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FEMALE MILITARY TRANSITION AND THE NEED FOR FURTHER STUDY

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JCSP 45

Exercise Solo Flight

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FEMALE MILITARY TRANSITION AND THE NEED FOR FURTHER STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Transition from the military to civilian life is unique for both male and female members. Since the first Iraq war and the subsequent war in Afghanistan and Iraq again, the transition of military members has highlighted the fragility of the transition process. Subsequently, the transition process from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to civilian life and the effectiveness of transition programs has fostered a number of reviews and inquiries within Australia. In 2016 the Australian Coalition Government committed to supporting veterans and their families. This governmental support was the driving factor for a review into the ADF Career Transition Assistance Scheme (CTAS). Even though a review of the CTAS was being undertaken, the importance of the scheme was recognized by the then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. In addition, in 2016 Prime Minister Turnbull publicly committed to supporting military members undergoing transition, and as such developed the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program. The Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program "allows businesses to make a public commitment to support the employment of veterans."¹ The Veterans' Employment Program is still continuing today and businesses can nominate for prestigious awards which are presented annually.

In 2017, the Senate for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee completed an inquiry into suicide by veterans and ex-services personnel. The

¹ Australia: Commonwealth of Australia "Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program," www.veteransemployment.gov.au

Inquiry made a total of 24 recommendations including a number of policy changes and further reviews to be conducted. One of these recommendations led to the Senate for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee completing an Inquiry into transition from the ADF. The completed inquiry was tabled recently on 04 Apr 2019. Currently there has been no response from the Government regarding the completed inquiry.² The Inquiry into transition from the ADF had three specific areas of interest, including barriers that prevent effective support to personnel; mental health care, both within service and through transition; and the efficacy of whole-of-government support through transition for military members.³ The inquiry made a total of 11 recommendations. Of particular interest is recommendation three which highlights the distinct difference that women military members go through during transition. Part of the recommendation is that the government commissions a study into better understanding the issues that ADF women members face during transition. As the military pushes for more female representation in the military it is imperative that the government accepts this recommendation. This research paper will argue why the government should accept the recommendation and a study is undertaken in order to better understand the transition of women ADF members.

To understand why the transition process is so unique to the military and in particular that of female military members, it is best to first look at the transition in process and understand the fundamentals of joining the military. For easy clarification the

² Australia: Parliament of Australia “Completed inquiries and reports”
https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Foreign_Affairs_Defence_and_Trade/Completed_inquiries

³ Australia: Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, “Inquiry into Transition from the Australian Defence Force,” *Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade*, (2019), 1.

transition in process will be referred from here on as the recruitment process or recruit training. This also encompasses military officer training. The recruitment process is fundamental to joining the military and is specifically designed to assist in institutionalization.⁴

Institutionalization is occurred by psychological development and adopting a military identity. Psychological development to some degree will affect all members who join the military. The aspects of psychological development and military identity will be discussed further. This will include the differences between male and female psychological development both within the military and then how this impacts in transition. Another important aspect of institutionalization within the military is the military identity. The identity of a military establishes the role of the military in society and throughout the world.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Military institutionalization is a process of psychological development that affects each member differently. The psychological development process is an important aspect of the military recruitment process. Psychological development assists the success of members when conducting military operations and for their overall employment achievement within the military.

The ADF specifically targets and recruits people within the age range 18-25 years. The ADF does accept people as young as 17 years and currently depending on

⁴ Binks, Eve, and Siobhan Cambridge, "The Transition Experiences of British Military Veterans," *Political Psychology* 39, (2018): 126.

service and occupation may accept recruits as old as 57, three years prior to compulsory retirement age. The age 18-25 is a significant time in a person's life and has been classified as emerging adulthood. "Emerging adulthood is defined as the development period from the late teens through the twenties, with a focus on ages 18-25."⁵ According to Psychologist Jeffrey Arnett "...the late teens through to mid-twenties are the most volitional years of life."⁶ For those members joining the military the ability to make their own choices during these volitional years of life is somewhat confined due to the very structured and institutionalized nature of the military. As the ADF is a volunteer force the connotation of institutionalization and psychological development is not really seen as contentious as it sounds, however it is necessary to identify the process.

