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Family Support in the Canadian Armed Forces: A Vision for the Future

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**FAMILY SUPPORT IN THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES:
A VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

By Major Jennifer Campbell

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ABSTRACT

The Government of Canada has a moral obligation to provide support to military members and their families. This support ensures that military families are not unfairly disadvantaged compared to civilian families. Since the mid-1980s, support to Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) families has focused on the unique needs connected to relocation, separation and risk of injury or illness. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*, released in 2017, placed renewed emphasis on the importance of family support to the operational success of the CAF at home and abroad. A different approach is necessary moving forward if the Department of National Defence (DND), the CAF and other family support stakeholders hope to meet the evolving needs of modern families proactively.

Strategic foresight is a systematic and structured way of anticipating and planning for uncertainty. Militaries have a long history of using strategic foresight to think critically about future conflict; however, strategic foresight has never been applied to the domain of CAF military family support. This paper argues that DND/CAF should consider using strategic foresight to plan for CAF family support out to 2040. This paper uses the *Framework Foresight* method developed by Andy Hines and Peter C. Bishop at the University of Houston to explain how strategic foresight could be applied to CAF family support. The paper walks through the first steps of the framework – framing, scanning, forecasting and visioning – in detail and discusses possible approaches to steps 5 and 6 –planning and acting. The paper recommends that DND/CAF assemble an interdisciplinary team and consult both internal and external stakeholders for any strategic foresight work related to CAF family support.

The complexity and expense associated with policies and programs for such a diverse population are substantial. Family-focused scholars and practitioners need to remain alert to the evolving challenges and opportunities of military service and be prepared to conduct research, review policy options and actions, and be vocal about gaps.

— Elizabeth C. Coppola and Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth,
Understanding the Challenges and Meeting the Needs
of Military and Veteran Families, 2020

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

There are more than 100,000 members of the Canadian Armed Forces, and they all have two things in common. They have each sworn an oath of allegiance to the Crown, and they all have a family, of one form or another.¹ Families are a fundamental building block of modern society. Yet, in many ways, they stand in diametrical opposition to the concept of *service before self*, which is part of the foundation of the profession of arms in Canada.² Military family researchers have long characterized both families and the military as *greedy* institutions, competing for the limited energy and attention of the service member.³ While this may be an accurate description, the Department of National Defence (DND), the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), and other stakeholders have worked diligently over the past 30 years to reconcile the demands of the institution with the needs of members and their families. In 1998, the third report of the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs (SCONDVA) recognized that the Government of Canada (GoC) had a "moral commitment" to provide military members and their families with services to "ensure their financial, physical and

¹ Alternatively, some members may opt to make a solemn declaration. "Oaths of Allegiance Act, R.S.C.," § C O-1 (1985).

² Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-001, *Duty With Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy — Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2009), 10, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/duty-with-honour-2009.html>.

³ Mady W. Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," *Armed Forces & Society* 13, no. 1 (Fall 1986): 9–38.

spiritual wellbeing."⁴ In the last 5-10 years, the turn of phrase "military families are the strength behind the uniform" has come to be widely used to describe the unique connection between providing support to families and the ability of the CAF to conduct operations effectively.⁵ Essentially, the phrase succinctly articulates the idea that military members could not do their jobs without the support of their families. It was used multiple times in *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (SSE), which introduced three new family-specific initiatives and several other initiatives with indirect impacts for families.⁶

SSE envisions the CAF as a force comprised of well-supported members surrounded by resilient families.⁷ This paper will demonstrate that to fulfill that vision over a future horizon of 20 years, up to 2040, DND/CAF could utilize strategic foresight to comprehensively analyse how plausible futures may shape CAF family support requirements. The paper will provide an overview of the current state of CAF members, military families, and DND/CAF family support mechanisms to build a baseline understanding of the factors that affect family support in the CAF. Following a discussion of applicable sociological theories, the *Framework Foresight* methodology, developed by

⁴ House of Commons, "Moving Forward: A Strategic Plan for Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Forces" (Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs, October 1998), <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/36-1/NDVA/report-3/page-2>.

⁵ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Canada, 2017), 28; "About the Military Family Services Program," accessed January 23, 2021, <https://www.cafconnection.ca/National/About-Us/Military-Family-Services/About-the-Military-Family-Services-Program.aspx>.

⁶ Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy* (Ottawa: Canada, 2017), 29.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

Andy Hines and Peter C. Bishop, will be offered as means of holistically considering how CAF family support may need to evolve in the future.⁸

Origins of CAF Family Support

In the context of the Canadian military, the term *family support* can be broadly summarized as the cumulative efforts of DND/CAF and other family stakeholders to mitigate the effects of military service on CAF families. These efforts take various forms, including formal compensation and benefits, policies, programs and services. Some are managed and provided by DND/CAF, and others are provided by external organizations, public, private and not-for-profit. To provide the appropriate spectrum of family support, stakeholders and service providers must first have a solid understanding of the factors driving families' need for support. They must also understand how those needs are linked to military service. A recent emphasis on contemporary military family research has helped family support stakeholders answer some of these questions in the present context, and it is widely acknowledged that military families today "receive more support than ever before." However, provision of support has consistently lagged as families' needs have changed over time. There remains considerable work to be done if DND/CAF wishes to ensure that future family support efforts remain focused on the correct issues and proactively address the needs of families rather than continually being reactive to changing family and CAF circumstances.⁹

⁸ Andy Hines and Peter C. Bishop, *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight*, 2nd Edition, 2nd ed. (Houston, TX: Hinesight, 2015).

⁹ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, "On the Homefront: Assessing the Well-Being of Canada's Military Families in the New Millennium," November 2013, 82, <https://www.canada.ca/en/ombudsman-national-defence-forces/reports-news-statistics/investigative-reports/homefront.html>.

The idea that there are key differences between Canadian military families and their civilian counterparts lies at the root of military family support in Canada. In many ways, military families are not unlike all Canadian families; their basic needs are the same. They experience similar family-journey challenges such as adding members and potential family breakdown; however, military families also face a unique trio of military-journey challenges. These challenges were first identified in 1986 by military family researcher Mady Segal: frequent geographic relocation; frequent separation due to the operational demands; and, the inherent risk of injury/illness or death linked to members' unlimited liability to serve.¹⁰ These same characteristics were used by Pierre Daigle, the CAF Ombudsman, to categorize the key challenges of military family life in the 2013 report, *On the Homefront: Assessing the Well-being of Canada's Military Families in the New Millennium*.¹¹ None of these challenges are unique in and of themselves, but the combination sets military families apart from civilian families in Canada. Hence, the ultimate intent of CAF family support is to offer policies, programs, services and supports to CAF families to ensure that they are not unfairly disadvantaged by the service of the member compared to average Canadian families. CAF family

¹⁰ Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 16. Department of National Defence, "Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+" (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, September 2020), 9, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/MFS/GovernanceandAccountability/Documents/Governance%20Working%20Group/Services-for-Military-and-Veteran-Families-Strategic-Framework-2020+-FINAL-EN.pdf>; Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, "On the Homefront Update," 15–17. Canada, "National Defence Act, R.S.C., c. N-5," § 33 (1985), <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/N-5/page-7.html#h-375043>.

¹¹ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, "Progress Report on the Status of Recommendations - On the Homefront: Assessing the Well-Being of Canada's Military Families in the New Millennium," Government, Canada.ca, June 11, 2020, 16–17, <https://www.canada.ca/en/ombudsman-national-defence-forces/reports-news-statistics/investigative-reports/homefront.html>.

support should also not provide military families with an unfair advantage; it exists to help close gaps created by demands of military service on the family.

An explicit commitment by the Governments of Canada (GoC) to military members and their families underpins the provision of support to military families. This commitment has evolved over the past 30 years; understanding the context of that evolution is critical to any discussion on the future of military family support in Canada. The work to give greater voice to the experiences of military families in Canada began in 1984. A small group of military spouses, known as the Organizational Society of Spouses of Military Members (OSSOMM, pronounced "awesome"), came to together in Penhold, Alberta to discuss local military family concerns.¹² OSSOMM's requests for meetings with the base commander and space to meet on the base were initially denied, which led the group to take legal action against the Crown, arguing discrimination under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.¹³ The legal proceedings brought publicity to the challenges faced by military families, specifically the limited ability of military families to advocate on their own behalf. Around the same time, the Government of Canada (GoC) and DND/CAF studied the British and American family associations to determine a way ahead that would benefit both families and CAF.¹⁴ The combined result of these efforts was the establishment first of the Family Support Program, and eventually the stand up of Military Family Services, the creation in 1991 of not-for-profit Military

¹² Department of National Defence, "The Military Family Services Program: Retropective of a Military Family Legacy" (CFMWS, December 31, 2016), 1, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/MFS/Resources/MFRCs/Documents/2017%20Documents/Foundation%20documents/Retropective%20of%20a%20Military%20Family%20Legacy,%20Eng.pdf>.

¹³ Ibid., 2.

¹⁴ Ibid., 3.

Family Resource Centres (MFRCs), and the establishment of the Military Family Services Program (MFSP).¹⁵

In 2008, DND/CAF further articulated the commitment to family support in the CAF Family Covenant (Figure 1.1), which "honours military families and their contributions and cements the [CAF] partnership with families..."¹⁶ The publication of the covenant coincided with the expansion of the MFSP to serve a broader range of family members, including the families of Reserve Force (ResF) members, whom many family support mechanisms had previously overlooked. It was also the first use of the phrase "Strength Behind the Uniform."¹⁷ In 2012, the CAF Ombudsman undertook the systemic review that identified relocation, separation and risk as the primary challenges affecting military families. The report resulting report, *On the Homefront*, argued that "successfully supporting families must be understood as [a] critical 'no fail' requirement...for the [CAF]."¹⁸ It detailed 18 recommendations, primarily aimed at addressing issues related to the three key challenges, reinforcing the value of MFRCs and encouraging modernization of DND/CAF policies and procedures that impact military families.¹⁹ CAF leadership accepted all of the recommendations; however, as of June 2020, DND/CAF has only fully implemented eight recommendations and partially implemented eight others.²⁰ Two recommendations have not been implemented at all.

¹⁵ Ibid., 6.

¹⁶ Ibid., 21.

¹⁷ Ibid., 22.

¹⁸ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, "On the Homefront Update," 74.

¹⁹ Ibid., 74–88.

²⁰ Note the two recommendations listed as not implemented were "grandfathering for military family support policy changes" and a "formalized approach to provincial and territorial engagement"; the progress report indicates efforts related to these topics were discussed in SSE and the Ombudsman's Office will continue to monitor progress related to these recommendations. Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, "On the Homefront."

