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## 1 CANADIAN DIVISION: STRUCTURED FOR HISTORICAL REASONS OR EFFECTIVENESS?

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**Service Paper**

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## **1 CANADIAN DIVISION: STRUCTURED FOR HISTORICAL REASONS OR EFFECTIVENESS?**

### **AIM**

1. The aim of this service paper is to analyze and determine whether or not the organizational structure of 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division (1 CAN DIV) is suited to meet its operational mandate. In order to do so, the organizational structure model which 1 CAN DIV uses will be compared and contrasted against another commonly used model. Additionally, the operational output of the division will be analyzed to ensure that its structure is effectively supporting its mandate.

### **INTRODUCTION**

2. 1 CAN DIV was first established during the First World War and has since then gone through several iterations, including disbandment and reactivation during the Second World War, Korean War, and the Cold War. The current model of 1 CAN DIV was re-established in 2010 by General W. Natynczyk, replacing the Canadian Forces Joint Headquarters. In April 2015, 1 CAN DIV was transferred from the Canadian Army to the Canadian Joint Operations Command with its four primary mission sets where are:

- a. The Disaster Assistance Relief Team (DART);
- b. Non-combatative Evacuation Team (NEO);
- c. National Command Element (NCE); and

d. Full-spectrum Operations (FSO).<sup>1</sup>

3. Despite the change in its primary missions gradually over time, 1 CAN DIV's structure has essentially remained unchanged since its inception in that the unit uses a continental staff structure as shown in figure 1.

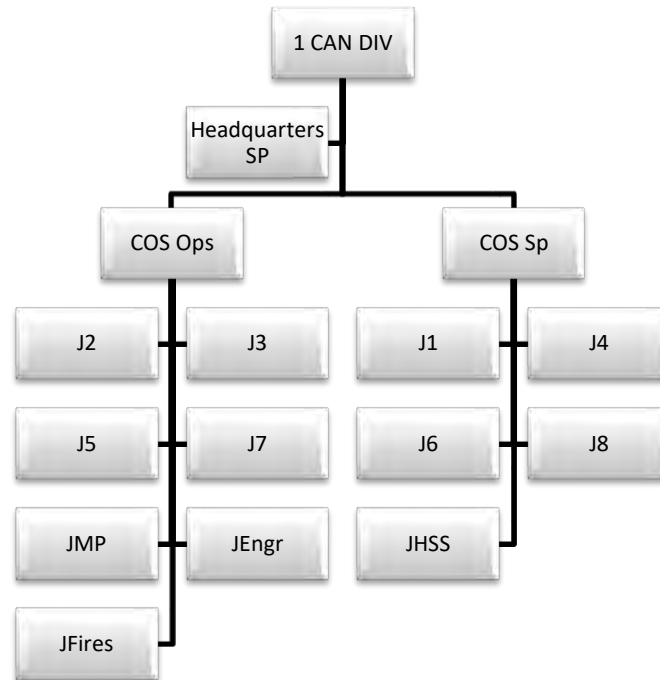


Figure 1 – Basic 1 CAN DIV Structure<sup>2</sup>

## DISCUSSION

4. As discussed, 1 CAN DIV's structure is based on the continental staff system, which is widely used for formation-level headquarters world-wide. However, the significant difference between these formations and 1 CAN DIV is that 1 CAN DIV has

<sup>1</sup> Government of Canada, "1st Canadian Division Headquarters," Last accessed 23 October 2019. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/conduct/1-canadian-division.html>

<sup>2</sup> Gregory Canuel, email to Scott McCarthy, dated October 2, 2019.

no subordinate units or formations, and therefore, the division is the end of its command chain. Only when the division is deployed or is exercising in an FSO context does it have subordinate formations to command. As an example, during JOINTEX 1 CAN DIV exercises with three notional brigades subordinate to it – 1 each from Canada, the USA, and the UK.