Institutionalization and psychological development starts from the moment a member chooses to sign on that dotted line. Whilst this may seem trivial at this time, the member is acknowledging that they understand the meaning of unlimited liability and they are willing to die for their country. The signature and choice in itself is a volitional act, and the enormity of what the member is willing to do for their country stimulates adrenalin and a sense of purpose.

During initial military training the adrenalin and sense of purpose achieved is used as a catalyst to continue psychological development and institutionalization. During initial military training psychological development is all about conformity and obedience. This requires limited volitional acts by the members. Military trainees are 'told how to

⁵ Hicks, C.C., E. Bell, and D. Gray, "Psychological Development of Emerging Adults in the Military and Transition to the Civilian Workforce," *Short Communication 26*, (2018): 15.

⁶ Arnett, Jeffrey Jensen, "Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development From the Late Teens Through the Twenties," *American Psychologist 55 no3*, (2000): 469

dress, how to march, how to act, how to behave,' and when one member does not conform, there are consequences. There is a clear left and right of arc, which is to be followed. Conformity and obedience is necessary. The military is structured because lives depend on it. The military revolves around teamwork and the ability to trust and have faith in your team members and the wider military community. The military is the only organization that is able to legally take lethal force. The military relies on the highly structured behavior to help legitimize its ability to be able to conduct lethal force. Legitimacy for the control of violence and lethal force is gained from the ability to display behavioral control as an institution. Society needs to be able to trust the military that they will not riot or use their power and strength to control them. This is an aspect of behavioral control of the military as an institution which is important.

Whilst training is different between services and that of officers and soldiers, sailors, and airmen/women; the underlining principle of institutionalization through psychological development is same for both males and females. However; the way in which the institutionalization affects females and males is inherently different. This is based on the fact that whilst female recruitment has increased, females are still the minority during initial recruit training and within the military. In addition, females are more likely to join the 'support' trades and occupations and not the 'operational' or 'war fighting' trades and occupations. The support trades are often referred to as the less 'sexy' trades. The psychological development of where you sit and what your perceived importance in the institution is developed at the recruit training process and creates another structure and hierarchy within the already structured setting of the military. For those females that join the 'operational' trades and occupations, research suggests that

women have a tendency to adopt masculine trends to display compliance with the masculine norms of the military.⁷ This is a key difference in psychological development between males and females. Females are not only undergoing psychological development of entering the military they are also within an environment where masculine norms are evident. Trying to fit in and be successful in an institution that is masculine and militarized is more often than not vastly different from a civilian environment that female members had known previously. Not only will the environment affect their psychological development but so will their own expectations placed on them by themselves and/or others. Whilst some women adopt masculine tendencies or masculine identity, more often than not the military masculinities marginalize females. It is argued that the “gendered identities formed within the military cultural milieu are particularly potent and may remain tenacious after leaving the Armed Forces and re-entering civilian life.”⁸

In addition to institutionalization, the military also instills a warrior cultural which comes from individuals having a warrior mentality. The warrior mentality is an essential element of a military member which allows them to go into places that are life threatening and completely outside ones comfort zone. This warrior culture is reinforced and developed again and again every time the member is placed in a situation that is life threatening and dangerous. However, whilst a warrior culture values strength, resilience and mental toughness; research has shown that the perceived warrior culture for female service members in a male dominated environment can be challenging. Furthermore

⁷ Sasson-Levy, Orna, “Feminism and Military Gender Practices: Women Soldiers in “Masculine Roles,”” *Sociological Inquiry* 73, no3, 2003, 447.