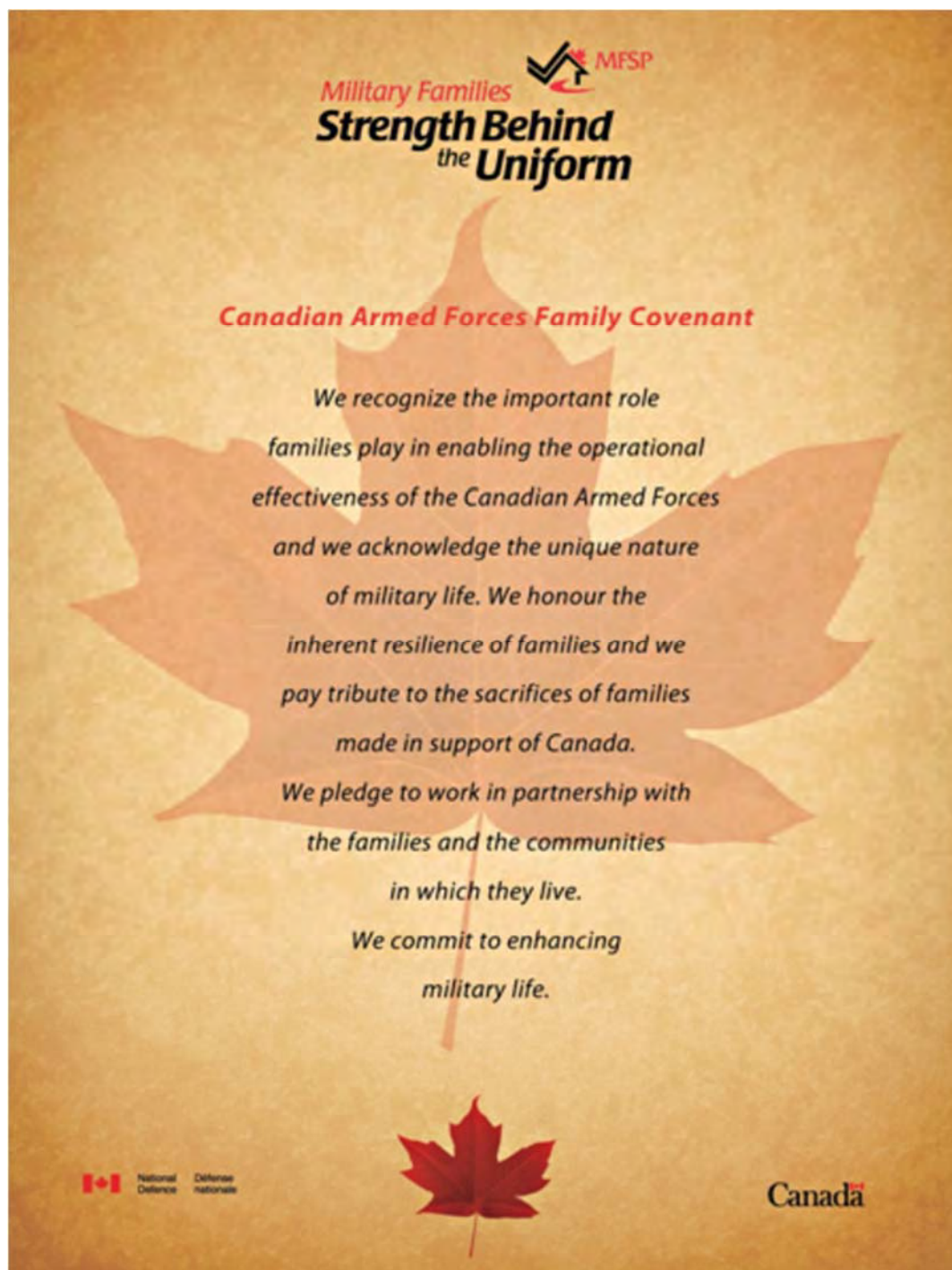


Figure 1.1 - CAF Family Covenant

Source: Military Family Service CAF Connection Website²¹

²¹ Department of National Defence, "CAF Family Covenant," Government, CAF Connection, accessed April 18, 2021, <https://www.cafconnection.ca/National/About-Us/Military-Family-Services/CAF-Family-Covenant.aspx>.

Most recently, SSE was released in 2017, 5 years after the Ombudsman's report. It states that "delivering on our commitments to our people *and their families* [emphasis added] is a sacred obligation..."²² With this statement, SSE reiterated the GoC's role in supporting military families. In addition to bringing renewed attention to personnel and families, SSE also directed three specific initiatives to improve military family services and support. SSE Initiative 24, the broadest of the family support initiatives, provided an additional \$6 million per year in funding to modernize the MFSP and MFRCs and directed the creation of a Comprehensive Military Family Plan (CMFP).²³ Part of the CMFP direction includes a requirement for DND/CAF to work with "federal, provincial and private sector partners to improve the coordination of services across provinces to ease the burden of moving."²⁴ This direction indicates that the GoC sees DND/CAF as the lead organization providing family support but recognizes that other organizations play vital roles. Ultimately, the commitments to families outlined in SSE emanate from more than 30 years of evolution in how the GoC and DND/CAF think about and provide family support.

CAF Family Support Needs Change Over Time

Over the same 30-year time horizon, the specific support needs of CAF families have also changed. While the three military-journey challenges previously discussed are always at the root of the unique needs of military families, specific needs have evolved and will continue to evolve in the future. Changes in the effects of military service on

²² Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 12.

²³ *Ibid.*, 108.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

families are linked to changes in the following three areas: changes in the nature of conflict, changes in the nature of the CAF, and changes in the nature of families.²⁵

The GoC has documented changes in the nature of conflict as a driver of change for military family support requirements multiple times. SCONDVA's 1998 report to parliament, *Moving Forward: A Strategic Plan for Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Armed Forces*, highlighted that despite the so-called *peace dividend* of the Cold War, the pace of operational deployments of the CAF increased throughout the 1990s.²⁶ Moreover, in places like Cyprus and Medak Pocket in Croatia, service members had faced conflict situations unlike anything seen since the Korean War in the 1950s.²⁷ A decade later, the 2008 *Canada First Defence Strategy* highlighted the rise of global terrorism and its connections to the CAF's involvement in Afghanistan.²⁸ The conflict in Afghanistan necessitated a shift in family support programs and services to address the emerging needs of families of the ill, injured and fallen as well as an increased demand for mental health services for families.²⁹ Ten years after that, SSE also identified the changing nature of conflict as a critical security trend likely to shape future CAF operations.³⁰ For example, SSE highlights the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda as part of changing nature of peace operations. WPS, a United Nations (UN) initiative,

²⁵ Elizabeth C Coppola and Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, "Understanding the Challenges and Meeting the Needs of Military and Veteran Families," *National Council on Family Relations: Research Policy Brief* 5, no. 1 (February 2020): 5.

²⁶ House of Commons, "Moving Forward: A Strategic Plan for Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Forces."

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Department of National Defence, "Canada First Defence Strategy," policies, February 19, 2013, 6, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/canada-first-defence-strategy-complete-document.html>.

²⁹ Ibid.; Department of National Defence, "Military Family Services Program: Retrospective," 21.

³⁰ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 49.

may impact family support requirements as the CAF works to ensure that women compromise 15% of the military force on any future UN peacekeeping missions.³¹

In addition to changes in the nature of conflict, changes in the nature and composition of the CAF may also impact family support requirements. Here too, there are historical examples. The SCONDVA report noted the significant fiscal restraint in the 1990s as especially problematic for families. Budget reductions and downsizing of the CAF caused remaining members to be overworked and underpaid and limited available funds for things like maintenance of military residential housing units (RHUs), all of which directly impacted families.³² Changes to the gender composition of the CAF have also previously played a role in the demand for family support. The Royal Military Colleges in Kingston, ON and St. Jean, QC admitted the first female officer cadets in 1980 (they graduated in 1984), and the CAF opened almost all occupations to women in 1989.³³ These changes roughly coincided with an increased emphasis on issues like childcare and maternity leave. For example, the first MFRCs were established in 1991 with a mandate to provide emergency, respite and casual childcare under the MFSP.³⁴

³¹ Ibid., 55. Global Affairs Canada, “Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations,” Government, GAC, February 21, 2017, https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_developpement-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/elsie_initiative-initiative_elsie.aspx?lang=eng.

³² House of Commons, “Moving Forward: A Strategic Plan for Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Forces.”

³³ The lone exception was service on board submarines, which opened to women in 2001 with the acquisition of the Victoria Class. Anna-Michelle Shewfelt, “End of Year One: What 5 of the First 32 Lady Cadets Had to Say & More,” RMC Club of Canada, *E-Veritas* (blog), accessed January 25, 2021, <https://everitas.rmclub.ca/end-of-year-one-what-5-of-the-first-32-lady-cadets-had-to-say-more/>. “Women in the CAF | Canadian Armed Forces,” Government, Forces.gc.ca, accessed January 25, 2021, <https://forces.ca/en/women-in-the-caf/>. “CBC News In Depth: Canada’s Submarines,” CBC, accessed March 30, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news2/background/cdnsubs/>.

³⁴ Department of National Defence, “Military Family Services Program: Retrospective,” 6; Department of National Defence, “Military Family Services Program - Parameters 4 Practice, 2nd Edition” (Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, December 2017), 17, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/MFS/ResourcesMFRCs/Documents/2017%20Documents/Parameters%204%20Practice/Parameters%204%20Practice%20E%20NEW%20DEC%202017.pdf>.

Less than a decade later, the SCONDVA report identified the fact that maternity leave did "not qualify, as time served, for the purposes of severance pay" in the CAF, even though it did in the public service (the policy was changed in light of the report).³⁵

Increasing the number of female service members highlighted specific challenges military families were facing and forced DND/CAF to address changing family support needs.

Finally, changes in families themselves impact the required nature of and need for family support. For example, at this same time as OSSOSM was advocating for the rights of military families, drastic changes were occurring in the roles of women in society and in their families. Women's participation in the labour force grew, the proportion of dual-earner families and dual-service couples increased, and marriage rates among junior military personnel rose.³⁶ These changes in CAF families drove demand for quality, affordable childcare. Since that time, this need has been met in part by MFRCs, although full-time childcare is still not a mandated MFRC service under the MFSP.³⁷ These changes meant that families faced additional challenges balancing their internal demands with the external demands of the CAF. Childcare challenges affect some families more than others. For example, single-parent families and dual-service couples may face additional challenges providing care for their children while upholding a demanding

³⁵ Department of National Defence, "Military Family Services Program: Retrospective," 5. House of Commons, "Moving Forward: A Strategic Plan for Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Forces."

³⁶ Donna Pickering, "Chapter 1 - Work-Life Conflict Among Military Personnel: Impact on Individual and Organizational Outcomes," in *The Homefront: Family Well-Being and Military Readiness*, ed. Sanela Durson, Samantha Urban, and Waylon H. Dean (Kingston, ON: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2018), 2. Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 13.

³⁷ Department of National Defence, "CF Child Care Status Update January 2013" (Ottawa, ON: CFMWS, January 2013), 5, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/MFS/FamilyResearch/Documents/CF%20Child%20Care%20Status%20Update%20January%202013%20Final%20EN.pdf>.

operational tempo; members in these groups are also more likely to consider release due to lack of childcare.³⁸ This reality has yet to prompt a fulsome, long-term solution to childcare challenges but has prompted local initiatives, led by MFRCs, to address the unmet needs of families.³⁹ It also prompted SCONDVA to propose Family Care Plan (FCP) to help members identify potential childcare challenges in advance.⁴⁰ These examples demonstrate how changing family demographics and dynamics can drive changes to the organizations that provide family support.

Over the past 30 years, changes in three areas have shaped the kind of family support needed by the military family community: change in the types of operations the CAF has engaged in; change in the structure and the composition of the force; and change in the dynamics and demographics of families. Recognition that family support is a vital operational enabler and the GoC's commitment to ensure military families are not unfairly disadvantaged by the member's service have both shaped the current family support landscape. However, to date, the vast majority of the work done by the DND/CAF and other family support stakeholders to address military family concerns has been reactive, or even retroactive, rather than proactive. Both families and DND/CAF are ever-evolving social institutions, and their respective needs will continue to change over time. If families are expected to continue to enable military operations, DND/CAF must

³⁸ Single-parent families make up 14% of CAF families with children. Dual-service couples make up 16% of CAF families with children. Lynda Manser, "State of Military Families in Canada: Issues Facing Regular Force Member and Their Families" (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, 2018), 10. Department of National Defence, "CF Child Care Status Update January 2013," 7.

³⁹ Most, but not all, MFRCs in Canada offer full-time, licensed childcare. Those centres that do offer licensed childcare do not receive any public funding for that purpose and costs must be recouped through other means, usually user fee, provincial grants and fundraising. Major Heather Reibin, "Improving Readiness: Operationalizing the Military Childcare Support Framework" (Master's Thesis, Toronto, ON, Canadian Forces College, 2020), 36, <https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/259/290/22/286/reibin.pdf>.

⁴⁰ Department of National Defence, "CF Child Care Status Update January 2013," 8.

be prepared to consider and address those evolving needs. Just as military leaders are frequently admonished for preparing to fight the last war, so too should family support stakeholders be cautious in their quest to modernize family support practices by addressing the challenges of yesterday's families in the context of future military service requirements.

