviors from the workplace<sup>12</sup> and in turn support the need to institutional change and enhancing the investigations and

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<sup>8</sup>Ontario. Ministry of the Attorney General, "Programs and Services for Victims of Crime," Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/ovss/programs.php#vwap>

<sup>9</sup> Canada. Department of Justice, *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*. Statutes of Canada, 23 July 2015. Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-23.7/page-1.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Canada. House Of Commons Of Canada, "BILL C-77: An Act to amend the National Defence Act and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts," December 2015 – Present. Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://www.parl.ca/LegisInfo/BillDetails.aspx?Language=E&billId=9847536>.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Pg 5.

<sup>12</sup> Department of National Defence. Minister of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. 2017. Pg 28.

prosecution of sexual offences.<sup>13</sup> This essay will demonstrate four potential policy improvements from the expansion of the current mandate of the SMRC (what types of offences they can support), expansion of who can obtain services from DND (including at times civilians), improvements to the coordination through victim service delivery transition, and modification of policy during imprisonment, are all policy instruments that would capitalize on the momentum of sexual misconduct adaptations and deliver better services to victims. This essay will not address the specific contents of the various victim services programs but rather the baseline policies supporting to whom and how the programs are delivered.

The definition of victim service delivery differs greatly depending on its source, but there are some core functions that seem to exist. Common definitions include; supporting a victim<sup>14</sup> of violent crimes, offering of direct support or referral services, and in some cases providing legal support to victims, are all measures to bring a level of information, comfort and control back to a victim of a crime. One might ask, why are victim services important to the CAF? Simply put, they support the vulnerable including DND members during susceptible times and provide linkages to required care and support mechanisms. Victim supports are beneficial to more than just the victim. A victim who feels supported may give better evidence from a policing perspective, which can lend to clearer statements and better court processes. Improved support mechanisms also lead to greater public confidence which is a cornerstone of a principled judicial system.

## **Body**

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., Pg 27.

<sup>14</sup> A victim of a crime might also be a witness or relation to the actual victim. For example, a parent of a deceased member could also be a victim. The spouse of an accused could also be victimized by a crime.

In Canada, there is a *Victim Bill of Rights* that entitles a victim to specific rights of information, protection, participation and restitution. These rights are centered around a victim having the right for information on the status of investigations, criminal proceedings, and the status of the accused. A victim has the right to the protection of their personal security and privacy. A victim also has the right to participate and have their views heard as well as a right to ask for restitution for crimes committed against them.<sup>15</sup> As stated in the *Victim Bill of Rights*: “This Act does not apply in respect of offences that are service offences, as defined in subsection 2(1) of the *National Defence Act*, which are investigated or proceeded with under that Act.”<sup>16</sup> The spirit of the Act is followed and as we will see, the CAF is striving to move towards those same concepts included in Bill C-77.

As the Canadian *Victim Bill of Rights* does not apply to service offences in the CAF, even when pursuing *Criminal Code* charges under section 130 of the *NDA*,<sup>17</sup> Bill C-77 was fashioned to capture and create the same rights provided to victims under the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*. Bill C-77 proposes basically the same rights for victims including information, protection, privacy, right to participate and restitution. Bill C-77 has passed through the House of Commons and is currently at committee in the Senate.<sup>18</sup> The Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) in testimony to the Senate on Sexual Misconduct in the CAF on 11 June 2018, spoke of implemented and planned improvements to the service delivery of victim services.<sup>19</sup> Between the act and the proposed bill there remains a gap that should be addressed through amendments in

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<sup>15</sup> Canadian Victims Bill of Rights.

<sup>16</sup> Canadian Victim Bill of Rights. Sub (3).

<sup>17</sup> Canada. National Defence Act, “Section 130,” Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/N-5/section-130.html>. Section 130 of the NDA allows for service trial of civil offences. For example, Sexual Assault (a *Criminal Code* Charge) committed by soldiers on Operations can be investigated and charges can preferred under the NDA.

<sup>18</sup> House Of Commons Of Canada, BILL C-77.