5. In order to determine whether or not the organizational structure of 1 CAN DIV is meeting its mission, we must analyze its organizational goals and output against its organization structure.<sup>3</sup> The division's organizational goals are its mission sets listed above. Its organizational structure as already mentioned as well as that of the continental staff system. What is not found in 1 CAN DIV's structure are permanent positions for members of the three other mission sets. Therefore, it is concluded that 100% of all members assigned to the DART, NEO, and NCE are secondary duties. This structure is known as a matrix structure when discussing organizational theory. The diagram below depicts this theory. In the context of 1 CAN DIV, the various roles across the horizontal axis are the various J-staff (J1, J2, etc...), and the product line across the vertical axis are the mission sets.

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<sup>3</sup>Gareth R. Jones, *Organizational Theory, Design, and Change Sixth Edition* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall), 18

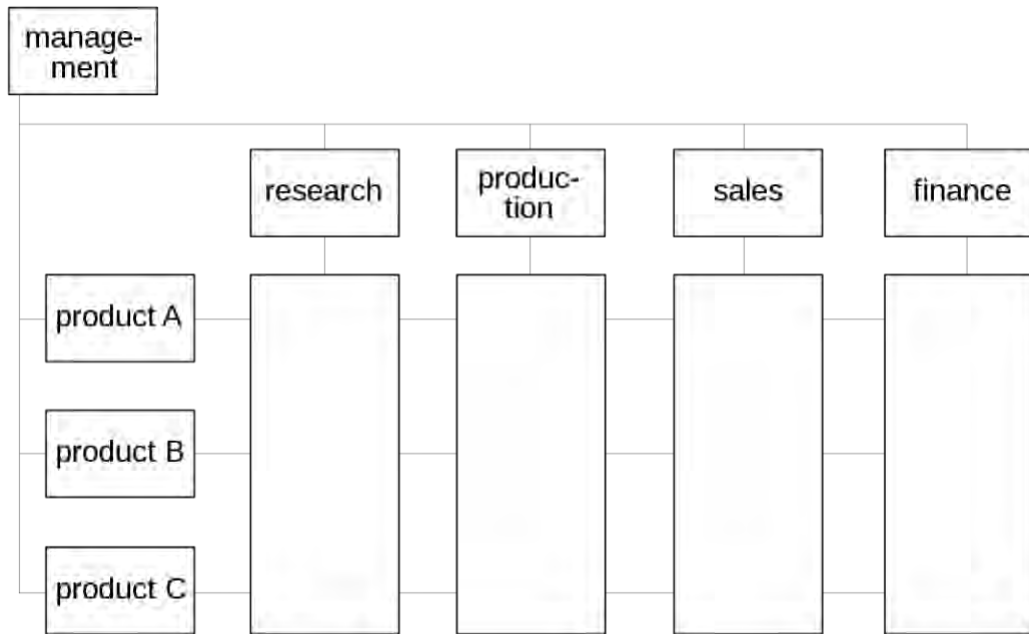


Figure 2 – The Matrix Model Example<sup>4</sup>

6. This model has several disadvantages, which are affecting 1 CAN DIV. The primary is that “the lack of clearly defined hierarchy of authority can lead to conflict between functions and product teams over the use of resources.” This disadvantage is highly possible and likely evident within the division.<sup>5</sup> For example, a Major within the J2 Branch may be assigned as J2 NEO; however, their use for an upcoming Exercise READY ANGLE can be contested between their Branch Head and the NEO Commanding Officer (CO). Both “bosses” of the Major may very-well have legitimate reasons why said member should or should not attend the exercise, and ultimately a command decision would have to be made if both “bosses” are not willing to

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid* 170

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid* 169

compromise. The secondary impacts of this are lost productivity, trust, and decreased trust between colleagues.

7. Another disadvantage of this structure is the loss in coordination amongst the team members.<sup>6</sup> Since the NCE team members do not work together daily, the coordination between themselves for NCE-related issues deteriorates over time as team members have less and less interaction with each other. This lack of coordination further deteriorates any institutional progress, such as lessons learned or the development of new Standard Operating Procedures. Ultimately, the NCE “institution” stagnates as there are no permanent members working on improving it, and continuously members are feeling like they are starting from the beginning whenever the organization is deployed for an operation or exercise.