Looking Towards the Future of CAF Family Support

DND/CAF has a vested interest in improving how family support is developed and delivered. In the past, major turning points in the timeline of CAF family support have been spurred on by external influences, such as the SCONDVA report and the Ombudsman's report.⁴¹ Utilizing strategic foresight to analyse CAF family support would allow DND/CAF to move beyond the common practice of considering only current and near-term challenges by looking further into the future. Hines and Bishop's *Framework Foresight* methodology provides a "systemic way to develop a start-to-finish future view of a...topic of interest and to explore its implications." The methodology walks users through a series of logical steps designed to avoid being overwhelmed by massive amounts of information. The process begins with a description and current assessment of a particular topic of interest, referred to as a *domain*. In this case, CAF family support. The next step in the framework is to scan the horizon of a set time period to identify possible changes in the domain to develop both a baseline and multiple alternative futures. Once possible futures have been identified, the framework offers a range of

⁴¹ The Ombudsman is not a fully external organization; however, the office operates at arms' length from the military CoC and reports are researched and written on the Ombudsman's own initiative. Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, "Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman," navigation page - organizational profile, Canada.ca, September 14, 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/ombudsman-national-defence-forces.html>.

analytical tools to help the user assess the implications of those futures. The goal at this stage is to highlight either strategic challenges to be mitigated or strategic opportunities to be exploited. The final step in the framework process is to set forth "leading indicators" that will help those monitoring the domain recognize moves towards or away from the baseline or alternate futures.⁴² Governments and militaries have been using strategic foresight for over 75 years to holistically consider how future uncertainties will shape various domains and to develop realistic plans to address future changes in those domains. Hines' and Bishop's methodology offers DND/CAF a concrete and well-tested means of thinking critically about the future of CAF family support and shift from reactively addressing families' needs to proactively meeting those needs.

Methodology

This paper aimed to determine how DND/CAF could ensure that members and families are "well-supported, diverse and resilient", the goal set forth in SSE.⁴³ SSE also highlighted how conflicts and the CAF are expected to change into the early 2030s; however, DND/CAF's historical efforts to provide family support have been largely reactive and driven by external stakeholders, such as the GoC and families themselves. A thematic analysis of CAF families and existing CAF family support was conducted to determine how changing families and a changing world could shape CAF family support needs of the future. Both qualitative and quantitative data were used to build picture of what CAF families and CAF family support look like and describe the key challenges faced by CAF families. Recent reports outlining the state and needs of CAF families such

⁴² Andy Hines and Peter C. Bishop, "Framework Foresight: Exploring Futures the Houston Way," *Futures* 51 (July 1, 2013): 32, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2013.05.002>.

⁴³ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 19.

as the Ombudsman’s report, *On The Homefront*, and MFS research including *The State of Military Families in Canada: Issues Facing Regular Force Members and their Families*, provided background information about the specific military family life challenges.⁴⁴ Qualitative and quantitative data about the CAF and CAF families was gathered from DND/CAF sources and DND/CAF sponsored research, such as summaries of the 2016 and 2019 Retention Surveys and the 2016 *Quality of Life Survey of Canadian Armed Forces Spouses*.⁴⁵ Independent sociological research on military families was also used to better understand how families cope with the challenges and risks of military life, *Family Systems and Ecological Perspective on the Impact of Deployment on Military Families* by Paley, Lester and Mogul, and *Community Social Organization and Military Families: Theoretical Perspective on Transitions, Contexts and Resilience*, by Mancini et al.⁴⁶ Review of independent research in particular, although almost exclusively based on American military families, helped inform the theoretical perspective of the paper presented in Chapter Four. Finally, DND/CAF and CFMWS policy and program, such as *The Mapping and Gaps Analysis of Services for Military Families Report*, information

⁴⁴ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update”; Manser, “State of Mil Families.”

⁴⁵ Polly Cheng et al., “The 2019 CAF Regular Force Retention Survey: Qualitative Analysis” (Ottawa, ON: Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis, December 30, 2019); Rebecca Lee, Emrah Eren, and Glen Budgell, “2016 CAF Retention Survey: Qualitative Analysis” (Ottawa, ON: Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis, May 2017); Edward Yeung, Evanya Musolino, and Emrah Eren, “The 2019 CAF Regular Force Retention Survey: Descriptive Analysis” (Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis, November 15, 2019). Zhigang Wang and Nicole Aitken, “Impacts of Military Lifestyle on Military Families: Results from the Quality of Life Survey of Canadian Armed Forces Spouses” (Ottawa, ON: Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis, March 2016).

⁴⁶ Blair Paley, Patricia Lester, and Catherine Mogil, “Family Systems and Ecological Perspectives on the Impact of Deployment on Military Families,” *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review* 16, no. 3 (September 2013): 245–65, <http://dx.doi.org.cfc.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s10567-013-0138-y>; Jay A. Mancini et al., “Community Social Organization and Military Families: Theoretical Perspectives on Transitions, Contexts, and Resilience,” *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 10, no. 3 (September 2018): 550–65, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12271>.

was consulted to determine the supports available to CAF families post-SSE.⁴⁷ Effort was made where possible, especially for quantitative data, to use the most recent information available. However, in some cases, older reports, such as the SCNDVA report from 1998, were used to demonstrate the long-standing nature of military family challenges.

Strategic foresight was selected as a possible solution to the problem of planning adequately for the future, given that it has been used elsewhere in DND/CAF to similar effect and is actively marketed by the GoC and a valuable policy development tool.⁴⁸ The specific strategic foresight methodology applied in Chapters Six and Seven, was informed by Hines' and Bishop's book *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight, 2nd Edition*.⁴⁹ Hines' and Bishop's methodology *Framework Foresight* was selected for use in this paper given that it is frequently used in academic settings; Hines and Bishop teach students at the undergraduate and graduate level, and their book lays the process out succinctly. The early steps of the methodology, including establishing the domain of CAF family support, was informed by the thematic analysis

⁴⁷ Department of National Defence, "The Mapping and Gaps Analysis of Services for Military Families Report," Comprehensive Military Family Plan (Ottawa, ON, March 2019), <https://www.cafconnection.ca/getmedia/4b303964-935f-4883-8e11-17582ea20dc6/GAP-Analysis-Report-2019-ENG.pdf.aspx>.

⁴⁸ Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 1: Methodology, Perspectives and Approaches*, vol. 1, 3 vols., Canada's Future Army (Kingston, ON: Canadian Army Land Warfare Centre, 2017), http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2017/mdn-dnd/D2-354-1-2015-eng.pdf; "Home – Policy Horizons Canada," Government, Policy Horizons Canada, accessed March 5, 2021, <https://horizons.gc.ca/en/home/>.

⁴⁹ Hines and Bishop, "Framework Foresight"; Hines and Bishop, *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight, 2nd Edition*.

mentioned previously.⁵⁰ The creative process of building the possible futures, a central feature of strategic foresight, used a traditional horizon scanning process. For this paper horizon scanning involved the following: monitoring news and social media (including CAF family focused Facebook groups); reviewing government foresight work (such as Policy Horizon’s Canada social futures project); consulting future-focused academic materials (such as *Transhumanizing War: Performance Enhancement and the Implications for Policy, Society and the Soldier* and *Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Ethics and the Military: A Canadian Perspective*); and, subscribing to an artificial intelligence-driven website (www.shapingtomorrow.com) that identified potential articles based on the keywords family, military and Canada.⁵¹ Significant effort was made, especially during the strategic foresight process, to consult only the most recent research and materials, with an emphasis on items published after 2017. The main limitation of this research is that strategic foresight work is generally carried out by a team of people, not by an individual researcher. To overcome this limitation, this paper did not aim to

⁵⁰ Note: I am serving member of the CAF who worked in the realm of CAF family support, as the RCAF Family Support Team Lead, for six years from 2014-2020. In that role, I became very familiar with the family support systems in place in the CAF and was routinely privy to information regarding the concerns of CAF families that was not always published or made explicitly public. I have made every effort to avoid using anecdotal information as evidence; however, given that the strategic foresight is a creative process, there are instances throughout the paper where I deemed my personnel experience valuable to the analysis. I will always note where information or an argument is based on my personal experience and not based on documented sources of data.

⁵¹ “Canadian Military Spouses! | Groups | Facebook,” Social, Facebook, accessed April 5, 2021, https://www.facebook.com/groups/2243536588/?multi_permaLinks=10158341800641589; “Unofficial CAF Relocation Site’ . | Facebook,” Social, Facebook, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/435235396568007>; “Posting Season - Military Relocations | Groups | Facebook,” Social, Facebook, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/postingseason>. Christian H. Breede, Stéphanie A.H. Bélanger, and Stefania von Hlatky, “Introduction: A Call to (Enhanced) Arms,” in *Transhumanizing War: Performance Enhancement and the Implications for Policy, Society, and the Soldier* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020), 3–24, <https://www-deslibris-ca.cfc.idm.oclc.org/ID/458320>; Sherry Wasilow and Joelle B. Thorpe, “Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Ethics, and the Military: A Canadian Perspective,” *AI Magazine* 40, no. 1 (March 28, 2019): 37–48, <https://doi.org/10.1609/aimag.v40i1.2848>. “Shaping Tomorrow,” Shaping Tomorrow, accessed March 18, 2021, <https://www.shapingtomorrow.com/home>.

conduct a complete strategic foresight process on the domain of CAF family support; instead, it aimed to provide an example of how the methodology could enable a more proactive approach to family support in the future.

Outline

Thus far, this introduction has provided a snapshot of what CAF family support is, its overarching goals, how the GoC's commitment to families and CAF family support have developed over the past 30 years, and what factors have driven changes to the domain during that time. Chapter Two will address, in greater detail, the dynamics and demographics of CAF members and CAF families. It will also discuss how member and family factors impact the requirement for and provision of family support. Chapter Three will use a similar methodology to explore the current status of various family support policies, programs, and services and highlight the organizations currently supporting CAF families.

Chapter Four will provide an overview of sociological theories. It will also briefly discuss Resiliency and Wellness theories, which DND/CAF currently rely on when developing family support programs. Chapter Four also proposes three different theories that are better suited to conducting implications' analysis of possible futures.

Specifically, it will present family systems theory and social ecological theory and intersectional feminism as useful analytical tools for strategic foresight work related to CAF family support. Finally, Chapter Four will explore how the strategic foresight process could integrate these theories into the implications' analysis step.

Chapter Five will provide an overview of the field of futures studies and strategic foresight, including how foresight work is being used elsewhere in the public policy

sphere to tackle challenging future-focused problems. The chapter will then present an overview of the steps involved in Hines' and Bishop's *Framework Foresight* methodology.⁵² Chapters Six and Seven will build on Chapter Five by applying Hine's and Bishop's framework to the CAF family support domain. Chapter Six will walk through the development of the domain and summarize a current assessment of the domain. Chapter Seven will articulate a baseline future and plausible alternative futures. It will also provide examples of implications' analysis using the theories presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Seven will also address the limitations of the examples provided and call for more robust futures work related to CAF family support. Finally, Chapter Eight will summarize the key findings and recommend that DND/CAF build on existing efforts to support military families by considering the possible ways in which the needs of members, the CAF and families will change between now and 2040.

SSE set forth new initiatives related to the future workforce (members), future capabilities and force structures (the CAF). Still, SSE's commitments regarding families were all firmly based on current needs. The next step in addressing CAF family support must look ahead, especially if the GoC expects families to help achieve its vision whereby "Canada is strong at home, secure in North America and engaged in the world."⁵³

⁵² Hines and Bishop, "Framework Foresight."

⁵³ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 14, 22, 29, 33.

Our military families face greater challenges than many other families because of the unique demands of relocation, deployment and the danger they face. I have an enormous admiration for those families that support our military members.

