

Canadian
Forces
College

Collège
des
Forces
Canadiennes



WOMEN FOR CHANGE: BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP IN THE CAF

MAJOR RICKI-LEE RICHARD

JCSP 46

Service Paper

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed remain those of the author and do not represent Department of National Defence or Canadian Forces policy. This paper may not be used without written permission.

© 2020 Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada,
as represented by the Minister of National Defence.

PCEMI 46

Étude militaire

Avertissement

Les opinions exprimées n'engagent que leurs auteurs et ne reflètent aucunement des politiques du Ministère de la Défense nationale ou des Forces canadiennes. Ce papier ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation écrite.

© 2020 Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada,
représentée par le ministre de la Défense nationale.

CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE – COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 46 – PCEMI 46
2019 – 2020

SERVICE PAPER - ÉTUDE MILITAIRE

WOMEN FOR CHANGE: BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP IN THE CAF

Major Ricki-Lee Richard

“This paper was written by a candidate attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfillment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus contains facts and opinions which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defence. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied, except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence.”

Word Count: 2,303

« La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale. »

Nombre de mots : 2.303

WOMEN FOR CHANGE: BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP IN THE CAF

AIM

1. The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is attempting to employ 25% women by 2026, as set out in the Canadian Defence Policy of 2017, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*.¹ According to the Government of Canada September 2018 statistics report, women currently make up 15.7% of the Regular and Reserve members of the CAF.² The aim of this service paper is to demonstrate achievable milestones with the vision to increase the amount of women in the CAF by 9.3% over the next approximately six years.

INTRODUCTION

2. Women make-up approximately 50.3% of over 37 million people in Canada, and 47.7% of the labour force.³ This diversity in gender is not replicated within the CAF whereby women make up only 15.7%, leaving a 32% disparity. The causes for this disparity will be discussed herein, and methods to counter this issue will be recommended. It should, however, also be noted that amongst 27 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members, Canada is co-ranked 6th with 15.1% women in active duty, as per a 2016 NATO report.⁴ These statistics should in no way be seen as an excuse to cease diversity and inclusion efforts within recruitment in the CAF, but it is of relevance to understand how well Canada is doing, on the global stage, regarding the recruitment and retention of women in a military organization.

3. With a targeted goal to reach 25% women in a force of 101,500 people in the CAF by 2026, the CAF must recruit approximately 10,000 more women and continue retaining the quantity of women who are currently in the CAF (or add the replacement quantity of female retirees). To this end, there are a number of key factors which influence women's decision to potentially join the CAF, such as: job security, equal pay, medical and dental benefits, maintenance of a strong social identity and connections, the possibility of progressing upward through leadership and management positions, etc. Employment attraction is positive, as the amount of women recruited has increased from 11.4% in 2001, to 15.7% in 2019, however, the CAF is still 9.3% away from its 2026

¹ Government of Canada, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence), 2017.

² Government of Canada, "Statistics of women in the Canadian Armed Forces (Ottawa: Department of National Defence), 2018. Accessed online 20 Oct 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/women-in-the-forces/statistics.html>.

³ Catalyst, "Women in the Workforce - Canada: Quick Take". Accessed at 10 Oct 2019, <https://www.catalyst.org/research/women-in-the-workforce-canada/>.

⁴ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), *Summary of the National Reports of NATO Member and Partner Nations to the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives*. Accessed at 10 Oct 2019, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_11/20171122_2016_Summary_of_NRs_to_NCGP.pdf.

goal.⁵ This paper will delve into current attraction efforts made by the CAF, including general awareness campaigns, and make recommendations to better recruiting efforts.

DISCUSSION

4. The CAF has increased its online presence in recruiting over the past years with technological advancements such as those related to Operation GENERATION, but has not maintained or increased its physical presence amongst Canadian communities. It could be argued that this is why Canadian women do not have a desire to join the CAF, as they have not made a face-to-face or a sincere connection with the CAF within their community, thus not maintaining or increasing the general awareness of the CAF at large. A study by the Earncliffe Strategy Group stated that 83% of women interviewed said that they would not consider joining the CAF.⁶ The reasons stated were due to “distance from family and friends, the perception that women may need to choose between careers and family and *the perception that CAF members are not well-treated* [emphasis added] and may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder after leaving the military”.⁷ Though some of the concerns are legitimate, if the women interviewed were to participate in a program similar to the Women In Force (pilot) Programs (WFP) that were run in 2017, perhaps the perceptions of those interviewed would have been better informed. Participants would have had the opportunity to speak directly with the CAF staff (mostly women) who ran the program for a more realistic insight of what working women in the CAF experienced. The WFP was aimed at providing Canadian women who were eligible to apply for employment with the CAF a realistic, hands-on experience of what day-to-day life is like (for a plethora of different trades) in the CAF, as well as what physical requirements would be required when doing things such as the (FORCE) physical fitness test.⁸