⁸ Cooper, Linda, Nick Caddick, Lauren Godlier, Alex Cooper, and Matt Fossey, “Transition From the Military Into Civilian Life: An Exploration of Cultural Competence,” *Armed Forces and Society* 44 no 1, (2018): 160.

when a member reaches out and seeks psychological support it can be perceived by others as a weakness, particularly for females.⁹ It needs to be noted that the ADF along with many other militaries have undertaken campaigns to dispel the idea that asking for psychological support is a weakness and encourages everyone to seek the support they require. Grimell's (2018) research determined that when a warrior culture is fostered, if civilian ideals and values are not communicated well during the transition process then the effectiveness of mental health support if required is reduced.¹⁰ Further research should be conducted in to the positive and negative impacts of the warrior culture. It is a wicked problem in itself, as it can be argued that it is required but then it can also be detrimental.

Humans evolve in complex ways and the development of the human brain is one of the most studied but least understood. For military members whose brains are developing during the time of transition into the military, minimal research has been done on the impact of this rigid military training system; which is quite removed from civilian life. The psychological development of the military member will occur at different rates for each member. Psychologist Joshua Jackson and his colleagues found in their research (2012) that "military training combines a number of socialization processes that provide ideal environments in which personality trait changes can occur."¹¹ For a member, male or female, who join the military straight out of school it is likely to be the first time they are away from home. As a military adult they have not experienced life as a civilian.

⁹ Grimell, Jan, "Advancing an understanding of selves in transition: I-positions as an analytical tool," *Culture and Psychology* 24 no2, (2018): 202.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 205

¹¹ Jackson, Joshua J., Felix Thoemmes, Kathrin Jonkmann, Oliver Lüdtke, and Ulrich Trautwein, "Military Training and Personality Trait Development: Does the Military Make the Man, or does the Man Make the Military?," *Psychological Science* 23 no3, (2012): 271.

There is also a distinct difference between military training for officers and soldiers, sailors, and airmen/women. Whilst officer training teaches members to think for themselves, they are still constrained in very tight left and right arcs of the military institution. Psychological development continues throughout a member's military career and provides members with a sense of belonging and military identity. Hicks and Gray (2018) argue "that the unique environment of the army culture has a positive influence on the psychological development of the emerging adult."¹² They go on further to identify that this may negatively impact the transition out for military members.¹³ The reason it is described as a positive influence is due to the intrinsic values that the military has; however, the disadvantage is the lack of civilian life skills and the reliance on military identity that can impact transition. Research from Jackson et al. (2012); Hicks and Gray (2018); Binks and Cambridge (2017); and Greer (2017), clearly identifies that the military does impact the psychological development of its members.

There is very limited research in whether this is causation or correlation. What this means is, is the military the cause of this psychological development or is it just a correlation to those members that decide on undertaking a career in the military. It may be both; but either way the military has a responsibility to members. The level of responsibility that the military has in ensuring that members succeed post military career is an element of the social contract that is debatable. Social contract is the concept of what the military owes a member in return for the sacrifices they make or are willing to make. Obviously if it is proven to be more commonly causation than correlation, then the

¹² Hicks, C.C., et al, "Psychological Development of Emerging Adults..." 15

¹³ *Ibid.*

social contract increases and the military would probably be seen to have a higher responsibility. A significant amount of research has been conducted on United States military personnel and the correlation between operational deployment and poor mental health,¹⁴ however Smith and True (2014) also found that transition caused mental health issues particularly in relation to the conflicting understanding of their identity and sense of belonging.¹⁵ If transition from the military can cause mental health issues research should be conducted into the possible negative impacts that the military causes from psychological development during the recruit process as well. Further research should also be conducted into whether this affects females differently understanding that they will have a different sense of belonging due to the masculinity of the military and being in a highly male dominated institution.