— His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston,
Governor General and Commander in Chief,
Canadian Military Family Magazine, 2014

CHAPTER 2 – CANADIAN ARMED FORCES FAMILIES

Military families are at the heart of the CAF family support. They have the most to gain – or to lose – depending on the domain’s future trajectory. Families, however, are neither homogenous nor static; they vary in composition, their needs are different, and both composition and needs change over time. To think about the future of CAF family support holistically, it is important first to understand the following: the definition of a CAF family, the demographics and dynamics of military members and their families in Canada; and, how military life impacts CAF families. Having a sense of the starting point of the domain today will serve as a solid foundation for analysing the implications of potential futures changes out to 2040.

What Is A Military Family in Canada?

If families are central to the concept of family support, it is critical to have a working definition of “family” in the Canadian military context. There are multiple definitions of family, both within and external to DND/CAF. Previous definitions have generally focused on the CAF member, his/her spouse or common-law partner and any dependent children under the age of 18 living in the home.⁵⁴ The Ombudsman emphasized the requirement for a single, consistent, modern definition of family in

⁵⁴ Children over the age of 18 and in full-time post-secondary education up to age 24 are also included in some policies. Manser, “State of Mil Families,” 2.

2013.⁵⁵ Since that time, although the Ombudsman specifically recommended that the institution adopt a common definition, DND/CAF has yet to establish a universally applicable definition across all family-related policies, programs, and services.⁵⁶ Military Family Service (MFS) has modernized the definition of family used for the Military Family Services Program (MFSP); it now encompasses a wider group of individuals who may be impacted by service to the CAF. According to MFS,

A military family is understood to be:

- All Canadian Armed Forces' personnel, Regular and Reserve Force, and their spouses, children, parents, relatives of significance or people who self-identify as the family of a military member.
- Non-Public Fund and Department of National Defence civilian employees during a deployment with the Canadian Armed Forces to a mission area outside of Canada, their spouses, parents, children and dependent relatives.
- Family members and persons of significance to Canadian Armed Forces personnel who die while serving remain part of the military family community in perpetuity.⁵⁷

Other definitions exist outside DND/CAF, which are worth considering as well.

The Vanier Institute of the Family provides a broader, functional definition of Canadian families. This definition includes any combination of two or more persons “bound together over time by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption or placement...” and highlights the roles and activities that bind these people together.⁵⁸ This definition also

⁵⁵ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 2.

⁵⁶ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront.”

⁵⁷ Department of National Defence, “About the Military Family Services Program,” CAF Connection, accessed January 23, 2021, <https://www.cafconnection.ca/National/About-Us/Military-Family-Services/About-the-Military-Family-Services-Program.aspx>.

⁵⁸ Note: The Vanier Institute is a Canadian “national, independent, charitable organization dedicated to understanding the diversity and complexity of families and the reality of family life in Canada.” The Vanier Institute of the Family, “Definition of Family,” *The Vanier Institute of the Family / L’Institut Vanier de La Famille* (blog), accessed February 10, 2021, <https://vanierinstitute.ca/definition-family/>. “About – The Vanier Institute of the Family / L’Institut Vanier de La Famille,” The Vanier Institute of the Family, accessed April 3, 2021, <https://vanierinstitute.ca/about/>.

makes sense from a social-ecological perspective. It acknowledges family members' roles and activities and alludes to external factors the family system itself, such as employment, education, health care, and commercial entities, etc. The GoC uses a somewhat narrower definition in line with United Nations principles when conducting the national census of families. The census definition includes couples (married or common law) and any children of either and/or both spouses (by birth or adoption) and lone parents and their cohabitant children; it also includes grandchildren living with their grandparents where no parents are in the home.⁵⁹ The census definition generally makes cohabitation a requirement for a group of individuals to constitute a family and considers separation, a defining feature of the military family experience, non-normative. This definition is likely to remain the most stable over time, and changes to the census definition would signal a major shift in general thinking about “families” in Canada. For this research, the previously identified MFSP definition of family is adequate in that it is broad enough to capture all military members and the people whom they consider “family.” However, the more functional definition proposed by the Vanier Institute also has value from an implications-analysis perspective.

Who are CAF Members?

The single, common feature of all military families is the military member. Member demographics and member employment specifics (such as rank and trade) directly impact family demographics and family support needs. SSE recently authorized an increase in CAF strength, growing the Regular Force (RegF) from 68,000 to 71,500

⁵⁹ Statistics Canada, “Census Family,” Government, Canada.ca, January 14, 2016, <https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Var.pl?Function=Unit&Id=32746>.

and the Reserve Force (ResF) from 27,000 to 30,000.⁶⁰ CAF members serve either as commissioned officers or non-commissioned members (NCMs) within the Canadian Army (CA), Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) or Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). Members range in age from 16 to 60 and hold ranks ranging from Private to Chief Warrant Officer (for NCMs) and Officer Cadet to General (for officers).⁶¹ Throughout their careers, regardless of rank, members must meet the standards laid out in *DAOD 5023-1, Minimum Operational Standards Related to Universality of Service*; the standards cover physical fitness requirements, job performance, and “medical or other employment limitations that would preclude deployment.”⁶² To be deployable, members must be able to, among other things:

- perform duties in the full variety of geographical locations and climatic conditions in any physical environment;
- deploy on short notice;
- sustain irregular or prolonged working hours.⁶³

These pre-requisites for continued employment in the CAF are aspects of military life where the service requirements may negatively impact families, hence necessitating

⁶⁰ Actual numbers will fluctuate on a daily basis due to do intakes, releases and transfers between components (RegF/ResF). Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 19.

⁶¹ Note: Ranks nomenclature differs between CA, RCN, RCAF although relative status of each rank remains the same. For example, a Private (CA) is referred to as an Aviator in the RCAF and Sailor Third Class in the RCN. Department of National Defence, “Military Ranks,” Government, Canada.ca, November 23, 2017, <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/defence/caf/military-identity-system/rank-appointment-insignia.html>.

⁶² Department of National Defence, *DAOD 5002-1, Enrolment*, 2013, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/defence-administrative-orders-directives/5000-series/5002/5002-1-enrolment.html#qe>. Department of National Defence, *DAOD 5023-1, Minimum Operational Standards Related to Universality of Service*, 2013, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/defence-administrative-orders-directives/5000-series/5023/5023-1-minimum-operational-standards-related-to-universality-of-service.html>.

⁶³ Department of National Defence, *DAOD 5023-1, Minimum Operational Standards Related to Universality of Service*, 50.

family support. There are [x number of trades] in the CAF, each with a unique employment profile.

A member's rank and trade will dictate aspects of their career, including the following: possible posting locations; frequency of postings, deployments and other service-related absences; the level of risk to which the member is routinely exposed; and the typical work schedule of the members.⁶⁴ For example, an infantry Corporal posted to Canadian Forces Base Edmonton will likely work a typical 40-hour work-week when at their home unit but may spend long periods away from home either deployed or on collective training exercises. In comparison, a Major working as an engineer in a project office at National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) in Ottawa may work longer hours daily; however, the Major is unlikely to be away from home as frequently as the Corporal. Hence, while risk, mobility and separation are common elements of military service, they do not universally affect members or families in the same ways or with the same frequency.

As of 2019, CAF demographic statistics indicate that 84.3% of CAF members are male, and 15.7% are female.⁶⁵ The proportion of women in the CAF has increased from 14.9% in 2016 to 16% in February 2020; SSE's target for women in the CAF is 25% by 2026.⁶⁶ Table 2.1, shows the percentage of serving women broken out by RegF/ResF and Officers/non-commissioned members (NCMs). Table 2.2 shows the breakdown by

⁶⁴ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, "On the Homefront Update," 16–17; Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 16.

⁶⁵ Stephen Fuhr, "Improving Diversity and Inclusion in the Canadian Armed Forces, Standing Committee on National Defence" (42nd Parliament, 1st Session, June 2019), 65, <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/421/NDDN/Reports/RP10573700/nddnrp17/nddnrp17-e.pdf>.

⁶⁶ Department of National Defence, "Statistics of Women in the Canadian Armed Forces," Government, Canada.ca, September 23, 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/women-in-the-forces/statistics.html>. Fuhr, "Improving Diversity," 9.

environment, CA, RCN, RCAF and Officers/NCMs.⁶⁷ A Statistics Canada summary of the Canadian Armed Forces Health Survey indicated that “women are more likely than men to be officers, and men are more likely than women to be senior non-commissioned members.”⁶⁸ Furthermore, although 65% of all CAF members have deployed, the “proportion was higher among men (68%) than women (52%).⁶⁹

Service Group	Percent of Women
RegF Officers	19.8%
RegF NCMs	14.3%
Total RegF members	15.8%
ResF Officers	16.9%
ResF NCMs	16.6%
Total Primary Reserve members	16.6%
RegF and ResF Officers	19.1%
RegF and ResF NCMs	15.1%
Total RegF and ResF members	16.0%

Table 2.1 - Percentage of Women in CAF (Officer and NCM)

Source: Source: Statistics Canada, Men and Women in the CAF, 2019

⁶⁷ Note that ResF numbers in these tables are Primary Reserve members, and do not include other ResF components, such as the Supplementary Reserve and the Cadet Instructor Cadre. Department of National Defence, “Statistics of Women in the Canadian Armed Forces.”

⁶⁸ Statistics Canada, “Men and Women in the CAF, 2019,” 2019, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2019072-eng.pdf>.

⁶⁹ Statistics Canada, “Canadian Armed Forces Health Survey, 2019,” Government, Canada.ca, December 4, 2019, 2, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/191204/dq191204c-eng.htm>.

Environment Group	Percent of Women
RCN Officers	22.40%
RCN NCMs	19.80%
Total RCN	20.60%
CA Officers	16.50%
CA NCMs	12.80%
Total CA	13.50%
RCAF Officers	21.00%
RCAF NCMs	19.20%
Total RCAF	19.80%

Table 2.2 - Percentage of Women by Environment

Source: Statistics Canada, Men and Women in the CAF, 2019, April 3, 2021

Female service members are slightly more likely to have dependants (67%) than male service members (63%), although they are far more likely to be single parents (18% of female service members vs only 11% of male service members) or to be in a formal marital relationship with another service member (53% of female service members vs. 9% of male service members).⁷⁰ Gender information is important for family support stakeholders to understand. Policymakers and program developers should not assume that

⁷⁰ Lynda Manser, *Profile of Military Families in Canada* (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, 2018), 17.

female CAF members experience military family challenges in the same way as male CAF members.⁷¹

Diversity demographics in the CAF are also worth discussing here. Ultimately, the CAF is expected to “reflect the society it serves and uphold the values it defends,” which demands certain levels of ethnocultural diversity among CAF members. 2019 CAF statistics indicate 2.8% of CAF members self-identify as Indigenous and 8.7% of CAF members self-identify as visible minorities; these groups are targeted to grow to 3.5% and 11.8%, respectively, by 2026.⁷² Even with the targeted increase, these numbers are lower in compared the percentages of visible minorities general Canadian population; the 2016 census showed 22.3% of Canadians self-identified as members of a visible minority group and 4.9% identified as Indigenous.⁷³ Furthermore, designated groups (visible minorities, Indigenous Canadians and women) in the CAF are overrepresented at lower

⁷¹ Much has been written on the military as a gendered institution; while some that that research may be relevant to a more detailed strategic foresight implications’ analysis, it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the gendered nature of the CAF but further information can be found at this reference. Mercy Yeboah-Ampadu, “Between Webs of Obligation: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Mothers Serving in the Canadian Armed Forces,” December 15, 2017, 58, <https://doi.org/10.11575/PRISM/5246>.

⁷² Fuhr, “Improving Diversity,” 65.

