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## **FIGHTING THE WAR WE HAVE, NOT THE WAR WE KNEW: STAGNATION IN THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES' APPROACH TO OFFICER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**JCSP 46**

**Solo Flight**

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# **FIGHTING THE WAR WE HAVE, NOT THE WAR WE KNEW: STAGNATION IN THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES' APPROACH TO OFFICER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The operating environment in which the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) now finds itself has changed drastically since the end of the Second World War. The style of warfare the CAF can expect to engage in has shifted from conventional state-on-state actions to a hybrid mix of insurgency, state-sponsored terrorism, organized crime, influence activities, and deterrence measures, all occurring in what is now labelled the grey zone.<sup>1</sup> To be successful in the new operating environment, CAF officers must receive professional military education (PME) throughout their careers, sufficient to provide officers with the abilities required to compete and prove successful against adversaries and challenges.<sup>2</sup>

In 2003, in response to the post-9/11 changes in the operating environment, the Department of National Defense produced *Duty with Honour*, a cornerstone leadership document which defines a profession as a “collection of people who possess and apply a systematically acquired body of knowledge derived from extensive research, education, training and experience.”<sup>3</sup> The document further outlines expectations of what CAF members must demonstrate to be considered professionals: they are required to “pursue the highest standard of expertise” and “required to master complex skills and gain extensive knowledge of the theory of conflict.”<sup>4</sup> This definition and concomitant expectations should be considered as updates from 1969’s *Report of the Officer Development Board*, (hereafter the Rowley Report), in which

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<sup>1</sup> Department of National Defence, *CANSOFCOM 2020 Beyond the Horizon* (DND Canada, 2020). 9.

<sup>2</sup> Department of National Defence, *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2003). 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 11.

Major-General (MGen) Rowley presented a similar view, stating professionals are experts who achieved their knowledge through education and experience. Rowley *et al.* described professionals as studying at institutions who develop, research and share this knowledge base, allowing students to keep abreast of current events in both practical and theoretic worlds.<sup>5</sup> It is these characteristics of professionalism recognized by the CAF, which underpin the current model of CAF Professional Development System (CAFPDS).<sup>6</sup> Within the CAFPDS resides the Officer Development Period Model that details the milestones for officers in professional knowledge, educational achievement, and experiential learning that are required to be achieved in order for them to progress. The model consists of five distinct developmental periods (DP), correlated with occupational expertise, rank, and requisite qualifications.<sup>7</sup>

With this in mind, I will in the following essay argue the CAF Officer Development Period Model (OPDM), specifically the development of leadership qualities and PME during Development Periods Two (DP 2) and Three (DP 3), requires sweeping change in order to produce officers with the requisite skillsets to meet the demands of the current and future operating environments.<sup>8</sup> This paper will present the development of the OPDM in a historical context, using the unification of the services and the forecasted operating environment as drivers for the proposed reforms in 1970. I will then examine the current model of OPDM against the shifting complexities of the post-Somalia environment and the subsequent requirements placed

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<sup>5</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 1969).

<sup>6</sup> National Defence, “Canadian Armed Forces Professional Development Framework,” education and awareness, aem, December 13, 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/benefits-military/education-training/professional-development/framework.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Department of National Defence, “Professional Development for Officers,” education and awareness, aem, June 20, 2013, <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/benefits-military/education-training/professional-development/framework/officers.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Author is currently finishing JCSP, having completed DP 2; he has held several key staff officer positions in domestic and expeditionary roles, as well as commanded at the sub-unit level while deployed. His last position was as a Deputy Commanding Officer of a line unit, providing experience in both leading people and the institution.

on the officer corps, in order to present my first argument that the OPDM requires change. The third section will consider the future operating environment as described in the *Pan-Domain Force Employment Concept* and discuss how the current OPDM is not suited to meet the requirements of the new operational paradigm. Finally, I will offer potential changes to ODPM that would meet the forecasted requirements laid out in the *Pan-Domain Force Employment Concept* and strengthen the CAF Officer Corps writ large.