5. One of the issues which may be contributing to the negative perception of women in the CAF being ill-treated, as per the Earncliffe study, is related to the Deschamps report on the CAF in 2014-2015. Within the Deschamps report, a number of issues concerning sexual misconduct, harassment and assault within the CAF were raised. The recommendations for improvement were a “cultural change, *improving the integration of women into the organization* [emphasis added], rebuilding the trust of members in the chain of command, and reducing the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual

⁵ Government of Canada, “Women in the Canadian Armed Forces”, *Backgrounder* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence). Accessed at 21 Oct 2019, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/news/article.page?doc=women-in-the-canadian-armed-forces/izkjzue>.

⁶ Government of Canada, “On the Road to Greater Representation of Women in the CAF” (Ottawa: Department of National Defence). Accessed at 21 Oct 2019, <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/news-publications/national-news-details-no-menu.page?doc=on-the-road-to-greater-representation-of-women-in-the-caf/j0y9nimx>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ R.A. Richard, “Looking Back: Women in Force Pilot Program 2017” (Ottawa: Canadian Forces Logistics Association). Accessed at 23 Oct 2019, <https://www.cfla-alfc.org/news/looking-back-women-in-force-pilot-program-2017/>.

assault”.⁹ With this in mind, it would require women joining the CAF to have the capacity for more women to be promoted into leadership roles, to help invoke a cultural change and promote a better working environment for women, as well as other diverse groups. The Canadian Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) issued Operation HONOUR in response to the recommendations made by the Deschamps report. The Operation HONOUR mission is “To eliminate harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour within the CAF”.¹⁰ This operation sees all CAF members demonstrate integrity to act appropriately (in-line with Canadian societal and CAF values), CAF senior leadership to ensure all investigations into allegations are completed promptly, and that swift and decisive action is taken against confirmed offenders. There were also a number of other tools which were implemented, such as the Sexual Misconduct Response Centre, to ensure victims are well taken care of, without fear to report or fear of reprisal. The acknowledgement of a problem, after the Deschamps report, and the corrective action implemented with Operation HONOUR, needs to be better highlighted to the Canadian public to ensure that those who question the integrity of the CAF understand the steps which have been taken to rectify this problem. Current messaging is done through the CDS, who is a white, male and not as relatable to possible young female recruits, and via bureaucratic reporting which also does not resonate with youth. No one could highlight the improvements made better than female CAF members, directly to the public.

6. As the CAF continues efforts to attract female recruits, there remains an issue of whether or not the training system has the capacity for the throughput of recruits as well as whether the CAF can retain them until past the point of achieving their Occupational Functional Point (OFP).¹¹ As a goal in the 2019-2020 Departmental Plan (departmental result 3.1), the CAF intends to increase throughput of students at the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School (CFLRS) and decrease the amount of time before recruits are trained to their OFP level within their respective trades.¹² Whether or not these goals were achieved is still unclear. If these two goals are achieved, and as previously noted recruitment of women into the CAF continues to rise, this will theoretically enable recruits to get to work quicker, subsequently increasing levels of satisfaction.

7. With the present-day battlefield evolving away from traditional war fighting and toward domains such as cyber and space, it is important for the CAF to stay ahead of the curve by recruiting those with special skill sets in these areas. With an increased amount of women completing degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering and

⁹ M. Deschamps, *External Review in Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, External Review Authority. Accessed at 22 Oct 2019, <file:///C:/Users/Richard.RL/Downloads/era-final-report-april-20-2015-eng.pdf>.

¹⁰ Government of Canada, *CDS Op Order – Op HONOUR* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence). Accessed at 22 Oct 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/conflict-misconduct/operation-honour/orders-policies-directives/cds-operation-order.html>.

¹¹ Government of Canada, *Joint CDS/DM Directive: Operation GENERATION* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2018), 5.