<sup>19</sup> Gen Vance, “CDS Testimony on Sexual Misconduct in the CAF.” Testimony to the Canadian Senate. 11 June 2018. Pg 2.

policy. The gap in policy creates a situation where a civilian victim proceeding through the MJS is not, at least in policy, afforded the same access to victim services as a DND victim. In practice, various systems do follow the spirit of the *Victim Bill of Rights* for example, the CO of the CFNIS confirmed that their investigators, still follow the spirit and principals of the Bill.<sup>20</sup>

## The Systems

### *CAF model*

The current CAF approach to victim services has a great many tools from which to draw upon to deliver direct or referral services to those impacted by violent crimes. The Military Police (MP) offer localized services (referral to local services),<sup>21</sup> the SMRC offer counselling and referral services, the CF Health Services offer health services, and the Director of Military Prosecution (DMP) has directed that considerations be put in place to support victims,<sup>22</sup> Chaplains and many other smaller services are also available.<sup>23</sup> The Canadian Forces Service Prison and Detention Barracks (CFSPDB) draws its supporting policy from the *Queen's Regulations and Orders (QR&O)* which provides for informing a detained member's Commanding Officer to changes in their status, however, providing victims with this information is not provided for in this policy.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> LCol K.L. Cadman, CO CFNIS, telephone interview, 17 May 2019.

<sup>21</sup> Department of National Defence, "Military Police Victim Assistance Program" Website Mission: Ready Resources@Hand Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://strongproudready.ca/missionready/en/military-police-victim-assistance-program/>

<sup>22</sup> Department of National Defence. DMP Policy Directive 007/00. "Responding to Victims' Needs," Updated December 2017. Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. [https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/migration/assets/FORCES\\_Internet/docs/en/about-policies-standards-legal/dmp-policy-directive-007-00-responding-to-victims-needs.pdf](https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/migration/assets/FORCES_Internet/docs/en/about-policies-standards-legal/dmp-policy-directive-007-00-responding-to-victims-needs.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Canadian Armed Forces. "Progress Report Addressing Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour," February 2016. Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. [http://www.forces.gc.ca/assets/FORCES\\_Internet/docs/en/caf-community-support-services/sexual-misconduct-progress-report-en.pdf](http://www.forces.gc.ca/assets/FORCES_Internet/docs/en/caf-community-support-services/sexual-misconduct-progress-report-en.pdf). Pg 12.

<sup>24</sup> Canada. Queen's Regulations and Orders. "Volume IV, Appendice 1.4." Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/queens-regulations-orders/vol-4-appendices/appendix-1-4.html>. Paras 4.25, 4.26, and 4.27.



With all the good that the CAF has created and coalesced in the sphere of victims' rights, there are some opportunities and shortcomings that should be examined soon to exploit momentum while systems like the SMRC are being created and expanded upon. Most of the systems support only certain victims, and under certain circumstances, creating different levels of support depending on the victim's category and type of crime. For example, the SMRC has many great resources but it is only mandated in policy to support victims of sexual offences or sexual misconduct<sup>25 26</sup> which can be seen in their mission statement:

As part of the Department of National Defence (DND) and independent from the chain of command, the SMRC ensures the provision of timely, compassionate, and comprehensive support to Canadian Armed Forces' (CAF) members affected by sexual misconduct, while working in partnership with CAF to increase understanding, improve preventative measures, and enhance responding to these behaviours in the CAF.<sup>27</sup>

This mission statement does not include other offences nor is it mandated to provide services to civilian victims of service offences. *Bill C-77*, DMP direction to Prosecutors,<sup>28 29</sup> MP victim assistance program,<sup>30</sup> and confirmation from the CO CFNIS that all victims are given access to resources and local supports,<sup>31</sup> the fact is there remains a gap in policy. While it is clear that

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<sup>25</sup> Department National Defence. Sexual Misconduct Response Centre. "Annual Report 2017-2018" July 2018. Last modified [or accessed] 12 May 19. <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/reports/2018/2017-2018-smrc-annual-report-en.pdf>. Pg 3.

<sup>26</sup> Sexual Misconduct Response Centre Charter. Pg 4.

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/reports/2018/2017-2018-smrc-annual-report-en.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Department of National Defence. DMP Policy Directive 004/00. "Sexual Misconduct Offences," Updated December 2017. Last modified [or accessed] 12 May 19. [https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/migration/assets/FORCES\\_Internet/docs/en/about-policies-standards-legal/dmp-policy-directive-004-00-sexual-misconduct-offences.pdf](https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/migration/assets/FORCES_Internet/docs/en/about-policies-standards-legal/dmp-policy-directive-004-00-sexual-misconduct-offences.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> DMP Policy Directive 007/00.

<sup>30</sup> Military Police Victim Assistance Program.

<sup>31</sup> LCol K.L. Cadman, CO CFNIS, telephone interview, 17 May 2019.

civilian victims proceeding thought the MJS are not supported in policy, a large risk also appears through the lack of coordination between those who deliver victim supports during investigations, charges, court processes, and incarceration. There is also a large risk of policy not supporting the provision of information to victims.