## **THE PAST – MAJ-GEN ROWLEY AND THE OFFICER DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

In the mid-1960s, as the CAF was in the midst of unification, it was recognized that Officer Education, now known as PME, was being conducted by each of the three services independently. The Army conducted a variety of staff courses at its staff college in Fort Frontenac, which quite naturally focussed heavily on land operations.<sup>9</sup> The Army program initially was two years in length (later reduced to single year) and provided Lts to LCol a detailed overview of staff functions, logistical management and "specialized staff skills," which entailed critical thinking, logic, and the clear communication of ideas.<sup>10</sup> The Air Force recognized the value of educated officers and offered a similar course at the Canadian Forces College (CFC) (formerly known as the Royal Canadian Air Force Staff College), which focussed on air operations and provided comprehensive understanding to enable officers to work in large multi-service organizations. Finally, the Navy at the time did not have its institution but instead sent candidates to both the Army and Air Force colleges. In May 1967, the Chief of Defense Staff (CDS), General Allard, asked MGen Rowley to develop a plan to examine the current state of PME within the CAF. The CDS cited three main factors for his decision to review the current

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<sup>9</sup> Department of National Defence, *A History of Fort Frontenac* (DND Canada, 2003).

<sup>10</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*. XIV.

system: First, the lack of coordination between the educational, training, and career management aspects of officer development, inherited from all three pre-unification services; second, the loss of too many expensively-educated and highly-trained young officers before their normal retirement age, and finally; the implication of unification on an officer's education and training in the future.<sup>11</sup>

Given these three factors, MGen Rowley drew up a plan for an Officer Development Board to conduct the review. Rowley received approval and proceeded to conduct an in-depth examination that encompassed officer qualities, military ethos, the nature of the future operating environment, and unification in order to produce an expected baseline level of education, experience and officer qualities required for each rank level. This data allowed the board to create three distinct periods in officer development, which corresponded with the OPDM: Pre-commissioning Training and Education (Cadet – 2 Lt or equivalent), Intermediate-Rank Development (Lt – LCol or equivalent) and Senior Officer Development (Col–Gen or equivalent).<sup>12</sup> MGen Rowley and his board used these three periods and examined how cadets and officers were educated within each one, to what level and by whom. From this, the Board's observations and recommendations were synthesized to meet the CDS's intent of a singular PME system, capable of meeting the demands of the operating environment at the time. The Board's findings were mixed; the pre-commissioning training and education period was seen to be in an acceptable state, requiring relatively minor adjustments to ensure the balance between education and training/experience could be met.<sup>13</sup> However, the Rowely Report detailed a lack of career path for senior officers, impeding their development. It was noted that no formal PME existed

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<sup>11</sup> Jean Victor Allard, "Report of the Officer Development Board," 3 Mar 69.

<sup>12</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*. 54.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 67.

for this DP; instead, the CAF relied on officers undergoing experiential learning through postings.<sup>14</sup> The National Defence College (NDC) did exist<sup>15</sup>, however, attendees were poorly selected, with fewer than half receiving promotions to senior ranks, and those who were promoted facing a shortage of senior officer positions. The Board found that, as an institution, the NDC lacked credibility for several reasons: did not focus on current issues as it lagged in behind in curriculum development, and its students were not formally required to meet any type of standard demonstrate learning or required to conduct in-depth research on relevant topics.<sup>16</sup> MGen Rowley noted that with some effort to update the program and shorten the length of the time spent at NDC, it would be possible to consider it a career course for senior officers. This would make it a required course for progression and promotion and create a standard level of competence within the senior officer ranks.

The final development period covered by MGen Rowley and his board is of the most interest to this paper as it covers the same time and rank band as the current ODPM periods Two and Three. The Intermediate-Rank Development period was considered to be the most formative time for officers in their careers. Attendance to Canadian service institutions was by selection only, with those who were chosen by their chains of command received PME in a formal setting, while those who were not selected received PME through experience and on-the-job training. There were three principal institutions at the time which provided PME; as previously mentioned, the CFC comprising of three separate schools and led by the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Canadian Land Forces Command and Staff College (CLFCSC) led by the Canadian Army, and the Canadian Forces Management School. As with all institutions which belonged to

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<sup>14</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*.70.

<sup>15</sup> National Defence College, *National Defence College Fonds*, 1975.