MILITARY IDENTITY

Military identity underpins what it means to be a military member. A crucial aspect of achieving a military identity is breaking down and shedding of a member's civilian identity. Military identity is a specific identity which makes members feel like they belong, and it disrupts their individuality. Military identity is required to unite people from different backgrounds including race, gender and socio-economic.¹⁶

When members feel a sense of belonging members feel integral to the team and that team

¹⁴ Sundin, J., R.K. Herrell, C.W. Hoge, N.T. Fear, A.B. Adler, N. Greenberg...P.D. Bleise, "Mental Health outcomes in US and UK military personnel returning from Iraq," *British Journal of Psychiatry* 204 no3, (2014): 200

¹⁵ Smith, R.T., and G. True, "Warring identities: Identify conflict and the mental distress of American veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan," *Society and Mental Health* 4 no2, (2014): 148

¹⁶ Hicks, C.C., et al, "Psychological Development of Emerging Adults..." 15

is stronger together than as individuals.¹⁷ The strength and power of the team together establishes a large proportion of what is military identity. Beech, Gold and Beech (2017) discuss in particular the military identity of males and the concept known as ‘fratriarchy’. ‘Fratriarchy’ comes from a mixture of patriarchy and fraternity and represents a group of males where children and women are excluded.¹⁸ ‘Fratriarchy’ encompasses the idea of a military identity which holds a certain level of power and social privilege; and also provides a sense of belonging and inclusion. The obvious concern with ‘fratriarchy’ is the notion of power and privilege. In addition, Cooper et al (2018) discuss how the military has masculine tendencies and attributes such as hardness, physical and emotional toughness and aggressiveness marginalize women in the military institution and is argued to further marginalize women.¹⁹

The concept of military identity, and not just ‘fratriarchy,’ is suggested to continually influence psychological development throughout ones military career. This is evidenced above with the notion of females adopting masculine identity norms as a way to belong within the perceived masculinity of the military. Whilst there is limited research on the concept of ‘fratriarchy’ it does highlight again the disparity between males and females identity and sense of belonging in the military. It also highlights the concept that women are not required and propensities the marginalization females may feel.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Beech, Nick, Jeff Gold, and Susan Beech, “Military lives: coaching transitions,” *European Journal of Training and Development* 41 no5, (2017): 437

¹⁹ Cooper, Linda, et al, “Transition From the Military Into Civilian Life... 159-160

The development of a military identity also represents the social construct idea. Military identity is what makes the military different from civilians, and identifies an in and out group. The military whether it means to or not distances individuals from civilian life creating a culture of “us” and “them”.²⁰ Military identity means you are included in the institution and there is a high level of expectation that group cohesion will be achieved, and members will provide loyalty to the institution. Military identity is forged during recruit training when a new recruit’s civilian status is broken down and the new military identity is forged.²¹ In addition, “in the United States, individuals who have a lower socio-economic status and IQ, come from rural versus urban areas, are minorities, and associate with deviant peers are more likely to join the military than individuals who remain civilians.”²² For members that come from this background they often join the military for a better quality of life physically, mentally and their social well-being.²³ This suggests the military provides an identity that they classify as more prestigious or superior to their current civilian identity. Whilst this may seem like a positive outcome on the surface; Beech, Gold and Beech (2017) discuss that as a result of the establishment of military identity, an institutionally socialized group is formed and the military identity is deeply engrained that provides members with a superficial stable state that could potentially “create long-term post-exit vulnerability.”²⁴ The impact of the military

²⁰ Binks, Eve, and Siobhan Cambridge, “The Transition Experiences of British Military Veterans,” *Political Psychology* 39, (2018): 125

²¹ Jackson, Joshua J., et al, “Military Training and Personality Trait Development...” 271

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Wesemann, Ulrich, Gerd D. Willmund, Jóm Ungerer, Günter Kreim, Peter L. Zimmermann, Antje Bühler, Michael Stein, Jakob, Kaiser, and Jens T. Kowalski, “Assessing Psychological Fitness in the Military - Development of an effective and economic screening instrument,” *Military Medicine* 183, (2018): 262

²⁴ Beech, Nick, et al, “Military lives: coaching transitions...” 443.

identity through transition is another aspect to the wicked problem of transition that affects military members transitioning to civilian life.