⁷³ Statistics Canada defines visible minority in accordance with the Employment Equity Act as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.” It is recognized that this national definition is somewhat outdated, Euro-centric term that reinforces the idea that Black, Indigenous and other People of Colour are “other” to the declining White majority; however, it is outside the scope of this work to fully deconstruct the term, and so it is used in this context as the official term utilized by the Canadian Census and for various statistical purposes within DND/CAF. It is worthwhile noting that Statistics Canada is exploring modernized, alternatives terminology. Statistics Canada, “The Daily — Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity: Key Results from the 2016 Census,” Government, Statistics Canada, October 25, 2017, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025b-eng.htm>. Statistics Canada, “The Daily — Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: Key Results from the 2016 Census,” Government, Statistics Canada, October 25, 2017, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025a-eng.htm>. Statistics Canada, “Dictionary, Census of Population, 2016 - Visible Minority,” Government, Statistics Canada, May 3, 2017, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/pop127-eng.cfm>. Institute on Governance, “The Visible Minority Construct,” Institute on Governance (Institute on Governance, March 4, 2021), <http://iog.ca/>, <http://iog.ca/about/news/the-visible-minority-construct/>. Clare Hennig, “StatsCan Looks to Modernize Decades-Old Term ‘visible Minority’ When Measuring Diversity | CBC News,” CBC, May 8, 2019, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/statcan-modernize-diversity-visible-minority-1.5128288>.

ranks and underrepresented at higher ranks.⁷⁴ These statistics have important implications for the development and provision of family support policies, programs and services; stakeholders must consider how gender and ethnocultural diversity impact family composition and, by extension, family support needs. For example, witnesses testifying to the Standing Committee on National Defence on issues of inclusion and diversity identified a “lack of support for spiritual and cultural practices” as a “barrier[] that cause[s] diverse individuals to leave the CAF.”⁷⁵ Part of the challenge in ensuring appropriate resources are in place for diverse members of the CAF is the lack of comprehensive data available about the ethnocultural makeup and diverse needs of the CAF *visible minority* demographic. Despite this lack of data, not one of the 23 recommendations made by the Standing Committee on National Defence, in its diversity and inclusion report, identified the need to treat visible minorities as anything more than a homogenous group or to delve deeper into the unique concerns of subsets of the CAF visible minority population.⁷⁶

What Do CAF Families Look Like?

With a basic understanding of who CAF members are, the next step is to understand who CAF families are and what knowledge gaps exist in the available information about military families. Historically, there has been a shortage of accurate statistical information about Canadian military families. In 2013 the Ombudsman encouraged DND/CAF to “place greater emphasis on promoting independent research of

⁷⁴ Fuhr, “Improving Diversity,” 30.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ The closest the recommendations comes to accounting for the diverse needs of the overarching *visible minority* populations is recommendation 12, which directs the GoC to “account [for] the perspectives and positions of stakeholders...especially those of marginalized communities.” Ibid., 58–61.

military family issues.”⁷⁷ There has been a significant amount of new Canadian military family research completed since that time. Following the Ombudsman’s report, and spurred on by the Comprehensive Military Family Plan (CMFP) initiative in SSE, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services (CFMWS) has published multiple detailed reports on RegF members and their families since 2013.⁷⁸ MFS intended to publish additional reports detailing demographics of ResF members and families and RegF members and families posted outside of Canada (OUTCAN); however, they have not been published these reports to date. As a result, ResF family data and subsequent analysis remain extremely limited.⁷⁹ Nonetheless, the existing reports provide useful information about the status of military families in Canada.

In 2018 there were 99,717 family members of RegF personnel and 38,398 family members of ResF personnel.⁸⁰ Among RegF family members, there are more children (60, 838) than spouses (37,052); there are also a smaller number (1,826) of other dependants who are neither children nor spouses.⁸¹ These other dependants are usually either elderly family members and/or adult children who are formally deemed dependant on the military member. Among RegF families, there are 14,583 spouses and 20,550 children. The number of other dependants is slightly higher among ResF families (approximately 8.5%).⁸² More than half of RegF personnel and slightly more than one-third of ResF personnel have at least one dependant (either child or spouse). More than

⁷⁷ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 11.

⁷⁸ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 28., Manser, *Profile of Mil Families*. Manser, “State of Mil Families.”

⁷⁹ Manser, “State of Mil Families,” 2. Kara-Lee Cassellman, “E-Mail from MFS Staff Member,” January 19, 2021.

⁸⁰ Manser, *Profile of Mil Families*, 3.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁸² *Ibid.*

three-quarters of spouses are female.⁸³ RegF families live in every province and territory; however, almost a quarter of all military personal are posted to Ontario, which equates to more than 40% of all RegF members, spouses and children. The three most populous military locations in Canada, Canadian Forces Support Group Ottawa-Gatineau (CFSG (OG)), Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax and CFB Valcartier, are located in or near large urban centres.⁸⁴ Only 14% of CAF families live in Residential Housing Units (RHUs) on base, the remainder live in owned (81%) or rented (4%) off-base accommodation, statistics that have almost completely reversed in the past 20 years.⁸⁵ These statistics don't account for the broader definition of family used by MFS, which includes "parents, relatives of significance or people who self-identify as the family of a military member".⁸⁶ US Department of Defence (DoD) research on military families dubs these individuals "invisible family members" and notes that "given that half of the military force is unmarried—a portion of which is certainly in committed relationships—this risk could be substantial."⁸⁷ The number of invisible family members connected to the CAF may be lower, given that Canada formally recognizes both common-law relationships and same-sex marriages, neither of which the DoD recognizes. However, there are 14,344 RegF members over the age of 25 without dependents posted in Canada.⁸⁸ These members may have "invisible" family members not currently accounted

⁸³ Ibid., 18.

⁸⁴ Manser, "State of Mil Families," 15.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 16. Heidi Cramm et al., "The Current State of Military Family Research," n.d., 4.

⁸⁶ Manser, *Profile of Mil Families*; Department of National Defence, "About the MFSP."

⁸⁷ Committee on the Well-Being of Military Families et al., *Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society*, ed. Kenneth W. Kizer and Suzanne Le Menestrel (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2019), 45, <https://doi.org/10.17226/25380>.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

for by CAF HR data-collection practices and who family support policies, programs and services do not fully consider.

In addition to general information about the number and locations of family members, CFMWS has sought to compile information about different types of families, referred to as “family personas.”⁸⁹ CFMWS has identified the following list of the CAF family personas:

- Single Member without Dependents and Family of Origin;
- New Family / Young Children;
- Middle Family / Elementary School-Aged Children;
- Mature Family / Youth;
- Couples without Children;
- Empty Nesters;
- Families Transitioning to Veteran Status;
- Single Parents;
- Dual Service Couples;
- Same-Sex Couples;
- Families with Special Needs Dependents;
- CAF Members Responsible for Elder Care;
- Reservists and their Families; and
- Families in Breakdown.⁹⁰

The list captures much of the diversity of CAF families. It helps build a fulsome picture of what CAF families look like and helps domain stakeholders better understand how different families may experience military family challenges. For example, empty nesters would likely experience a service-related injury or illness very differently than a family with young children. However, there may also be differences that are not yet widely recognized in how other personas experience deployment; for example, is there a difference between how dual-service couples experience injuries or illnesses compared to civilian-military couples? Some family personas will also overlap; for example, there will

⁸⁹ Manser, “State of Mil Families,” 18.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

be same-sex couples both with and without children (of varying ages) whose experiences may or may not mirror those of different-sex couples.

It is important to note that the statistics discussed here represent only a small snapshot of information about military families in Canada. Most data is extracted from the CAF human resources systems of record or originates from voluntary research surveys. While statistics are valuable to family support practitioners, they do not present a complete picture, nor will the statistics necessarily remain static moving forward. The fact that both the 2013 Ombudsman report and the 2018 *State of Military Families in Canada* explicitly excluded Reservists and ResF families from their target research groups is unfortunate, and the lack of detailed ResF data represents a significant statistical gap.⁹¹ Finally, none of the available statistics on CAF families address ethnocultural diversity.

What is the CAF Family Experience?

From the moment that a member joins the CAF, their family becomes a military family per the MFS definition by virtue of connection to the member. The previous section established that not all military families look the same. There is a wide range of military family personas, and some families will fit the description of more than one persona at different times in their family journey. This section will describe the specific aspects of military life that unfairly disadvantage military families compared to other Canadian families.

⁹¹ Note that while Manser mentions a 2018 document on ResF family demographics in her report, that document was never actually completed or published by CFMWS. Ibid., 2. Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 19.

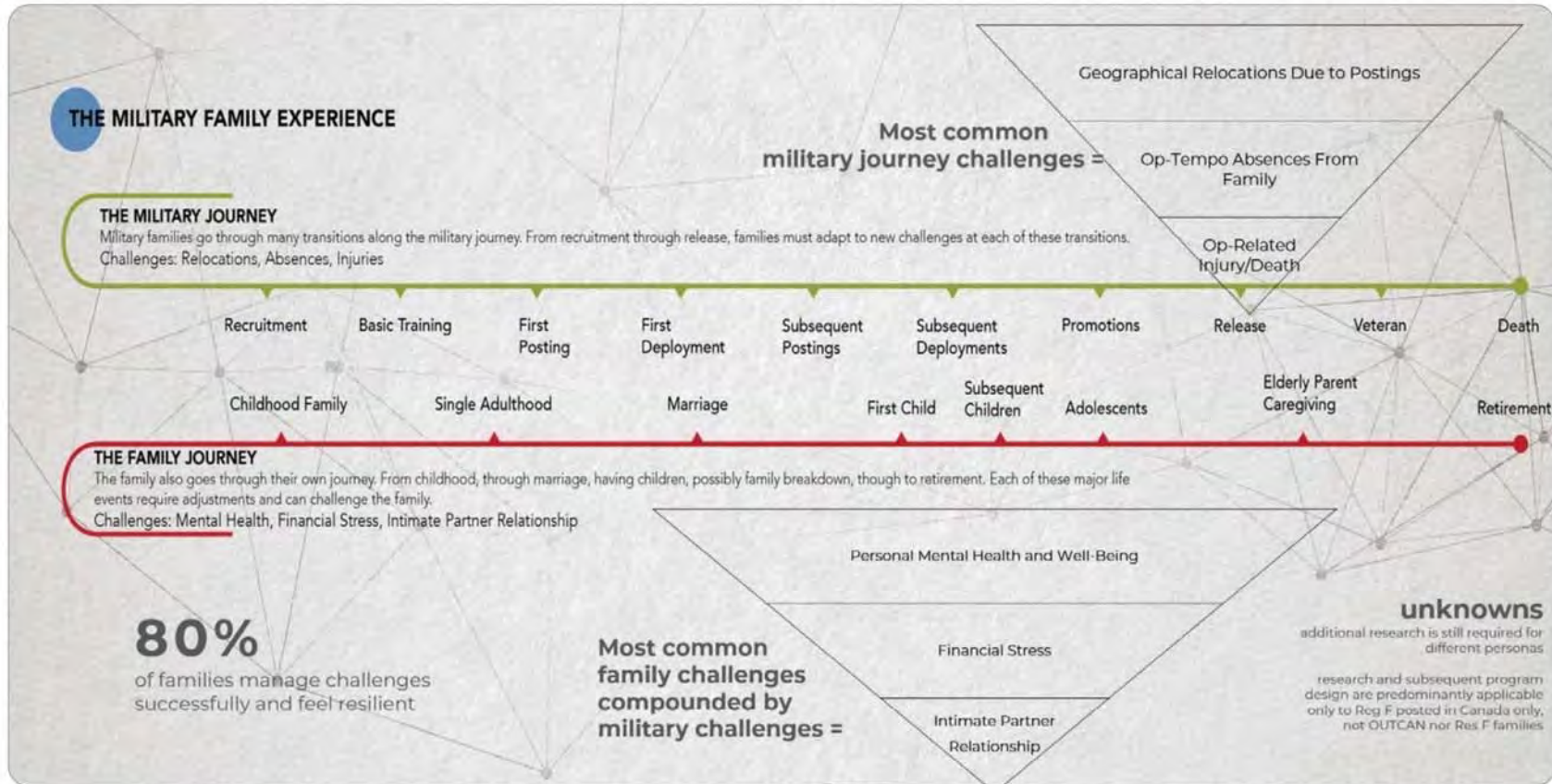


Figure 2.1 - The Military Family Experience

Source: Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework 2020+. Ottawa, CFMWS, September 2020

Like other families, military families encounter various milestones and transitions as they move through life; this is the family journey. However, for military families, the family journey overlaps and intersects with the military journey; that is, the typical events, milestones, and transitions of the military member's career. MFS describes this space as the *military family experience*, as depicted in Figure 2.1.⁹² This figure differentiates between and depicts various milestones in *The Military Journey* (recruitment, postings and promotions) and *The Family Journey* (marriage, children, and eldercare). *The Military Journey* description reinforces the ideas first proposed by Segal and reiterated by others that relocation, separation and risk of injury or illness are unique and representative challenges of military service.⁹³ Also depicted in this figure are the most common *Family Journey* challenges, as deduced by MFS through recent CAF family research: mental health, financial stress, and partner relationships.⁹⁴

Civilian families also sometimes relocate, are occasionally separated and may face risks; however, there is added complexity to how military families experience these three challenges. As the Ombudsman stated, “few occupations or professions expose the overwhelming majority of its people to recurring geographic relocation, relentless separation and elevated levels of risk as a matter of course throughout much of their careers.”⁹⁵ CAF families also have little choice regarding the timing of these imposed challenges, which can compound the situation. It is also not difficult to imagine how

⁹² Department of National Defence, “Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+,” 7.