¹² Department of National Defence, *Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces 2019-20 – Departmental Plan* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence). Accessed online 22 Oct 2019, [file:///C:/Users/Richard.RL/Downloads/D3-37-2019-eng%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Richard.RL/Downloads/D3-37-2019-eng%20(1).pdf).

mathematics (STEM), women with such special skill sets are increasingly available in Canadian society, and thus also available to join the CAF.¹³ As STEM-related studies continues to attract women, it is important that the CAF also attract these women early, so as to ensure a competitive advantage or, at a minimum, an even playing field, with others competing for these individuals in industry. The CAF should aim to either recruit, or at the very least show a presence and provide information, at high schools as students make their choice to begin an undergraduate degree. As the CAF has limited resources dedicated to recruiting, and Canada is such a vast country, it is important to leverage the women who are already in the CAF and residing on or near bases across the country in order to conduct community outreach and demonstrate a physical presence.

8. One aim with respect to the CAF is to develop general awareness of the CAF as an employment opportunity. It is therefore of utmost importance to develop long-lasting social connections, especially with communities that do not already have a strong military presence. Operation GENERATION is a new online information and recruiting tool which compliments more traditional recruiting methods in the CAF.¹⁴ It is a great online tool for those who have already developed an interest in the CAF and have considered employment with the CAF. However, the online tool performs less than effectively for an audience without a general level of awareness of the CAF. The intent to recruit women, or anyone, into the CAF should be focussed on those who are unaware of the CAF as a possible employment option, as opposed to those who are already aware of the CAF and its possibilities. With the current community outreach program, there is insufficient dispersion of CAF resources to reach most communities, especially in the physical sense. If the CAF wants to garner more attraction of women to the CAF, there must be more face-to-face, social interactions with eligible Canadian women within their respective communities. There is also a requirement to have more awareness from the perspective of social media and other advertising efforts, which could be better highlighted with an effective Public Affairs information awareness campaign (i.e., online ads with popularly used platforms such as YouTube, Amazon, Facebook, etc., and ads at popular events such as National Hockey League and Major League Baseball games).

9. A program such as the Women in Force Program (WFP) has the potential to be scaled to the resources available on each major Canadian Forces Base (CFB), it can be scaled in length (to work within potentially restricted budgets) by prioritizing which elements of the program are presented to candidates, and it can be run at whatever time of year works best with a respective CFB's operational tempo. The WFP pilot programs, specifically those run at CFB Borden in the late summer and fall of 2017, saw 59 candidates go through the programs and, since then, saw 9 candidates join the Regular Force and 3 join the Reserve Force as of the fall of 2019.¹⁵ With 20% of candidates joining the CAF within two years of the program, it should be considered a success and

¹³ M. Turcotte, *Women and Education*, Statistics Canada. Accessed online 22 Oct 2019, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11542-eng.pdf?st=PEB1ifsk>.

¹⁴ Government of Canada, *Joint CDS/DM Directive: Operation GENERATION* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2018).

¹⁵ R.A. Richard, "Looking Back: Women in Force Pilot Program 2017" (Ottawa: Canadian Forces Logistics Association).

worthwhile endeavour to continue running in the future, however, since those pilot programs were run, there have been no additional programs. The CAF should conduct a longitudinal study on the WFPs run in 2017 and re-assess their value and efficacy in recruiting women, as well as their use as a community outreach tool which can help to attract younger generations of women.

CONCLUSION

10. This paper was aimed at demonstrating achievable milestones to increase the amount of women by 10,000 in the CAF over the next six years (approximately 1,667 female recruits per year). Throughout, it has been pointed out that the CAF needs to increase face-to-face interactions with the community in order to gain better awareness. The CAF, much like industry, is eager to recruit or hire people of diverse backgrounds directly out of undergraduate studies (such as STEM). Therefore, the CAF must ensure that awareness of the CAF as a possible employer is presented as early as possible to potential recruits, through high school job fairs and online or major event advertisement. Without proper awareness, the online information and recruiting tools will be inefficient. Awareness efforts can leverage those women who already serve and are already dispersed across the country, to have a significant impact at low cost. With increased production of trained recruits through the CFLRS and expedited entry onto trade training courses, job satisfaction should increase, and the retention of recruits through to OFP should no longer be a problem. After the 2015 Deschamps report, there is a compelling reason to highlight CAF improvements over the past number of years, and to do so from the perspective of a person that young women, possible recruits, can relate to. In the end, the answers lie in a strong Public Affairs campaign, and resources from CFRG and other major bases across Canada, to assist in awareness and recruiting pan-Canada.