<sup>16</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*. 71.



a single service, the material taught did not lend itself to joint PME but instead remained element-specific.<sup>17</sup> The board found that material taught was still of high quality and prepared officers for future roles within their service, but not particularly useful outside of their service. The Rowley Report made note that some of the PME provided was delivered too late, at too high of a rank level. This provided little value to experienced officers, and would have been better utilized being offered earlier in the career path. In light of the unification of the services, the Board suggested that all courses be reviewed to ensure they met the need of a newly-unified force.

Finally, MGen Rowley and the board examined the command and management of the officer development model in an effort to tie all three development periods together. The board observed a lack of cohesiveness within the CAF, as each institution reported through various separate staff agencies at different levels to reach the CDS, creating a situation where programs had very “little centralized coordination or control.”<sup>18</sup> This convoluted staffing lead to coordination issues within PME, namely difficulty in the communication of policy, administration, and plans from CFHQ to the institutions. This was further complicated by each institution being located in different geographical areas, supported by different commands, creating unnecessary costs and administrative burden for the institutions to navigate.

These four areas, (Pre-commissioning training and education, Intermediate-Rank development, Senior Rank Development, and Command and Management of officer development) provided insight into the Canadian system of officer development during at the

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<sup>17</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*. 68.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 71.

time, and from them, the board drew conclusions based on 16 precepts laid out by MGen Rowley's terms of reference.<sup>19</sup> Of these 16, the following seven stand out:

1. Preparation of Officers to Contribute to a Canadian National Strategy;
2. Imparting a Canadian Military Ethic;
3. Remaining in Consonance with Scientific and Technological, Sociological, Economic, Educational and Other Changes;
4. Employment of a Sequential Process of Professional Education and Experience in the Post-Commissioning Period and the Recognition of Professional Courses as Career Requirements;
5. Provision of the Appropriate Development Course Material at the Right Stage so as to Assist the Officer in the Orderly Development of the Qualities Demanded in Him in Succeeding Ranks;
6. Encouragement of Original Research and Contribution to Professional Knowledge; and
7. Permitting no Degradation in Operational Effectiveness.

These seven criteria were seen to be inadequately addressed by the officer development system of the time and presented in MGen Rowley's view, an impediment to producing officers who would be effective in the future operating environments envisioned by the CAF.

The Rowley Report presented a scenario that encompassed changes in the economic, social, political, and military realms across the world in the next 30 years from 1970 to 2000.<sup>20</sup> From this broad view, requirements for forces and functions expected of officers were determined. These global changes included increased competition for resources; it was predicted that a widening of the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" would cause insurgencies based on ethnicity, religion or social status. The report foreshadowed a change in the foreign policy of the great powers, from containment to the control of spheres of influence and areas of

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<sup>19</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*. 73.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 30.

interest while trying to avoid major conflict. Notably, the USSR was expected to continue to exert its will in surrounding countries, while China would build influence across the Indian subcontinent, Africa, and Asia.<sup>21</sup> Further, it predicted the United States would go through a period of social division on foreign policy, weakening its ability to meet its international commitments, leading to urgent requests of Western allies to provide more significant support in the realm of collective security.

This coherent vision of the future operating environment enabled the board to use *Canadian Forces Publication 243, Rationale for Canadian Defense Forces*, to describe how the CAF might need to be equipped to operate. These forces were to be well-balanced, strategically mobile Land, Sea, and Air Forces, who could operate in post-nuclear environments. A robust ICBM deterrent and second-strike capability was mandatory and complimented Anti-ICBM systems. Finally, a coordinated ASW, Ocean Surveillance and Anti-SLBM forces would round out future forces for the defence of Canada and the global rules-based order.<sup>22</sup> These new forces would require officers to possess qualities and capabilities that were currently under-emphasized, misunderstood, or not taught as required in the face of growing complexity. The board concluded that modern officers were required to be well-versed in three areas of general knowledge-- environmental, organizational, and inter-environmental--attaining this comprehensive knowledge at the beginning of their careers. This widening of the officer knowledge base would also require depth in the form of the study of social sciences and the liberal arts, since officers would be required to understand the nature of warfare as a human act, and its long term effects on society as a whole.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*. 30.