### *Ontario Model*

Toronto Police Service (TPS), for example, provides its victim services through first line support workers from a separate organization called Victim Services Toronto (VST).<sup>32</sup> Volunteers and professionals with VST receive training on scene case management, trauma dog use, high risk training, and youth based intervention.<sup>33</sup> Where charges are laid in criminal cases, police victim services providers, like the VST, will then conduct a coordinated transition to VWAP, an office with the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General who supports victims and witnesses of violent crime.<sup>34</sup> If a transfer doesn't occur through the police (charges can be laid by other agencies and prosecutors without victim services), VWAP will receive a referral from a crown prosecutor or people can self-refer.<sup>35</sup> VWAP provides victims with information and services throughout the court process which can be as simple as explanations as to how court processes work through o assistance with Victim Impact Statements. If the court process ends with a conviction and incarceration, another further coordinated transition will occur to the Victim Notification System (VNS), which is managed by the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General's Office.<sup>36</sup> Unlike the CFSPDB who updates an offender's Commanding Officer, the

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<sup>32</sup> Toronto Police Service, "Victim Service Volunteers" Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. [http://www.torontopolice.on.ca/community/volunteer\\_vic.php](http://www.torontopolice.on.ca/community/volunteer_vic.php)

<sup>33</sup> Victim Services Toronto, "Programs and Services," Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <http://victimservicestoronto.com/#programs>

<sup>34</sup> Ontario. Ministry of the Attorney General, "The Victim/Witness Assistance Program," Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/ovss/VWAP-English.html>

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>36</sup> Ontario. Ministry of the Solicitor General, "Victim Services," Last modified {or accessed} 12 May 19. <https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/Corrections/VictimServices.html>

VNS provides updates directly to any impacted victim on any change of status for the convicted member from parole hearings releases escapes, transfers etc.<sup>37</sup>

Section 130 of the *National Defence Act* allows for a *Criminal Code* charges to be laid under the *National Defence Act* and proceed by way of Military Tribunal.<sup>38</sup> For example, the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service (CFNIS) has the ability to prefer charges to a civilian court under the *Criminal Code* or to a Military Tribunal under the *National Defence Act*.<sup>39</sup> Because of this, there is a potential for differing levels of victim services available, dependent on where the charges are laid and who the victim is. In cases where a victim is not a CAF or DND member, and if the case is proceeding via the MJS, that individual, at least in policy, may have less access to victim services than others. The type of offence is also important from a policy perspective as many of the new victim service delivery constructs, like the SMRC, are bound, at least in in policy, to support only offences that surround sexual misconduct. A victim of a violent non-sexual assault in policy has a lower level of support available to them. While the majority of criminal investigations within the DND see victims that come from within the department, it is not infrequent at all to see civilian victims.<sup>40</sup>

#### Proposed Approach Using Existing CAF Support Initiatives:

In the last few years, the CAF has institutionalized its approach to reducing sexualized misconduct. A part of that effort is the provision of enhanced victim services. SSE the DND's most recent defence policy, has identified areas of improvement related to victim services.<sup>41</sup> In

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>38</sup> National Defence Act. Section 130.

<sup>39</sup> Interview CO CFNIS

<sup>40</sup> LCol K.L. Cadman, CO CFNIS, telephone interview, 17 May 2019.

<sup>41</sup> Minister of National Defence. Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy. Pg 27.

particular, the “Enhanced Investigation and Prosecution of Sexual Offences”<sup>42</sup> contains sections which discuss current actions; including improved MP training to better support victims, policy implementations to protect a victim’s sensitive information, and direction to Prosecutors to help them minimize potential impacts to victims of crime.<sup>43</sup> SSE is not the only policy addressing victim services and supports as it is also spoken to in Operation Honour the “Institutionalized Culture Change”<sup>44</sup> section which re-enforces the victim centric goals of Operation Honour.

Two lines of operation from Operation Honour specifically target victim services:

“Responding more decisively to incidents”<sup>45</sup> and “Supporting victims more effectively”<sup>46</sup>

Initiative 19 of SSE is titled “Provide a full range of victim and survivor support services to Canadian Armed Forces members.”<sup>47</sup> While some might see a relatively narrow focus, it in fact an opportunity to expand and adapt existing efforts while new organizations, like the SMRC, are still developing.