Psychologist Joshua Jackson and his colleagues looked at military identity and conducted specific research into the agreeableness of military members. Their findings suggest "...that military training may be potentially detrimental" as military members have lower levels of agreeableness, which can be related to aggression and inability for mature adult relationships (both romantic and platonic).²⁵ Lower levels of agreeableness are also evident in a number of other research articles which identify that employers often believe that military identity and the institutionalization of military members makes them difficult to work with, and that military members struggle without constant direction and orders.²⁶ Further research suggests that whilst a society may have a strong support for the military - as an institution, support for individual ex-military members is lacking.²⁷ This is a significant finding because transition occurs individually and whilst the military may feel as a whole accepted and supported by society every time an individual transitions from the military they are doing this away from the unique military identity that they have associated with. Binks and Cambridge (2018) research found that "although strong social identities may hinder reintegration from the individual perspective, societal attitudes also prevent a smooth transition."²⁸ The concept by former Australian Prime Minister for Veteran's Employment Program is a key initiative in changing societal attitudes and is hopefully assisting in smooth transitions for members.

²⁵ Jackson, Joshua J., et al, "Military Training and Personality Trait Development..." 275

²⁶ Binks, Eve, and Siobhan Cambridge, "The Transition Experiences of British Military..." 136

²⁷ *Ibid.* 137

²⁸ *Ibid.* 136

FEMALE TRANSITION

As earlier mentioned the Inquiry into transition from the ADF has made the recommendation that a study be conducted in to the transition of female military members, after noting that female transition is different from that of male members. United States Associate Professor at the University of Houston Tomika Greer states, women veterans particularly those that served in Iraq and Afghanistan wars suffer from higher unemployment rates than their male veterans.²⁹ Greer also identifies that the main reason for the case is that the notion that military members and veterans are men; and that the transition programs designed and implemented by militaries are more aligned to men transitioning to civilian life and do not adequately meet the needs of women veterans.³⁰

Females constantly have to correct society about being a veteran. The general picture of what most people think of when they hear the word veteran is a male. For females this can feel like the importance of their service and their contribution to their country is neglected. This can negatively impact on their self-worth and the sacrifices they made within their military career. In addition, further research found that “armed forces must address the cultural obstacles for female service members in a male-dominated world, otherwise a likely consequence is that these female service members depart and thus the cultural reproduction of the obstacles continues.”³¹ This is another wicked problem and the military needs to take lead in trying to adjust societies view if they are going to assist in female members transition.

²⁹ Greer, Tomika W., “Career Development for Women Veterans: Facilitating Successful Transitions from Military Service to Civilian Employment,” *Advances in Developing Human Resources* 19, (2017): 54

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Grimell, Jan, “Advancing an understanding of selves in transition... 205

ADF TRANSITION STRATEGY

ADF transition is a mandatory process that must be completed prior to transition by all members of the military. The process encourages families to be involved as important parts of the transition support plan. The transition process highlights that it is a joint process which includes the member, family, unit and the ADF Transition Centre. The Transition Centre provides members with a transition coach which will assist in providing an individual transition plan; offer career coaching during transition and up to 12 months afterwards; help meet administration requirements; help the member leave with all required personal documentation from their time in service; and facilitate connections to support services.³² As well as providing members with transition coaches, the Transition Centre also provides transition seminars, and manages benefits under the Career Transition Assistance Scheme (CTAS). Depending on how long you served and the reason for your transition will depend on the level of support you are provided through CTAS (table 1). CTAS provides members such things as Job Search Preparation Workshops; Approved absence for transition activities; Career Transition training to support future employment post transition; Career Transition Management Coaching to identify current skills and develop interview skills etc; Curriculum Vitae (CV) Coaching to help develop a CV; Financial advice and counseling; and Partner Employee Assistance Program.³³

³² Australia: Department of Defence, "ADF Member and Family Transition Guide: A Practical manual to Transitioning," 14.