<sup>22</sup> Department of National Defence, *Rationale for Canadian Defense Forces*, CFP 243 (Ottawa: Canadian Armed Forces, 1968).

<sup>23</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*. 33

The report authored by MGen Rowley and his board produced a model for officer development that would meet the envisioned requirements of the CDS: it put forward a standardized PME for all three services, enabling the retention of qualified officers, and a system that would meet the future requirements of both the operational environment and unification. The model attempted to standardize PME and training across all three services from the rank of Cadet to General. The primary focus of change detailed in the report occurred during the intermediate-rank development stage (Lt – Lt Col or equivalents). The introduction of Junior Staff Course for all officers to establish and maintain the capability to conduct staff duties to an acceptable level, and a service-specific Junior Command and Staff Course to allow the evaluation of individual officers and future potential, were two significant changes at the most junior officer level.<sup>24</sup> The board found a discrepancy within the officer corps regarding fundamental knowledge of the Canadian Government, the evolution of modern war, and military economics in Canada. A preparatory course was proposed to provide the knowledge to officers who were selected to attend the Command and Staff Course, which would ensure an even footing of baseline knowledge, and would be completed as required on the officer's own time before attending the course. The Command and Staff Course focussed on the three services and management. This course would provide a detailed look at all facets of each service ranging from employment, logistics, and budgeting, to operational research and analysis, in preparation for employment as staff officers in headquarters at the rank of Major and Lieutenant Colonel and their naval equivalents.<sup>25</sup> Sharing the same period of development, the board proposed post-graduate training for officers, as it was seen as an option that would quickly provide value in analytical skills and knowledgebase development, but was not a requirement for career

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<sup>24</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*. 303.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 304.

progression. The senior officer development period was also addressed with the proposal of formal courses at the rank level of Lieutenant-Colonel and Colonel and their naval equivalents, and strategic-level seminars conducted throughout the year to provide continuing education for all senior ranks and ensure the development of all facets of officership with regards to military operations, strategic studies, technology, and leadership and management.<sup>26</sup> These courses would be considered career courses and required for progression.

This development model would be managed and commanded by a newly-created organization structure, the Canadian Defence Education Center (CDEC), who would report directly to the CDS. CDEC would be responsible for implementing policy concerning PME, commanded the colleges, and hold sway over all officer development agencies.<sup>27</sup> CDEC would be vital in standardizing officer development and PME in support of unification and leading the modernization of curriculum for educational institutions in the CAF. In spite of—or indeed because of—the future-oriented and transformative changes to PME the Board proposed, MGen Rowley’s system was not adopted in any meaningful way by the CAF.

## **THE PRESENT – THE CAF IN A POST-SOMALIA WOLRD**

Between the release of the Rowley report in 1970 and the post-Somalia wholesale reorganization of officer education in 1995, officer professional development did not fare well. Due to a change in foreign policy and the release of a Defence white paper, CAF leadership did not pursue any of the recommendations from MGen Rowley, as efforts were focussed on meeting the obligations set out by the government. It was not until 1985, when MGen Kitchener penned his report on senior officer development, that the OPDM was reviewed for potential

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<sup>26</sup> Department of National Defence, *The Report on the Officer Development Board*. 306.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, 314.

changes. Recognizing that formal education for senior officers was non-existent past CFCSC, MGen Kitchener was tasked with investigating a potential solution.<sup>28</sup> The resulting recommendation was that officers ought to attend civilian universities at the graduate level, as they would provide the requisite dynamic that a professional military officer required to be successful in their role within society. This report lasted a year before it was contradicted by another, authored by Colonel Lightburn, who championed further professional development at CFCSC and NDC.<sup>29</sup> This debate over senior officer professional development spurred a further study by LGen Evaire in 1988. Evaire was a proponent of service-specific senior officer development, job-specific courses and seminars, and also recommended that the CAF develop a center for strategic studies.<sup>30</sup> These three reports had two commonalities: each identified systemic issues with the OPDM, and none gained traction with leadership at the time. It was not until the Somalia Affair<sup>31</sup> in 1993 and the results of the Board of Inquiry<sup>32</sup> in that officer professional development became a focal point for the CAF again.