⁹³ Segal, “The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions,” 16. Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 2.

⁹⁴ Department of National Defence, “Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+,” 7.

⁹⁵ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 3.

military journey challenges could either create or further exacerbate family journey challenges. For example, consider the following couple. They married shortly after the member completed trade training and immediately after that experienced the member's first deployment. At the end of the deployment, the couple, who faced some communications challenges while separated, work hard to reintegrate and re-establish a healthy relationship. They are considering starting a family and, just as they find out they are expecting their first child, they receive a posting to a new location. They currently live in RHUs on base, but the location they are moving to has an extremely low RHU vacancy rate, and the couple decides to purchase their first home. This convergence of so many military and family journey events at once is part of what makes military families so unique.

The impacts of military journey events on families can be conceptualized as a spiral. Unlike a typical lifecycle perspective, where one event leads to the next in a repeating fashion, a spiral analogy (Figure 2.2) indicates that the experiences of individuals, families, and whole military communities “accumulate and shape subsequent expectations and attributions” as experiences recur throughout the member's career.⁹⁶ For example, families often face the same military journey challenges more than once. All of the intervening military and family journey experiences will impact how that family perceives and navigates a given challenge. A family's perception of these events is shaped not only by the individual family's persona but also by their past experiences with similar events. Consider again the couple with the baby who recently moved across the country and purchased their first home. When the member is slated for her next

⁹⁶ Paley, Lester, and Mogil, “Family Systems and Ecological Perspectives on the Impact of Deployment on Military Families,” September 2013, 253.

deployment, her partner may “apply the strengths and skills they have developed from previous deployments but may also carry forth lingering vulnerabilities...that interfere with their ability to navigate future deployments.”⁹⁷

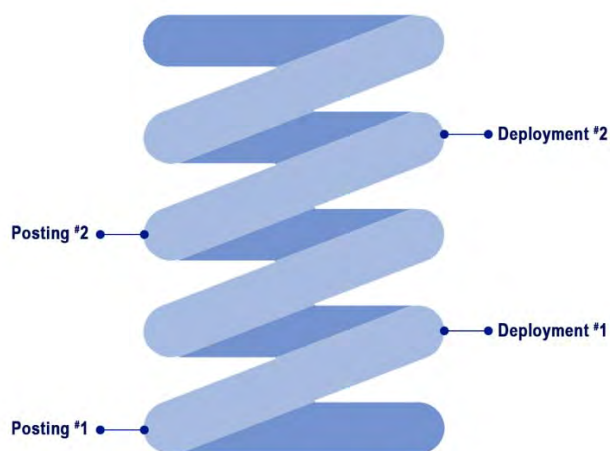


Figure 2.2 - Military Family Experience Spiral

For example, if the partner left at home struggled with anxiety and feelings of isolation during the first deployment, those feelings may resurface in the face of a new deployment. During the first deployment, the non-member spouse was able to seek support from extended family in the area and accessed health care from their family doctor; however, at the new location, extended family are not as easily accessible, the spouse is still on a provincial waitlist for a family doctor, and caring for a young child and homeownership have now been added to the long list of responsibilities the spouse must manage alone

⁹⁷ Ibid.

during the deployment. This example depicts just one family's possible experience, but it articulates many of the issues military families repeatedly identify as challenging about relocation in particular, such as: "re-establishing medical services, rebuilding social networks; finding employment and re-establishing seniority, and locating childcare."⁹⁸

Despite these challenges, military families are exceptionally resilient and perceive that "they have successfully met the challenges of military life."⁹⁹ Recent studies demonstrate that 80% of CAF families "manage these challenges successfully" and only 10% "struggle."¹⁰⁰ Still, family support is recognized as one element of the "wicked problem" of CAF retention.¹⁰¹ Recent data shows that CAF members perceive family support and amelioration of other issues that impact families as important. When asked what the CAF could do to convince them to stay if they were considering leaving within five years, four of the top seven themes cited have a family nexus (in order of importance): benefits, compensation, and incentives; postings; support for the family; workload and demands; and geographic stability or flexibility.¹⁰² With regard to family support in particular,

...[R]espondents mentioned wanting changes with respect to improved employment opportunities for spouses, improved availability of healthcare, childcare and gyms for family on bases, accommodations for members supporting an ill or injured family member, and improved benefits (e.g., medical, dental) specifically for families.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ Wang and Aitken, "Impacts of Military Lifestyle on Military Families: Results from the Quality of Life Survey of Canadian Armed Forces Spouses," 14.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁰⁰ Department of National Defence, "Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+," 10.

¹⁰¹ Amanda Huddleston, "Canadian Armed Forces Retention: A Wicked Problem?" (Master's Thesis, Winnipeg, MB, University of Manitoba, 2020), 92, https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/bitstream/handle/1993/34939/Huddleston_Amanda.pdf?sequence=1.

¹⁰² Cheng et al., "The 2019 CAF Regular Force Retention Survey: Qualitative Analysis," 17.

¹⁰³ Huddleston, "Canadian Armed Forces Retention: A Wicked Problem?," 92. Cheng et al., "The 2019 CAF Regular Force Retention Survey: Qualitative Analysis," 20.

Regarding postings, “respondents mentioned wanting to see changes..., including reducing the negative impact of postings on their family, relationships, and spouse’s employment.¹⁰⁴ Of note, male members were far more likely than women to cite higher pay as an incentive to remain in the CAF, whereas women were more likely to request improved support for family (9.5% versus 6.6% for women and men, respectively).¹⁰⁵ This type of gender difference regarding the perceived solution to a problem has serious implications for the future if the CAF intends to meet its goals of increasing women’s representation in the force.

Research also substantiates that CAF families are at a disadvantage in several areas compared to civilian families. These disadvantages necessitate additional support to offset the challenges imposed by military journey events. For example, the most recent quality-of-life (QOL) survey administered to CAF spouses in 2016 indicates that “23.8% of CAF spouses did not have a family doctor, 17.3% of military children did not have a family doctor, and 26.4% of CAF spouses had needed health care in the 12 months prior to the survey but had not received it”; for comparison, across the country in 2019, 14.5% of Canadian over the age of 12 did not have a family doctor.¹⁰⁶ Another example comes from comparing the education levels, employment rates, and income levels of CAF spouses compared to other Canadian spouses.¹⁰⁷ The study showed that CAF spouses were less likely to have a university-level education, less likely to be employed and,

¹⁰⁴ Lee, Eren, and Budgell, “2016 CAF Retention Survey: Qualitative Analysis,” 39.

¹⁰⁵ Cheng et al., “The 2019 CAF Regular Force Retention Survey: Qualitative Analysis,” 24.

¹⁰⁶ Wang and Aitken, “Impacts of Military Lifestyle on Military Families: Results from the Quality of Life Survey of Canadian Armed Forces Spouses,” 30. Statistics Canada, “Primary Health Care Providers, 2019,” Government, Statistics Canada, October 22, 2020, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-625-x/2020001/article/00004-eng.htm>.

¹⁰⁷ Note that for this study, only female CAF spouses were considered. Jason Dunn, Samantha Urban, and Zhigang Wang, “Spousal Employment Income of Canadian Forces Personnel: A Comparison of Civilian Spouses,” n.d., 20.

likely to earn less than spouses in similar groups, including police spouses, federal public service spouses and other civilian spouses.¹⁰⁸

The issues addressed here represent just a small portion of the myriad challenges that CAF families regularly face due to relocation, separation and risk. If we return briefly to the example of the young family, we would see that since we last checked in on them, they have added two more children and have moved a second time. Although there have been no further deployments, the member has been promoted into a supervisory position that requires longer regular hours and frequent duty travel within Canada. They are currently preparing for their third posting in 7 years, with an infant, a toddler and a second-grader in tow. They were lucky enough to make a modest profit on the sale of their first house; however, they are facing a significant loss on the sale of their current home, and the civilian spouse sees few job prospects in his current field at the next posting. These challenges mean that they are contemplating the military member proceeding to the next posting by herself, on Imposed Restriction status.¹⁰⁹ While that choice may help them avoid incurring a capital loss on the sale of their home, it comes with its own challenges. The alternative is for the family to accept the combined financial losses of home equity and spousal employment income and the resulting reduction in their standard of living to remain together. Proceeding with the posting would also mean a new school for their oldest child, who has recently been diagnosed with a learning disability. He will likely be placed on a waitlist for services at the new location. Suppose they move and the civilian spouse is lucky enough to secure full-time employment at the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 5, 6, 9, 18.

¹⁰⁹ Department of National Defence, “CF Military Personnel Instruction 01/17 - Imposed Restriction (IR)” (Chief of Military Personnel, July 6, 2017).

new posting. In that case, they will face the additional challenge of locating two childcare spaces, including an infant space, which are notoriously difficult to find at the new location. While this scenario may seem complex, it represents the type of decisions CAF families routinely face. For example, 49% of military families report considering either posting refusal or Imposed Restriction due to the upheaval relocation would have on the family.¹¹⁰ Still, this vignette only considers one CAF family persona, that of a young family with two working parents, a persona that is relatively well researched and understood within the domain. The scenario also doesn't encompass the military journey challenge of service-related illness or injury, which would likely further exacerbate the family's experiences.

It is important at this juncture to note that there are gaps in the overall body of CAF family research that mirror the gaps in member research and statistics. For example, the QOL survey research had a small sample size due to low response rates, and research often excludes ResF and other minority family personas, such as same-sex couples.¹¹¹ These family personas should not be overlooked as they may have different needs than other families and represent a large proportion of the CAF family population. For example, ResF families make up almost 34% of all military members and their families.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Lynda Manser, "Relocation Experiences: The Experiences of Military Families with Relocations Due to Postings – Survey Results" (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, 2018), 41, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/MFS/FamilyResearch/Documents/2018%20Research%20on%20Families/Relocation%20Experiences%20Research%20Report%20May%202018.pdf>.

¹¹¹ Dunn, Urban, and Wang, "Spousal Employment Income of Canadian Forces Personnel: A Comparison of Civilian Spouses," 5; Wang and Aitken, "Impacts of Military Lifestyle on Military Families: Results from the Quality of Life Survey of Canadian Armed Forces Spouses," 31.

¹¹² Manser, *Profile of Mil Families*, 6.

Summary

This chapter has explored the foundation of the CAF family support domain: military families. It has provided an overview of who military members are and what their families look like, emphasizing that military families come in all shapes and sizes, known as personas. Despite the variety of CAF family personas, available research suggests that families face similar military and family journey challenges and, without additional family support, may be disadvantaged compared to non-military families in Canada. The recent emphasis on CAF family research has provided domain stakeholders with valuable information; the next step is to understand how DND/CAF and other stakeholders use this information to reduce the unfair disadvantages of military family life. It is important to keep in mind that just as military families will continue to change over time, as will the challenges they face. Research on military families must continue; however, it must also evolve to consider both under-researched family personas and possible future family personas.