³³ *Ibid.* 18

	CTAS Level	Job Search Preparation Workshop	Approved Absence	Career Transition Training Up to \$5,320	Career Transition Management Coaching Up to \$2,820	CV Coaching Up to \$253	Financial Counselling Up to \$518
< 12 years' service	1	Yes	5 days	No	No	No	No
12 - <18 years' service	2	Yes	10 days	EITHER / OR		Yes	No
				Yes, up to \$1,100 if CTMC isn't undertaken	Yes, up to \$1,100 if CTT isn't undertaken		
Compulsory Retirement Age or ≥ 18 years' service	3	No	23 days	EITHER / OR		Yes	No
				Yes, up to \$5,320 if CTMC isn't undertaken	Yes, up to \$2,820 if CTT isn't undertaken		
Medical MIER Redundancy	3	No	23 days	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 1.³⁴

In addition, by referral only there is also a Transition for Employment Program which provides certain members with additional development opportunities for post transition employment.

The ADF transition scheme is quite detailed and is comparable to similar militaries such as the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). The CAF transition model is a five step process which is designed to commence during your career in order to prepare you for your transition when the time comes. The five step process consists of: *Step 1* - Understand transition; *Step 2* - Plan for transition (throughout your career); *Step 3* - Train for transition (in-service phase and release phase); *Step 4* - Undergo a personalized transition experience; and, *Step 5* - Transition successfully and re-establish in civilian

³⁴ *Ibid.*

life.³⁵ Each step provides guidance to assist in making transition easier, for example step 1 identifies that you should be thinking that transition is inevitable and you should be preparing well in advance for transition; step 2 encourages members to undertake in-service education programs and manage your own resilience throughout your career; step 3 encourages members to attend a Career Transition Workshop and develop a resume; step 4 requires members (and family if desired) to meet with a transition advisor; and step 5 suggests members contact CAF and/or Veteran Affairs Canada (VAC) if required.³⁶ As part of the CAF Career Transition services a number of programs are offered, some of which are compulsory at certain steps within the transition process. The programs offered are: *Enhanced Transition Training* (compulsory training designed to assist members in a successful and seamless transition by developing a transition plan); *Second Career Assistance Network (SCAN) Seminars* (members are encouraged to attend and will provide information on entitlements including pension and VAC benefits, administration processes and as a networking opportunity; online option is also available); *CAF Career Transition Workshops* (optional two day workshop covering four modules - Self-Assessment for interests and skills, Resume Writing, Interview techniques, and job search techniques); *CAF Long Term Planning Seminars* (members are encouraged to attend to receive information on education, career and retirement goals, including financial planning); *Individual Career and Education Counseling* (optional service to discuss any information in relation to transition); CAF Education Reimbursement (programs with financial assistance available to undertake education and professional qualification

³⁵ Government of Canada, Department of National Defence, "Transition Model," accessed on 26 Apr 2019, www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence

³⁶ *Ibid.*

courses).³⁷ Both Transition processes seem to have similar components; however, the ADF Transition Scheme has a distinct amount of more mandatory requirements associated with transition. It also seems to have a larger number of face-to-face requirements than the CAF transition model.

Currently the ADF Transition Scheme heavily relies on support from the family of the members during transition. The transition scheme is designed around the family being the first point of support for the military member through their transition. Family support is even more crucial once the member officially leaves the military as all the transition centres are within Defence premises which cannot be accessed without a military pass. The major concern with the ADF expecting family to be a significant part of a member's transition support plan is that there are a number of members who are single or have no immediate family close by. This in particular should, and needs to be raised during the study on female transition as a much higher proportion of females within the military are single compared to males.³⁸ In addition, the proportion of single members within the military has increased in the last ten years.³⁹ For a single female who has more than likely posted away from their home town and family, relying on "family" as the support mechanism is a significant flaw in the ADF Transition Scheme.