As addressed above, there are many structures within the CAF providing victim services in separate isolated areas. Within each isolated area, there is no transition or handoff from one victim service delivery to another throughout court processes through to imprisonment and release. Opportunities should be seized at this time to create policy that would allow greater coordination amongst services or perhaps tasking an existing organization to track and coordinate throughout. DND has the added benefit of being self-contained with direct access to all of the current methods of delivering victim services and has the ability of tasking one of its sub-organizations with coordination responsibility will greatly reduce potential risks. A

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., Pg 27.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., Pg 28.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

reinforcing policy could benefit future delivery structures by further expanding the role of the SMRC to include any victim, any offence, as well as directing a transitional role with other victim service entities from reporting up to and including changes to detention status. In Ontario, VWAP has a transitional role that creates an entity that can coordinate with other agencies horizontally or vertically, meaning they speak directly with other victim service delivery organizations to physically hand over information. The DND should be able to take the concept a step further by using policy to create or task an overarching entity that can coordinate service delivery of existing mechanisms, a much simpler task than in Ontario, given that all agencies report under the same department. While policy could place this overarching entity under the VCDS, CMP, or the JAG, it might be best to capitalize on the momentum of the SMRC<sup>48</sup> which they would likely be receptive to as they indicated in their annual report, they are looking to expand their mandate.

Using the SMRC as an explanation example, we can project how shifts in policy could work. Simplified, there are four specific areas where a policy adjustment would create a more comprehensive and robust victim service delivery model for the DND. First, the mandate of the SMRC could be expanded to emulate something like the VWAP in Ontario which would serve to remove the limits placed on the types of offences it provides support for. Instead of limiting the SMRC to sexual misconduct supports, the SMRC could support all victims regardless of offence. Secondly, there should be an expansion to service delivery which would see the SMRC, like VWAP, support all members including civilian victims proceeding through the MJS or administrative systems. Thirdly, inclusion of a transitional role whereby other victim service mechanisms can connect directly into the SMRC. Similar to the transition that happens during

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<sup>48</sup> Sexual Misconduct Response Centre. Annual Report 2017-2018. Pg 18.

court proceedings in Ontario, this transitional role would see a transfer of responsibility from police to the SMRC when courts processes occur. Lastly, there remains a gap in *QR&O* Volume IV, Appendix 1.4 not consistent with *Bill C-77* and DND will need a policy, in the mid term, that tasks an entity to ensure information regarding the changes of status of an offender be relayed to the victim. This last portion could task the CFSPDB directly or potentially any of the supporting agencies like the SMRC. In the longer term, corrections can be brought forward when the cyclical updating of the *QR&O* occurs.

The four recommended changes are not at all inconsistent with existing concepts provided by the SMRC. The SMRC Charter already indicates that it will be responsive to the needs of the CAF.<sup>49</sup> Expansion is a natural process with the operationalization of Operation HONOUR where needs are being explored. Creating official policy to for the SMRC to support civilians would serve to create an official task to them for something it already provides, in a limited way. The SMRC doesn't refuse civilians when they receives contact from them<sup>50</sup> and the SMRC already recognizes that there is a need to expand the clients they support.<sup>51</sup> A single source of coordination of victim service delivery, as each mechanism from MP to CF Health Services has its own mandate and will occur, the transition from MP to Prosecutions to CFSPBD needs coordination to support proposed amendments in *Bill C-77*. The SMRC could be the VWAP of the CAF serving as a Centre of excellence and filling the gap through a transitional role.

## **Conclusion**

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<sup>49</sup> Sexual Misconduct Response Centre. Charter. Pg 3.

<sup>50</sup> Sexual Misconduct Response Centre. Annual Report 2017-2018. Pg 8.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, Pgs 8 and 18.

In the process of creating an improved system to deliver victim services to members affected by Sexual Misconduct, the CAF has also produced a system that, with minimal policy augmentation, could greatly enhance the services offered. In leveraging the momentum of new organizations, like the SMRC, the CAF can potentially avoid the pitfalls associated with a dual class system, where some victims receive different levels of supports than others. Victims proceeding through the MJS, regardless if they are civilian or not, should be supported in the same manner in policy.

Existing policy should be either augmented or supported by new policy in the mid-term, which focuses on four distinct areas of victim service delivery. An expansion of the SMRC mandate to include all offences, giving the SMRC policy to support the provision of Victim Services to any client, the creation of a transitional role to follow cases through the court process, and finally creating new policy for the provision of victim updates when the status of an incarcerated member changes. Now is the ideal opportunity to create a more coordinated and inclusive approach to the delivery of victim service within the DND, which will make the implementation of *Bill C-77* that much easier. Longer term solutions like, amendments to the NDA, QR&O and various subordinate administrative orders and directives can be identified and rectified during their respective cyclical reviews.

It is important to ensure that policy is carried into force that compliments the variety of tools that can be brought forward to assist victims. Having a well-supported victim will have a positive influence on the many facets, from investigations through to prosecution and even on sentencing through Victim Impact Statements. During criminal processes, a well-supported victim will have a more positive outlook and will likely foster greater public confidence throughout the whole process.

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