On a number of occasions during the course of this systemic review, senior leaders and commanders posed the rhetorical questions of ‘how much is enough?’ ...Regrettably, this is the wrong questions the institution should pose. The questions that needs to be addressed is ‘what do military families need?’

— Pierre Daigle, CAF Ombudsman,
On the Homefront, 2013

CHAPTER 3 – POLICIES, PROGRAM AND SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF CAF FAMILIES

The first structured family support provided to military families in Canada dates back to 1947 when educational programs were first offered to Canadian military children.¹¹³ Since then, the provision of formal family support has expanded significantly. The Ombudsman’s report acknowledged that military families today “receive more support than ever before.”¹¹⁴ The report also emphasized that the real issue is not how much support is available but whether that support meets the families’ and successfully closes the gap between CAF families and other Canadian families. As discussed in Chapter One, the GoC and DND/CAF have committed to supporting military families; however, that commitment alone rings hollow if the policies, programs and services in place are not successfully mitigating the unfair disadvantages faced by military families.

Chapter Two established that these disadvantages roughly align with the three military journey challenges of relocation, separation and risk; hence, support to military families has traditionally focused on addressing needs in these three areas. This chapter will provide an overview of the primary organizations that currently provide support to military families in these areas: DND/CAF and its subordinate entities, including

¹¹³ Department of National Defence, “Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+,” 5.

¹¹⁴ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 2, 89.

Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services (CFMWS) and Military Family Services (MFS), Military Family Resource Centres, provincial governments, and non-profit organizations. It will explore some of the specific support provided for each organization and highlight where existing policies, programs, and services currently fail to meet families' needs. The chapter will conclude with a brief look at what military families are doing themselves to help close the gaps where formal supports are lacking. Providing support to CAF families is not a new endeavour; however, understanding the context in which CAF family support has evolved over the past 30 years is a critical building block for any discussion of the future of military family support in Canada.

CAF Policies, Programs and Services

As the ultimate arbiter in a broad range of policy and program decisions and a key advisor in others, DND/CAF has a significant level of influence on family support. As noted in Chapter, DND/CAF also has a particular interest in ensuring families are well supported to ensure the continued ability to recruit a diverse array of Canadians into the forces and retain highly skilled members. *DAOD 5044-1, Families* underpins DND/CAF's commitment to family support. This directive acknowledges that "family-oriented policy and program initiatives will enable CAF members and their families to respond more effectively to the stresses associated with military life and better balance the often-conflicting demands of work and family."¹¹⁵ Essentially, in this directive, DND/CAF accepts some responsibility for mediating the challenges members face in meeting the needs of their families because of their service, especially challenges related

¹¹⁵ Department of National Defence, *DAOD 5044-1, Families*, 2013, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/defence-administrative-orders-directives/5000-series/5044/5044-1-families.html>.

to relocation, separation and risk. *DAOD 5044-1* also introduces the concept of the CAF Family Network (Figure 3.1). The Family Network introduces many of the organizations at the heart of the CAF family support domain, including MFRCs, military chaplains, and the military Chain of Command.¹¹⁶ The Family Network concept is in line with the social-ecological perspective of military family support; it recognizes that elements outside the family play a role in the family experience, although it fails to account for the interactions between different organizations. In reality, for example, there can be both synergies and frictions between Personnel Support Programs and MFRCs or between MFRCs and the military Chain of Command.

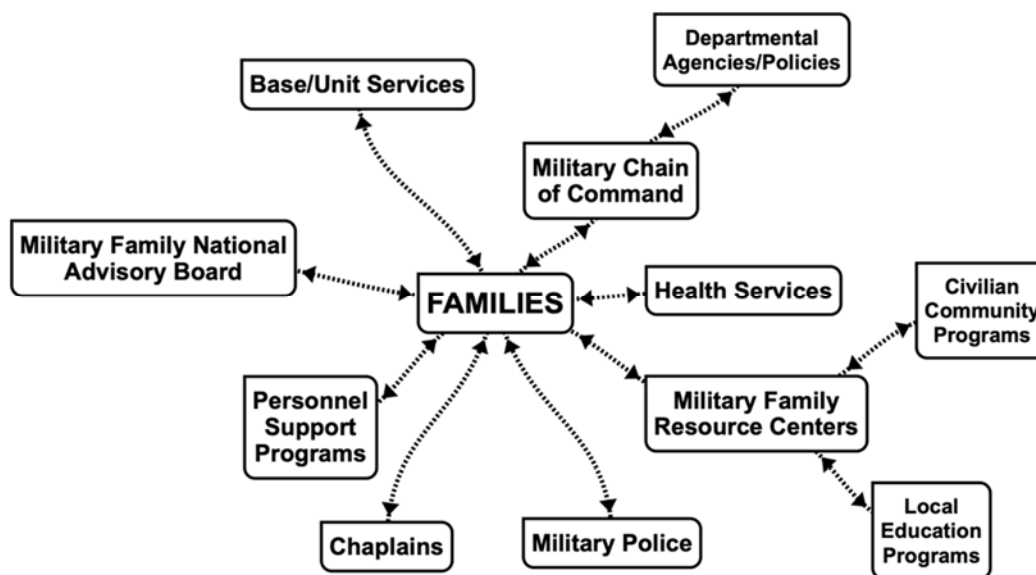


Figure 3.1 - CAF Family Network

Source: Adapted from DAOD 5044-1 Families

¹¹⁶ Note that the Military Family Advisory Committee no longer exists and nothing formal has replaced it. Furthermore, not all of these organizations will be discussed in this Chapter. More information about Personnel Support Programs can be found at www.cafconnection.ca. Ibid.

The *DAOD* also “acknowledges the ever-changing structure, composition and function of Canadian families.”¹¹⁷ This recognition that families are not static entities underscores the information presented in Chapter Two. However, many DND/CAF policies with direct implications, such as leave policy, leave-related travel benefits and relocation policy, are not flexible enough to meet CAF families' diverse needs. The following discussion will demonstrate how policies designed to assist families are falling short.

Leave policy, for example, is designed to both maintain member morale and contribute to member and family well-being.¹¹⁸ Leave is managed in accordance with the *Canadian Forces Leave Policy Manual*, which includes provisions for a wide variety of leave types, some of which are designed to compensate for the separation and mobility aspects of military life. Granting of leave is almost always initially at the discretion of the member's Commanding Officer and may be withheld or withdrawn based on military requirements.¹¹⁹ While this stipulation provides CAF with the requisite flexibility to undertake military operations, the definition of military requirement is also open to interpretation by the Chain of Command (CoC). Military members have very little recourse if the CoC denies a request for leave. Examples of leave that directly impact families include Leave Without Pay for Maternity and Parental Purposes, Compassionate

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Department of National Defence, *DAOD 5060-0, Leave*, 2013, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/defence-administrative-orders-directives/5000-series/5060/5060-0-leave.html>; Department of National Defence, “UPDATE: Modernizing the Relocation Service Delivery Model to Meet Your Needs - Canadian Armed Forces Relocation Program,” Government, Forces.gc.ca, September 25, 2017, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/caf-community-benefits/know-your-benefits-articles/update-modernizing-relocation.page>.

¹¹⁹ Department of National Defence, *QR&O: Volume I - Chapter 16 Leave*, 2014, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/queens-regulations-orders/vol-1-administration/ch-16-leave.html#cha-016-11>.

Leave, some types of Special Leave related to operational deployment and relocation.¹²⁰

The common thread among these varied leave types is that they are designed to allow the member to spend time away from work, connecting with loved ones.

While flexibility exists for the CoC to award leave deemed necessary to support members' and families' well-being, there is less flexibility available in providing financial benefits that are tied to certain types of leave. For example, CAF members are eligible for Compassionate Leave; up to 14 calendar days can be approved locally by a Commanding Officer for a wide range of reasons. When Compassionate Leave is granted, CAF members and their spouses (including civilian spouses) may be eligible for Compassionate Travel Assistance (CTA). CTA reimburses some travel costs so that members and their spouses/partners can attend the bedside of gravely ill immediate family members or attend funerals.¹²¹ Although CTA is quite restrictive in terms of both the types of familial relationships it recognizes and the circumstances under which it can be granted; hence, it may not adequately address the needs of today's diverse families. Even the more flexible component of this benefit package, Compassionate Leave, is issued at the discretion of local commanders based on junior and mid-level military leaders' recommendations, who may not have a fulsome understanding of the importance of extended family and community members in certain cultures. This exact issue was highlighted in a report on diversity and inclusion from the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence by an Indigenous CAF member:

¹²⁰ Department of National Defence, *A-PP-005-LVE/AG-001 Canadian Forces Leave Policy Manual*, 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/military-benefits/canadian-force-leave-policy-manual/2020-12-04-canadian-forces-leave-policy-manual.pdf>.

¹²¹ CTA is covered in CBI 209.51. Department of National Defence, *Compensation and Benefits Instructions - Chapter 209 - Transportation and Travelling Expenses*, 2013, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/compensation-benefits-instructions/chapter-209-transportation-expenses.html#sec-209-50>.

“There were few to no cultural practices of Indigenous spirituality. ... I was also denied the opportunity to attend close family members’ funerals. In an Indigenous community, attending funerals honours the family clan.”¹²²

This example highlights that even where policies adequately address existing needs, there is room to improve policy implementation. If the CAF hopes to increase diversity in the force and honour changing family demographics and dynamics, policymakers and the CoC must understand how implementing policies, programs, and services impact diverse CAF members and families.

A final example from the *Leave Policy Manual* worth considering is the inconsistent application of Special Leave - Relocation both before and after extended absences. Current policy allows members to take leave, at the CO’s discretion both before and after any absences longer than 14 days, for individual or collective training or other military duties (aside from deployment, covered under a separate policy).¹²³ This policy is intended to offset the stress of repeated absences on the member and the family by providing additional time away from work to deal with personnel administration arising from the times away; however, the numbers of days granted to members can vary from unit to unit and situation to situation.¹²⁴

Another key administrative policy that attempts to address the challenge of frequent service-related separations is the Family Care Plan (FCP) and related benefit, Family Care Assistance (FCA). *DAOD 5044-1, Families* states:

¹²² Fuhr, “Improving Diversity,” 35.

¹²³ Department of National Defence, *Leave Policy*, 50, 61.

¹²⁴ The author was unable to find documented evidence of these statements in independent research; however, personal experience on various military courses between 2018 and 2020 has demonstrated that not all members received the same leave entitlements based on a number of factors from ops tempo, the members unwillingness to request special relocation leave or the opinions of applicable unit leadership. It should be noted that the author’s personal experience on this topic is limited to CAF Officers at the ranks of Captain and Major.

“[T]he purpose of the [FCP] is to: assist members with planning for family care needs in the event of an absence for duty reasons; and, apprise commanding officers (COs) of potential difficulties regarding family care needs that may be encountered by some members in the event of an absence for duty reasons.”¹²⁵

The policy requires RegF and ResF members to complete form DND 2886, *Family Care Plan (FCP) Declaration*, acknowledging responsibility for dependants requiring care and (optionally) listing potential caregivers along with specific care requirements. This policy intends to support members and families by proactively identifying potential challenges with providing care to dependants. Guidance in completing the form may be available from the local administrative staff and/or the local MFRC, but this level of service is not universally available. Ultimately, completion of the form provides no guarantee that alternate caregivers will be available when required. Furthermore, families often struggle to complete the form immediately following a posting when they have few local connections.¹²⁶

FCA is a related but separate benefit available under some circumstances to single members with dependent children and dual-service couples.¹²⁷ FCA provides financial assistance to offset the cost of additional care when the member (or both members in the case of dual service couples) is away for more than 24 hours for service reasons at a rate of \$35/day for non-commercial care or \$75/day for commercial care. The policy has been criticized on multiple fronts for failing to fully address the wide range of circumstances in which military families find themselves challenged to provide care for dependent

¹²⁵ Department of National Defence, *DAOD 5044-1, Families*.