RECOMMENDATION

11. The following recommendations are made, as achievable milestones, over the next 5-6 years, in order to effectively and efficiently increase the quantity of recruited women into the CAF:

- a. A two-tiered system organized for awareness and recruitment:
 - (1) General Awareness Campaign: The CAF should develop a program, to be run complimentary to Operation GENERATION, with the aim of women who are already in the CAF to attend high school career fairs and recruiting efforts to promote the recruitment of women into the Forces;
 - (2) Recruitment Information and Hands-on Program: All major Canadian Forces Bases across Canada should be provided a training plan to execute a Women in Force Program on their respective base, within their own base resources, at a time of their convenience (annually), and

(possibly) with subsidy from the Canadian Force Recruiting Group funding;

- b. The CAF Public Affairs community needs to establish a strategy to best report the CAF's improvements, as seen since the implementation of Operation HONOUR, to ensure that the Canadian public is aware of the gains made in terms of elimination of "harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour in the CAF".¹⁶ This message would best be portrayed by young, female CAF members who are the most relatable to those women the CAF is trying to attract ; and,
- c. In order to alleviate the issues related to the training system, all CAF training establishments should continually endeavour to decrease the amount of time spent on training and awaiting training, without decreasing the quality of training product delivered to students. Any creative solutions should be entertained, especially where redundancies in training are identified.

¹⁶ Government of Canada, *Joint CDS/DM Directive: Operation GENERATION* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2018).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Catalyst. “Women in the Workforce - Canada: Quick Take”, 28 May 2019. Accessed at 10 Oct 2019, <https://www.catalyst.org/research/women-in-the-workforce-canada/>.

Deschamps, M. *External Review in Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*. External Review Authority. Accessed at 22 Oct 2019, https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/migration/assets/FORCES_Internet/docs/en/caf-community-support-services-harassment/era-final-report-april-20-2015-eng.pdf.

Department of National Defence. *Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces 2019-20 – Departmental Plan*. Ottawa: Department of National Defence. Accessed online 22 Oct 2019, http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2019/mdn-dnd/D3-37-2019-eng.pdf.

Degen, S. “Meeting Recruiting Targets of Women: Challenges of Attraction”. Toronto: Canadian Forces College. Accessed at 22 Oct 2019, <https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/papers/csc/csc45/sp/degen.pdf>.

Government of Canada. *CDS Op Order – Op HONOUR*. Ottawa: Department of National Defence. Accessed at 22 Oct 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/conflict-misconduct/operation-honour/orders-policies-directives/cds-operation-order.html>.

Government of Canada. *Joint CDS/DM Directive: Operation GENERATION*. Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2018, 5.

Government of Canada. “On the Road to Greater Representation of Women in the CAF”. Ottawa: Department of National Defence. Accessed at 21 Oct 2019, <http://www.army-armee.forces.gc.ca/en/news-publications/national-news-details-no-menu.page?doc=on-the-road-to-greater-representation-of-women-in-the-caf/j0y9nimx>.

Government of Canada. “Statistics of women in the Canadian Armed Forces”. Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2018. Accessed online 20 Oct 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/women-in-the-forces/statistics.html>.

Government of Canada. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada’s Defence Policy*. Ottawa: National Defence, 2017.

Government of Canada. “Women in the Canadian Armed Forces”. *Backgrounder*. Ottawa: Department of National Defence. Accessed at 21 Oct 2019,

<http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/news/article.page?doc=women-in-the-canadian-armed-forces/izkjqzeu>.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). *Summary of the National Reports of NATO Member and Partner Nations to the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives*. Brussels: NATO Headquarters. Accessed at 10 Oct 2019, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2017_11/20171122_2016_Summary_of_NRs_to_NCGP.pdf.

Richard, R.A. “Looking Back: Women In Force Pilot Program 2017”. Ottawa: Canadian Forces Logistics Association. Accessed at 23 Oct 2019, <https://www.cfla-alfc.org/news/looking-back-women-in-force-pilot-program-2017/>.

Turcotte, M. *Women and Education*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Accessed online 22 Oct 2019, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11542-eng.pdf?st=PEB1ifsk>.