A second Officer Development Review Board was ordered in 1995 and was lead by LGen (Retired) Robert Morton. The results of the examination all but confirmed what was written 25 years previously by MGen Rowley. Morton found that the CAF did not possess a systematic approach to officer professional development, which provided the opportunity for

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<sup>28</sup> Bernd Horn and Bill Bentley, *Forced to Change: Crisis and Reform in the Canadian Armed Forces* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2015). 14.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 15.

<sup>31</sup> Scott Taylor and Brian Nolan, *Tarnished Brass: Greed and Corruption in the Canadian Military* (Toronto: Lester Publications, 1996).

<sup>32</sup> Dishonoured legacy : the lessons of the Somalia Affair : report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia, "Dishonoured Legacy : The Lessons of the Somalia Affair : Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces to Somalia" (Ottawa: The Commission, 1997). The report highlight a significant deficiency in all aspect of officer training to include ethics, critical thinking and qualities required of a leader and the CAF would be required to make a concerted effort to improve the overall quality of its officers.

officers to attain the critical thinking skill set, nor the specific knowledge base essential to a military officer. Further, to serve its intended purpose, the OPDM would need to champion high standards of leadership and understanding of the CAF ethos.<sup>33</sup> In all, there were over 200 recommendations on changes required to the OPDM of the time in Morton's report, but they were considered unmanageable at the time in a resource-scarce environment. The ones that were adopted by CAF leadership form the basis for the current CAF OPDM.<sup>34</sup>

The Canadian Defence Academy (CDA), created in 2003 as one of the recommendations adopted from Morton's report, was tasked with developing the framework to address how non-service specific PME would be incorporated into the OPDM. Its charter describes it as the "training authority for common professional development training and education," and affirms that "CDA exists to champion lifelong learning, and to promote the professional development of members of the CAF."<sup>35</sup> In response to these two significant tasks, the CDA produced the current OPDM based on five DPs.

The first of the five, DP 1, consists of entry-level training and education to create a baseline knowledge of the CAF. DP1 culminates with the achievement of the Basic Military Officer Qualification, environmental (service), and trade qualifications, with the associated ranks being Officer Cadet to Lieutenant or equivalent. DP 2 is a mix of on-the-job training, experience, environmental and trade specific-qualifications, with formal education being provided in the form of Canadian Armed Forces Junior Officer Development Program. The CAFJOD curriculum provides an overview of staff duties, law and military justice, ethics, an introduction to Joint

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<sup>33</sup> Robert Morton, *Report of the Officer Development Review Board* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 1995).

<sup>34</sup> Horn and Bentley. 17.

<sup>35</sup> Department of National Defence, "Canadian Defence Academy," education and awareness, aem, August 1, 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/education-training/professional-development/canadian-defence-academy.html>.

Operations, and history, all provided in a distance learning format. DP 2 is complete with promotion to Major or equivalent. DP 3 is characterized by the further on-the-job training, experience, and selection for the Joint Command and Staff Program or Allied equivalent and is considered complete with promotion to Colonel or equivalent DP 4 continues formal PME with the National Security Programme or allied equivalents, offered to selected members. The NSP provides training and mentoring to attendees on strategic leadership and institutional resource management across the spectrum of operations, in preparation for roles in joint-level commands and senior staff. DP 4 concludes when the member is promoted to the General/Flag Officer level. DP 5 focussed on preparing the officer for the rigours of institutional command.<sup>36</sup>

The operating environment that has arisen between the CAF's deployment to Somalia and today can be characterized by the rapid rise of globalization and the ensuing discord. Conflict during this period has increased, punctuated by violence in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and the rise of international terrorism, insurgencies and violent extremist organizations. Responses to each of these challenges require task-tailored solutions which can no longer rely solely on military strength but instead require a comprehensive approach from likeminded nations acting in concert.<sup>37</sup> A fundamental shift from conventional warfare (state on state) and peace-keeping to irregular warfare, counterinsurgency, and security force capacity building operations has mirrored the increasing complexity of the global economy. Politics, both internal and international, have not been immune to change; the expansion of organizations like NATO and the European Union, the rise of China as a global economic powerhouse, the resurgence of Russian state aggression, and the of nationalism and populism have added layers of complexity

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<sup>36</sup> Department of National Defence, "Professional Development for Officers."