8. The final disadvantage of the Matrix Model is that “the matrix lacks a control structure that allows employees to develop stable expectations of each other.”<sup>7</sup> Essentially, what is being said is that within the matrix structure, for example, DART team members will not be able to develop the relationships and expectations of each other. This disadvantage is highly worrisome during a deployment as time is always of the essence and lives are at risk. Therefore, every second that the staff is trying to understand what CO DART is saying to them is a second lost, which could be used to save lives or repair infrastructure. Since these members do not work together daily, it is

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<sup>6</sup> Pamela S. Tolbert and Richard H. Hall, *Organizations Structures, Processes, and Outcomes* (New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall), 54.

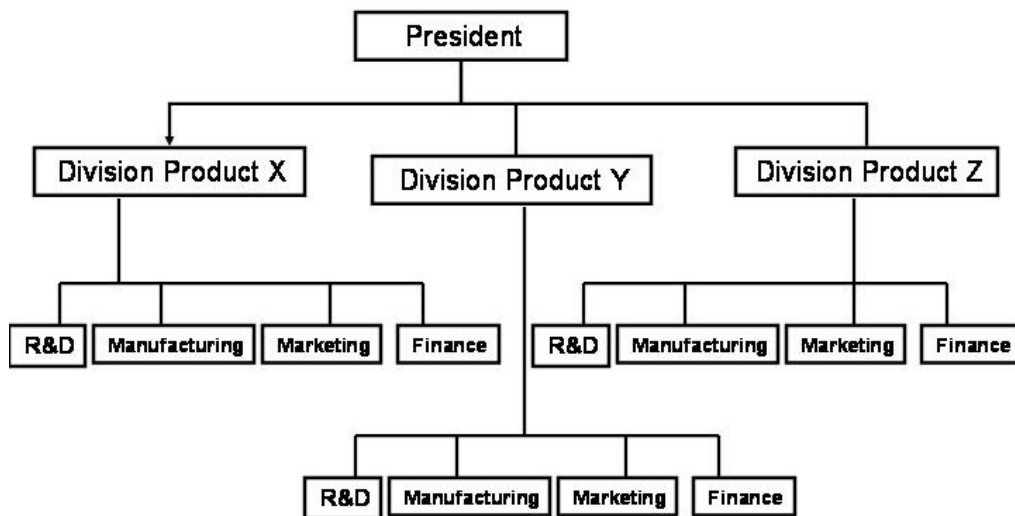
<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*



difficult for team members to have a full understanding of the CO's intent and implied tasks when it possible that it is the first time that they have worked with this person.

9. These disadvantages, however, are offset by several advantages which the model affords. The cross-pollination of staff from various branches breaks down the barriers between the different branches as well as opens up communication between these branches. The model efficiently uses specialized skills especially when there is a lack of those personnel. Finally, the model enables ideas and lessons learned flow freely between the various mission sets. However, these advantages need to be compared to those of the other model to be discussed.<sup>8</sup>

10. Often compared as a contrast to the Matrix Model is the Product Division Model. This model emphasizes the operational output through effective use of resources, mainly personnel, vice the highly efficient Matrix Model. The following diagram shows the organizational structure of a company based on this model.



<sup>8</sup> *Ibid* 56.

### Figure 3 – The Product Division Example<sup>9</sup>

11. This Product Division Model has several advantages, which would be of benefit to 1 CAN DIV if the division used this structure. The first is increased organizational effectiveness.<sup>10</sup> The CAF aims to be as effective as possible with the resources allocated to it. Furthermore, this statement is even more critical for high-readiness units whose *raison d'être* is to be operationally effective at short notice. 1 CAN DIV would be able to take advantage of this change by having task forces already established, commanded, and ready to deploy even faster than currently due to this increased effectiveness.