In addition, it is important to understand that "women are more likely to have experienced a traumatic pre-military life, more likely to meet the criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder, and more likely to be victims of sexual abuse compared

³⁷ Government of Canada: Department of National Defence, "CAF Career Transition Services," accessed on 26 Apr 2019

³⁸ Australia: Department of Defence (Justine Greig) "The Australian Defence Organisation Personnel Environment Scan 2020: Recruitment and Retention Issues", (2001): 8

³⁹ *Ibid.*

with men veterans.”⁴⁰ Women who meet the criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder, or are victims of sexual abuse, more often than not their transition will be affected. Even whilst the member’s decision may be a voluntary choice in the end, because of the reasons surrounding their decision to transition the female is likely to feel as if their transition is involuntary. Particularly in circumstances of sexual abuse where they feel they cannot be in the institution anymore and/or they have lost their sense of belonging. Involuntary transition specifically under these circumstances where mental health has or is affected, will impact greatly the success of the female coping with transition.⁴¹ In addition, females are likely to suffer from higher unemployment rates post transition than their male counterparts.⁴² This further emphasises the distinct gap in the ADF Transition Scheme and provides further evidence of the importance of a study being conducted into female transition.

CONCLUSION

As the ADF seeks for more females to join the military it is essential that it addresses some of the issues that affect females. From the evidence provided females have distinct issues from recruitment that lead into separate issues in transition. The transition process is a wicked problem that affects all military members differently. Part of this is due to the psychological development and military identity that is achieved from the recruitment process and throughout a member’s career.

⁴⁰ Greer, Tomika W., “Career Development for Women Veterans...55.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 60.

⁴² *Ibid.* 54.

The paper identified that Psychological development is an inevitable part of military institutionalization. The level of impact is unknown however research does show that the military does affect psychological development. It was identified that the average members that are recruited into the ADF are at the emerging adulthood range and on joining the ADF volitional acts are limited which impacts their psychological development. The conformity and obedience of the military institution assists in providing the military with legitimacy but the lasting effect of this on the members is unknown.

Psychological development continues especially for females as they try and achieve a sense of belonging within an environment of military masculinity. The environment can often lead to marginalizing females due to the engrained nature of the military and expectations such as a warrior culture.

Military identity is an essential part of the military but military identity is also seen as a negative within society. Jackson et al research found that initial military training breaks down the civilian identity of members and a new military identity is forged.⁴³ Members are entering civilian life with a military identity which can often be seen as a negative rather than a positive due to societal impressions of military members. How this can be rectified or even addressed is a wicked problem in itself, because the question should also be considered whether a military member needs to, or wants to even forget their military identity when they transition from the military.

⁴³ Jackson, Joshua J., et al, "Military Training and Personality Trait Development... 271

Binks and Cambridge identify that evidence suggests a member's worldview is altered from military service which affects their own self-concept, their social identity and need to belong.⁴⁴ This suggests that even if a member wishes to disassociate themselves from the military their self-concept is still affected from their military service which will impact them in transition to civilian life. But whilst it is a wicked problem for the ADF without understanding the social contract and determining what the military owes members it is hard to determine how much more effort the military should be putting in to achieving a seamless transition.

Both the ADF and CAF have extensive transition programs which provide support not only to members but their family as well. However, as the rate of single members within the military increases, relying on family as a support plan is not going to be viable. In addition, more female military members are single than male members. Female members have distinct different transition issues to their male counterparts. For this reason alone further study needs to be undertaken to understand the issues concerning females within the ADF as they transition.

Beech et al describe military service as more than just a job, and "leaving military service can be felt as a severance from a deeply engrained way of being."⁴⁵ The recent government Inquiry into transition from the ADF, is a start in trying to understand exactly what the problem statement is. The recommendations to government place the ADF in a good position to address some of the issues regarding transition going forward, especially if all 11 recommendations of the inquiry are accepted by government. As

⁴⁴ Binks, Eve, and Siobhan Cambridge, "The Transition Experiences of British Military...129.

⁴⁵ Beech, Nick, et al, "Military lives: coaching transitions...434.

identified throughout this paper there are nuances associated with female military members time in service that continue into transition. As such it is imperative that a further study be conducted into the transition of female military members.

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