<sup>37</sup> Lotta Themnér and Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts, 1946–2012," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 4 (July 2013): 509–21



to interactions between nations. Finally, the occurrence of natural disasters has increased as climate change has intensified, placing strain on the resources available to support relief efforts, and bringing knock-on effects such as mass migration and pandemics.<sup>38</sup> In an era of almost total globalization, the delineation of what a military operation is, how it could be conducted, and what results could be achieved has grown hazy; navigating globalization while conducting successful military operations now requires a greater understanding of all the instruments of power held by nations.

To reinforce this idea of globalized warfare, it is instructive to note that since 2003, the CAF has been active in operations throughout the world, across the spectrum of conflict from humanitarian-assistance to war, and the demands on its officers have only grown.<sup>39</sup> To counter this increased demand on officers, General Krulak, the American author of the 'three-block war theory,' suggested that quality PME would be required to "sustain[s] the growth of technical and tactical proficiency and mental and physical toughness."<sup>40</sup> This concept focussed on a broad spectrum of operations occurring simultaneously in close proximity to one another and forced junior leaders at the tactical level to make decisions with strategic impacts. 'Three-block warfare' was adopted by the CAF during its transformational period in 2005 and was soon considered to be a guiding principle.<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, its influence only took hold in the training system at the

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<sup>38</sup> Ekatherina Zhukova, "Humanitarianism and Mass Migration: Confronting the World Crisis: Edited by Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, Oakland, CA, University of California Press, Ross Institute, 2019:

<sup>39</sup> Department of National Defence, "Recently Completed Operations," aem, January 28, 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/recently-completed.html>.

<sup>40</sup> "Krulak Revisited: The Three-Block War, Strategic Corporals, and the Future Battlefield," *Modern War Institute* (blog), February 3, 2020, <https://mwi.usma.edu/krulak-revisited-three-block-war-strategic-corporals-future-battlefield>.

<sup>41</sup> Walter Dorn and Michael Varey, "Fatally Flawed: The Rise and Demise of the 'Three-Block War' Concept in Canada," *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis* 63, no. 4 (December 2008): 970.

tactical level, and the newly-chartered CDA did not modernize its philosophy on how CAF officers were educated.

In a similar vein, as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan progressed, tactical-level leaders noted that junior leaders were required to reconcile tactical decisions with strategic objectives in order to succeed.<sup>42</sup> This broader understanding of strategic level concepts could only be developed through a commitment to career-long learning.<sup>43</sup> For an officer, this translates into seeking opportunities to attend higher-level academic education in order to gain analytical skills and knowledge outside of their service, and exposure to current administrative and operational concepts to develop their military skills. As noted in the description of the OPDM, specifically DP2 and 3, the higher-level academic education and exposure to joint and operational level concepts are limited to Majors selected to attend JCSP, and not actively encouraged or provided at an earlier point. This can be considered the first missed opportunity for officer professional development as the current OPDM, the CDA and CAF did not consider potential demands of the evolving operating environment that would be placed on officers and adopted a system designed decades earlier to meet the demands of a bygone era.

## **THE FUTURE – DEMANDS OF THE PAN-DOMAIN**

In 2017, the Government of Canada (GoC) released *Strong, Secured, Engaged Canada's Defence Policy* (SSE), which described the global defence environment, highlighting critical emerging geopolitical trends and the changing nature of conflict.<sup>44</sup> The policy provided a framework for the CAF on their future roles in defence of Canada and expeditionary operations

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<sup>42</sup> T.M. Scott, "Enhancing the Future Strategic Corporal" (Quantico, Virginia, Marine Corps University, 2006).

<sup>43</sup> Williamson Murray, "Innovation: Past and Future," in *Military Innovation in the Interwar Period*, ed. Williamson R. Murray and Allan R. Millett, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 327.