12. The following advantage of this model is increased control, in that the division head has complete control over its subordinates. They can dictate the operational tempo and absence of their team members.<sup>11</sup> In terms of 1 CAN DIV, this would mean increased control for the mission COs. The CO would have actual control over their entire teams' day-to-day vice on an ad-hoc basis. This increased control would allow them to assign priorities for training, administration, and implementation of lessons learned daily vice rarely as currently seen. No longer would these missions be filled as a secondary duty and at times, positions filled for deployments with members who have not trained with its Task Force. As an example, during Operation RENAISSANCE 15-01 (NEPAL), the deployed DART J4 was never a DART member; they just happened to be available at that specific time. The actual DART J4 was authorized leave without consideration or

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 58

<sup>10</sup> Gareth R. Jones, *Organizational Theory, Design, and Change Sixth Edition* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall), 157.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid* 159.

input from the DART CO. With the Product Division Model, the DART CO will be the sole person accepting the risk of allowing their personnel to be away outside of standard block periods or away for career courses.

13. The third advantage is the potential for skill specialization and growth. With this model, members stay within their division and learn multiple aspects of the division's roles and responsibilities. They can establish solid relationships with outside stakeholders and ultimately can assist with the success of the division through multiple avenues.<sup>12</sup> In terms of 1 CAN DIV, this advantage would allow its members to solely focus on their specific function within DART, NEO, NCE, or FSO. For example, members of the NEO team would be able to properly and thoroughly understand the role of NEO and establish relationships with supporting and supported organizations such as Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and the Canadian Forces Joint Operational Support Group. This is contrary to the current model where relationships are continually having to be built from the beginning due to staff rotation. This is, in-turn, a highly inefficient model to operate when the main task is to evacuate Canadians from a foreign country in distress.

14. Finally, this model allows for true specialization and development of its people. Since people stay with the division and specialize so deeply in it, the model enables the division to develop its future leaders and promote from within itself.<sup>13</sup> For 1 CAN DIV, it would be able to develop its personnel who will be more likely to return in the future to fill higher-ranked positions, which would lead to increased operational effectiveness and

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*

efficiency. As an example, the DART J3 (a Major’s position) who becomes highly specialized and knowledgeable of DART, and Humanitarian Operations is posted away but promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel. Then this person would make an ideal candidate to return to 1 CAN DIV and become the DART CO. No longer would the member have to learn their role thoroughly, understand how a DART deployment operates, nor establish relations with all the key personnel. Additionally, relationships with OGDs would already have been established as their turnover rates are much less than the CAF’s. Thus, the new CO is likely to know the key personnel within these organizations.

15. However, organizational structure is only one piece of this problem, and to review an organizational structure without taking into consideration the operational output would be a grave error. Therefore, the operational tempo of 1 CAN DIV needs to be analyzed to determine if a Matrix Model is correct after all. The division’s operational tempo comes in two general forms – exercises and deployments.

16. According to the “1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division” presentation given by Colonel Boucher on 19 August 2019, the division has a large number of exercises planned for 2019 and 2020. The following table breaks these exercises down by mission set.<sup>14</sup>

	2019	2020	Total	% of total
<b>NEO</b>	4	3	7	26%
<b>DART</b>	3	3	6	22%
<b>NCE</b>	2	3	5	19%
<b>FSO</b>	5	4	9	33%
<b>Total</b>	14	13	27	100%

<sup>14</sup> Colonel J. Boucher. “1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division” Lecture, Division Orientation Week. Kingston, Ontario, August 19, 2019.

Figure 4 – 1 CAN DIV Exercises 2019/2020<sup>15</sup>

17. The table shows that 1 CAN DIV's training is primarily focused around 75% of its mission set. However, based on the assumption that all of the mission tasks are of equal importance this is still lower than what should be expected. The table indicates a slight favouring of FSO training than the other missions. This suggests that Comd 1 CAN DIV is emphasizing FSO over the others. However, operations are what the Government of Canada calls on the CAF to conduct; therefore, it is vital to note actual operational deployments from the division.

18. From 2014 to 2016, during my tenure within 1 CAN DIV, there were three operational deployments out of Canada. The NCE, DART, and NEO each deployed once on Operations IMPACT, RENAISSANCE, and PROVISION respectively. Each of these deployments was successful; however, there were always organizational problems due to personnel availability or even a lack of an organizational structure – as in the case of Op MOBILE (NCE). Not once was there discussion of activating CONPLAN JUPITER for an FSO deployment. In summary, each of the disadvantages as discussed regarding the Matrix Model were present during a deployment.

## **CONCLUSION**

19. Overall, the organizational structure of 1 CAN DIV does meet its organizational mandate through the use of the Matrix Model, as shown through its successful deployment of mission. However, this structure is highly inefficient, as shown through

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*

the analysis of its disadvantages and analyzing the division's operational tempo statistics. By using a traditional staff model, the division is allocating 100% of its resources to only 25% of its mandate. Additionally, it is arguable that this mission had not been executed since the Korean War almost 70 years ago and the likelihood of another deployment of such nature is extremely low. On the other hand, the remaining mission sets remain not permanently resourced; however, they have actually deployed within those capacities in the recent past. Therefore, it is a conclusion that in order to increase the operational effectiveness of 1 CAN DIV, an organization structure based primarily around the three predominant missions is more effective.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

20. It is recommended that 1 CAN DIV change its organizational structure away from the traditional model, which is coupled with the Matrix Model to a model aligned with the three primary mission sets. This new structure would be based on a Product Division Model and would permanently allocate resources to the three mission sets while placing the secondary duty of FSO on the entire unit. An example of how this new structure would look is as follows:

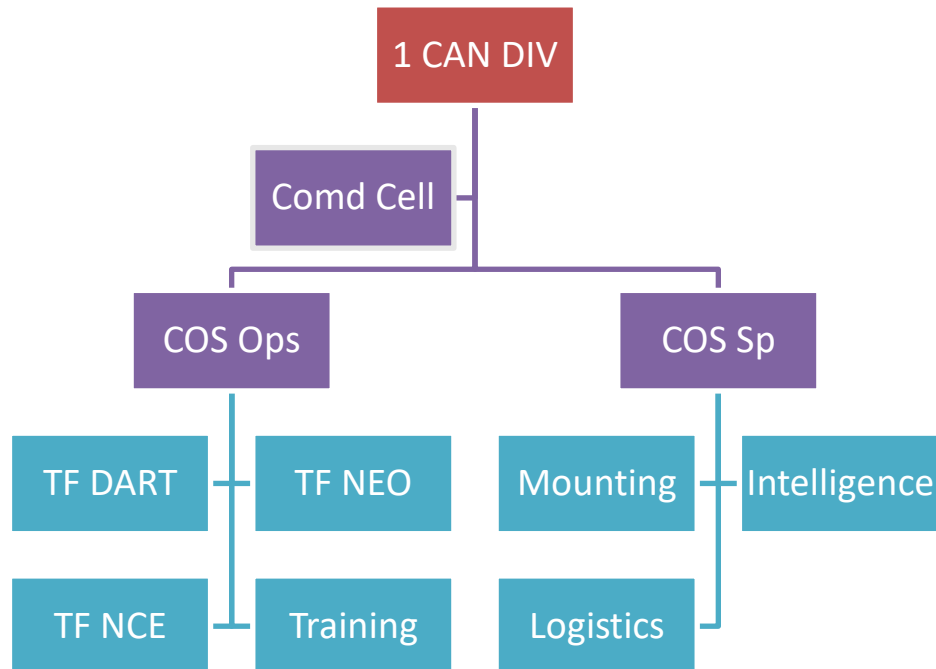


Figure 5 – Concept of New 1 CAN DIV Structure

21. The new organizational structure would still be divided between Chief of Staff – Operations (COS Ops) and Chief of Staff – Support (COS Sp); however, their roles would be slightly changed. COS Ops would oversee the three main Task Forces of 1 CAN DIV – DART, NEO, and NCE and their respective training. This permits COS Ops’ sole focus to ensure that the three subunits are prepared for their mandates. COS Sp will oversee 1 CAN DIV’s day-to-day work and all aspects of support to the TFs – logistics, deployment mounting, and Intelligence support, to name just a few.

22. Ultimately, this new structure would allow Comd 1 CAN DIV to ensure that their unit is operationally prepared for multiple operations simultaneously. All of the TFs would have permanent staffed positions ready to deploy at a moment’s notice, which is

the division's mandate to achieve. Therefore, this structure would enable 1 CAN DIV to achieve its mission more effectively than it currently does.



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