<sup>44</sup> Canada and Ministère de la défense nationale, *Strong, Secure, Engaged - Canada's Defence Policy*, 2017.

in broad terms. Seizing on SSE, Commander Canadian Joint Operation Command (Comd CJOC) penned a series of letters, *How We Fight*, challenging members of the CAF to rethink how the CAF would address the new operating environment. The letters provided points to reflect on, and significant themes throughout included: the development of leaders through a re-envisioned approach to PME which focusses on tomorrow's conflict and the enhancement of critical thinking skillsets; refinement of Joint CAF training to reflect the current environment, and; 'pushing power to the edge' in order to capitalize on well-trained, educated, and disciplined junior leaders making decisions at the tactical level.<sup>45</sup> These discussions informed the *Pan-Domain Force Employment Concept* (PFEC), a framework for how the military will respond to threats within the current and future operating environment.<sup>46</sup> PFEC further refines the conceptual operating environment, introducing 'competition' to the spectrum of conflict, and expanding the number of domains to include space, cyber, and information in which operations will occur. The operating environment will present complex problems requiring the incorporation of rapidly evolving technology, a revitalized understanding of joint operations, and insight into how the CAF and its capabilities fit into the GoC's strategies. It is this paradigm that drives the need for sweeping changes of the OPDM, specifically DPs 2 and 3.

As the nature of conflict evolves and places a higher demand on an officer's cognitive abilities, the OPDM in its current form is nearing the end of its lifespan. This presents an excellent opportunity to create a modern system with an emphasis on career-long PME, one that can provide the military expertise and academic skillsets required to analyze problems and find solutions in the Pan-Domain context. To capitalize on this opportunity, an official review board

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<sup>45</sup> Mike Rouleau, "How We Fight," February 10, 2019.7.

<sup>46</sup> Department of National Defence, *Pan Domain Force Employment Concept: Prevailing in an Uncertain World* (DND Canada, 2020), 4.

should be ordered, but as illustrated in this paper, successful implementation of the results is not guaranteed. In place of an official review, I will propose several recommendations that could potentially extend the life of the current model.

My first recommendation is the creation of a standalone CAF educational philosophy, similar to *Duty with Honour*. This philosophy would highlight the necessity of pursuing development in both military and academic realms throughout one's career, in order to obtain the skillsets required to meet the challenges posed in PFEC. The philosophy would be the basis for creating a CAF-wide shift in mindset towards the “anticipate, adapt, act” identified in SSE.<sup>47</sup> Similar philosophies can be found in use by our allies; for example, the United States Marine Corps recently published *Learning*, a formalization of the learning culture of the Marine Corps.<sup>48</sup> The creation and adoption of such a philosophy would provide the foundation for the revamped OPDM and signal to both the GoC and allies alike, the CAF commitment to its role in the Pan-Domain environment.

My second recommendation concerns the timing and content of courses required by all officers in the CAF. As illustrated in PFEC, the rate at which the operating environment evolves requires a PME system that provides necessary base-level knowledge early in a career, as a stepping stone for further development. To accomplish this, CAFJODs would be relocated to DP1 and condensed into a 2-week period based on current time estimates to be completed before the commencement of DP2. Within DP2, a course similar to the Army Operations Course, but with a larger emphasis on joint-operations in a pan-domain context, should be developed and made mandatory for all officers. This would prove useful on several fronts, creating a detailed understanding of joint operations at a junior officer level and prepare officers for employment in

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<sup>47</sup> Canada and Ministère de la défense nationale, *Strong, Secure, Engaged - Canada's Defence Policy*. 63.

<sup>48</sup> USMC, *MCDP 7 Learning* (Washington, DC: Department of the Navy, 2020).

higher-level headquarters. The course would be attended in the middle of DP 2 as officers will have gained enough relevant experience to speak confidently concerning their trade. With the introduction of joint planning during DP 2, DP 3—and specifically JCSP—can shift its focus from an introduction to joint operations and planning to covering advanced concepts focussed on current topics.<sup>49</sup> These topics would develop the analytical skillset to support the spectrum of military operations described in the PFEC and future iterations. Attendance to JCSP would require the officer to possess sub-unit command or equivalent (experiential learning) and possess graduate-level education.

My third recommendation concerns academic education and its role within the OPDM. To reinforce the recommended philosophy, officers must be continually undertaking formal academic education, with a view to all officers attending a civilian institution for graduate-level studies.<sup>50</sup> This would include cancelling the MDS program at CFC and replacing it with graduate-level programs at universities within Canada, in order for officers to be exposed to a broader perspective on topics. This “breather” would allow officers to focus on developing cognitive skillsets in a setting where rank and experience do not matter and would provide the opportunity to examine topics outside of their comfort zone in order to grow intellectually. A similar approach was championed by General Petraeus, who advocated for the expansion of the External Placement (Academic) Program for the US Army.<sup>51</sup> Further, divorcing academic education from professional military education would ease the tension between achieving the standard required for graduate-level studies and developing the required military knowledge at

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<sup>49</sup> “Professional Military Education: What Is It Good For? | RealClearDefense,” accessed April 1, 2020, <http://www.realcleardefense.com>

<sup>50</sup> Rouleau, “How We Fight,” February 10, 2019.

<sup>51</sup> David H. Petraeus, “Beyond the Cloister,” *The American Interest* (blog), July 1, 2007, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2007/07/01/beyond-the-cloister>.

staff college.<sup>52,53</sup> The timing of the graduate-level civilian education is recommended to be moved from DP 3 to DP 2 and be required prior to DP 2s completion. The shift in timing would reduce the period between undergraduate and graduate-level courses from the current average of 12-15 years to a potential of 6-8 year period and continue to build on prior academic skillsets before they atrophy.<sup>54</sup>

My final recommendation concerns the quality of instruction. The adage of “those who can, do; those who cannot, teach” must be continually fought against in the CAF. Institutions charged with delivering PME to leaders of all ranks should be provided with the resources required to achieve the expected standard. This would include the allocation as instructors of experienced officers who were previously successful in leadership or staff roles and have the personality traits needed to teach and mentor; this was noted by BGen (Retired) Thornhill as being essential in the production of officers with the skills necessary to meet the challenges posed in PFEC.<sup>55</sup> This means that the service L1s must change their mindset and view PME institutions as a posting priority for their identified future General and Flag officer candidates, rather than as a hindrance to a high-flyer’s career. The advantages of such a PME talent pool would manifest in multiple ways. First, the curriculum would be continually scrutinized and updated against the current operational knowledge and experience of high-performing instructors, meaning their expertise would be leveraged to develop best practices. Second, the opportunity for expert professional mentorship would be available to a broader audience in an educational setting, rather than being reserved for select in-branch or in-service mentees. Student

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<sup>52</sup> “Professional Education and Military Learning in the 21st Century,” War on the Rocks, July 25, 2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/07/approaching-a-fork-in-the-road-professional-education-and-military-learning/>.

<sup>53</sup> Ashley Gleiman and Jeff Zacharakis, “Continuing Professional Education in the Military,” *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 2016, no. 151 (September 2016): 81–90.

<sup>54</sup> Department of National Defence, “Professional Development for Officers.”

<sup>55</sup> “To Produce Strategists, Focus on Staffing Senior Leaders,” War on the Rocks, July 20, 2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/07/to-produce-strategists-focus-on-staffing-senior-leaders/>.

officers would be exposed to talented mentors from the other services, and the use of high-performing officers for instruction and curriculum development would raise the quality of officers produced by each PME institution.

These four recommendations above will not solve the issues of the OPDM and its ability to produce officers who are prepared to meet the challenges presented in PFEC but provide a tactical-level view of potential improvements. Ultimately, a comprehensive review is required to provide a holistic approach to solve this complex issue.

## CONCLUSION

The development of an OPDM within the CAF has been a long and challenging process. Despite thorough examinations and sound recommendations being made on how to best create and adapt professional development models that address future threats while remaining flexible in its approach to PME, the CAF has not accepted these proposed changes promptly. Instead of seizing the initiative and proactively adopting a new model, the CAF has waited until the situation has been forced to change from outside the institution, as noted above, with unification and the Somalia affair. In both cases, that CAF reacted in haste to adopt a model designed to fight past wars. The CAF is once again at a crossroads with regard to OPDM. It can continue to use the system designed by MGen Rowley in 1970, adopted in 2003 and focused on past conflicts, or it can re-evaluate and rebuild its system to meet the requirements of future conflicts. SSE, *How We Fight*, and PFEC have now presented the opportunity to seize the initiative once again, and the CAF must act quickly, or be prepared to concede its PME advantage to Canada's competitors.

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