¹²⁶ Department of National Defence, “Gaps Analysis,” 38; Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 87.

¹²⁷ In some cases, FCA is also available for eligible members with dependants 18 years of age and older who require assistance based on physical or mental disability. Department of National Defence, *Compensation and Benefits Instructions - Chapter 209 - Transportation and Travelling Expenses*.

children when members are absent. Specific criticisms include the following: the inability of members to access suitable care; lack of eligibility for members undergoing training who work extended hours but are not absent for more than 24 hours; inadequate policy coverage when a family has non-caregiving adults over the age of 18+ living in the home; maximum daily rates that do not account for the number of children requiring care; and, the ineligibility of ResF members (single or members of a dual-service couple) who is absent while on Class “A” service.¹²⁸ A further significant criticism is differing local interpretations of the policy, which indicates the policy itself is not as straightforward as it could be.¹²⁹ FCP and FCA address an administrative issue of concern for DND/CAF; Chapter Two provided an analysis of modern family systems and functions. Using this understanding as a baseline, it becomes clear that the FCP and FCA fail to fully meet the needs of CAF families.

DND/CAF is also responsible administration of benefits and compensation related to the relocation of members and their families. The *Canadian Armed Forces Relocation Directive (CAFRD)*, a recent update to the longstanding *Canadian Forces Integrated Relocation Policy (CFIRP)*, outlines these benefits; administrative support is provided to members and families under contract by an international relocation service provider,

¹²⁸ Reibin, “Improving Readiness: Operationalizing the Military Childcare Support Framework,” 51.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 55.

BGRS.¹³⁰ The *CAFRD* represents the official Treasury Board (TB) policy, and any changes to the benefits afforded to members and families require TB approval.¹³¹ The policy reimburses a wide range of relocation expenses. Still, it has been a source of constant frustration among families who feel that it does not adequately address relocation challenges. Changes to the Program approved by TB in 2018 addressed some issues raised by members and families in the 2013 Ombudsman’s report. For example, TB approved an increase in the available benefit for loss of home equity upon posting from \$15,000 to \$30,000 and an increase in the maximum number of days payable for Interim Lodgings, Meals and Miscellaneous Expenses (ILM&M), to allow members and families more flexibility in accommodation dispossession and possession dates.¹³² Unfortunately, a subsequent administrative change made by DND/CAF, which shifted contracted program service and support to a virtual environment, suffered from implementation challenges. The change caused high levels of additional anxiety for many families while failing to address core issues related to customer satisfaction.¹³³

Relocation challenges are not solely related to benefits and service support; much of the outsized impact on families in relocating has its roots in CAF members' career

¹³⁰ While *CAFRD* has been published as a completely new document for the first time since 2009, the content remains largely unchanged from the 2018. Department of National Defence, “Canadian Armed Forces Relocation Directive (*CAFRD*),” March 4, 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/relocation-directive/cafrd.html>. Department of National Defence, *A-PP-005-IRP-AG-001 Canadian Forces Integrated Relocation Program Directive, APS 2009-2018* (Ottawa, ON: Director General Compensation and Benefits (DGCB), 2018), <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/military-benefits/cfirp/a-pp-005-irp-ag-001-cfirp-eff-19-april-2018.pdf>. “BGRS Named Provider for the Canadian Armed Forces,” BGRS talent | mobility, August 26, 2016, <https://www.bgrs.com/news/services-solutions/bgrs-named-provider-canadian-armed-forces/>.

¹³¹ Department of National Defence, *CFIRP Directive*, 11.

¹³² Department of National Defence, “CANFORGEN 126/18 CMP 064/18 251800Z JUN 18 - CORRECTED COPY OF CANFORGEN 073/18 - RELOCATION POLICIES AND BENEFITS CHANGES,” June 25, 2018.

¹³³ Department of National Defence, “UPDATE”; Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 33.

management, which ultimately dictates when and where families relocate. DND/CAF has established a range of administrative policy options that allow members and families flexibility regarding relocation. These include: (1) Imposed Restriction, under which the member moves temporarily, and the family follows later at a more convenient time; (2) Compassionate Status of Compassionate Posting, which either keeps the member and family in place or posts them to an appropriate location to address personal circumstances and which limits deployability; and (3) Contingency Cost Moves for personal circumstances, which posts the member and family to a more appropriate location without limiting deployability.¹³⁴ While these options provide some flexibility, they also significantly impact the broader family system, especially IR, which is the most frequently used policy of the three. The example of the young couple discussed in Chapter Two provides insight into the challenges families may face if they opt for IR instead of the whole family proceeding to a new posting.

Finally, while relocation benefits offset many of the costs associated with disposing of and acquiring housing during a relocation, they do not address the fact that locating housing can pose a significant challenge in and of itself. The Canadian Forces Housing Agency (CFHA), a special operating agency under DND, manages the DND/CAF residential housing portfolio. The portfolio consists of approximately 11,500 rental units at 27 locations across Canada, with an occupancy rate of 89% in 2019-

¹³⁴ Department of National Defence, *DAOD 5003-6, Contingency Cost Moves for Personal Reasons, Compassionate Status and Compassionate Posting*, 2013, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/defence-administrative-orders-directives/5000-series/5003/5003-6-contingency-cost-moves-for-personal-reasons-compassionate-status-and-compassionate-posting.html#comp>.

2020.¹³⁵ Historically, as mentioned in Chapter Two, most families live in Residential Housing Units (RHUs) on base; today, available units could only house approximately 20% of CAF families posted within Canada.¹³⁶ However, long waitlists for RHUs in areas where the local real estate market is heated put immense pressure on families who have trouble finding affordable housing. Low RHU vacancy rates impact junior personnel more acutely because they earn less and are more vulnerable to drastic changes in the cost of living from one posting to the next. The rate of families choosing to reside in RHUs for financial reasons increased 37% from 2005 to 2017.¹³⁷ For example, in Ottawa, the average price of a single-family home rose 27% from 2020 to 2021 to over \$700,000, making RHUs and other rental accommodations more attractive. When families cannot access RHUs or afford other local accommodations, they may consider housing at greater distances from the base. Living at greater distances also has follow-on consequences. For example, families who live further away from the base may be less likely to access support from military service providers, such as the MFRC. Furthermore, civilian service providers in their area, such as health care and education professionals, may be less familiar with the challenges routinely faced by military families. Overall, relocation-related supports represent a significant proportion of the CAF family support domain. DND/CAF's advice and decisions regarding relocation policies can potentially impact the domain's future trajectory.

¹³⁵ Department of National Defence, "Canadian Forces Housing Agency Annual Report 2019-2020" (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Forces Housing Agency, 2020), 3, <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/documents/housing/annual-report-cfha-2019-2020.pdf>.

¹³⁶ Manser, "State of Mil Families," 16.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 44.

So far, this section has addressed how DND/CAF seeks to meet the needs of members and families with regard to separation and relocation. Missing from this discussion is an assessment of how DND/CAF offsets the requirement for families to live with the knowledge that members routinely face significant risks in their service to Canada. Military members themselves are compensated for the risks that they face as part of CAF pay, and there are benefits available to members who sustain injuries or become ill while serving.¹³⁸ However, helping families better cope when injuries and illnesses occur or manage their anxiety when members face dangerous situations is primarily left to frontline family support providers outside of DND/CAF.

Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services Programs and Support

The most family-centric DND/CAF sub-organization is Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services (CFMWS). CFMWS is responsible for delivering a suite of “public morale and welfare programs, services, and activities to eligible members and their families” on behalf of DND/CAF.¹³⁹ Its principal operating entities include Personnel Support Programs (PSP), MFS, CANEX, and SISIP Financial. MFS’ mandate is to ensure that the military family community receives the support necessary to ensure military families lead lives comparable to the average Canadian family and to support the

¹³⁸ For example, military pay is based on the rates negotiated by public service unions for federal public servants, but it also includes a “military factor” which accounts for the risk that members face by virtue of their service. Military members are also required to contribute to mandatory disability and life insurance (known as Supplementary Death Benefits). Department of National Defence, “Pay Overview for the Military,” Canada.ca, June 2, 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/pay-pension-benefits/pay/overview.html>; Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, “Survivor Benefits - Pension Plan - Supplementary Death Benefits,” Government, Canada.ca, September 12, 2012, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/pension-plan/plan-information/survivor-benefits-pension.html>.

¹³⁹ Department of National Defence, “About CFMWS,” Government, CFMWS, accessed February 22, 2021, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/CFPFSS/Pages/default.aspx>.

operational effectiveness of the CAF.¹⁴⁰ MFS accomplishes this mandate through three primary means: (1) by distributing funds allocated to the MFSP; (2) by setting governance standards for MFRCs; and (3) by providing some direct-to-family programming. MFS manages the Family Information Line (FIL) Children's Education Management (CEM). The FIL offers bilingual information and referral services and crisis counselling to CAF families, and CEM manages education funding for CAF children posted outside of Canada and provides guidance counselling to facilitate transitions between school systems.¹⁴¹

Finally, CFMWS also conducts and oversees research on military families. This research has helped them recognize that the world is changing; research has also pushed them to develop a strategic plan to address changing societal, environmental and community situations out to 2030. They have identified three key risk areas for their operations, including financial sustainability, disruptive technological advancements that impact their business model and, perhaps most importantly, the changing demographics of their customers.¹⁴² For example, both the FIL and CEM have expanded their service offerings in the past few years to better meet the evidence-based needs of military

¹⁴⁰ Department of National Defence, "WE ARE MILITARY FAMILY SERVICES," Government, CFMWS, August 22, 2016, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/MFS/Pages/We-are-Military-Family-Services.aspx>.

¹⁴¹ Department of National Defence, "Parameters 4 Practice," 19. Department of National Defence, "Children's Education Management," Government, CAF Connection, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.cafconnection.ca/National/Programs-Services/Education-and-Training/Children-s-Education-Management.aspx>.

¹⁴² Department of National Defence, "Healthy Members, Strong Communities: Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services Strategy 2030" (Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, 2020), https://www.cafconnection.ca/getmedia/b5410602-189f-40cc-b23c-7230d6ca1e13/CFMWS_Strategy-2030_brochure_8-5x11_FEB2020_DPS.pdf.aspx.

families, indicating that MFS closely monitors the domain and attempts to adapt programs and services accordingly.¹⁴³

In 2019 CFMWS conducted a gap analysis to better inform the Comprehensive Military Family Plan (CMFP, an SSE initiative).¹⁴⁴ The analysis grouped programs and services into two broad categories, military family journey challenges and family journey challenges.¹⁴⁵ It then broke the military journey challenges down further into three areas that align well with the Ombudsman’s report conclusions, relocation, op-tempo absences (separation) and risk/injury/death (risk). Finally, it analysed the programs in terms of the intended level influence: individual, family or community.¹⁴⁶ The analysis identified 26 systemic and 119 programming gaps related to military family support within the CAF.¹⁴⁷ The report defines systemic gaps as those pertaining to “structures, processes and organizational strategies as well as obstacles relating to program delivery or access...[which]...have the potential to impact the largest number of people and concern all stakeholders”.¹⁴⁸ The analysis developed a set of 18 general recommendations grouped into four categories of systemic gaps – alignment (8), awareness (4), advocacy (2) and availability (4)- and determined that these systemic issues cause most programming gaps.¹⁴⁹ There were ten specific programming gaps identified

¹⁴³ In the past 5 years, CEM added guidance counsellors for families for families moving internationally and then expanded their services to include inter-provincial moves. The FIL expanded their service to include supportive counselling, available by appointment on a short-term, ongoing basis.

¹⁴⁴ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 29.

¹⁴⁵ Department of National Defence, “Gaps Analysis,” 6.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, iv.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 66–70.

(Table 3.1).¹⁵⁰ CFMWS has used the gap analysis to inform its strategic plan and the *MFS Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic Framework 2020+*.¹⁵¹

The CFMWS gap analysis, though thorough in its review of programming and services intended to support families, did not holistically address DND/CAF administrative and employment policies, many of which are not constructed or interpreted using a broad family systems lens.

Child and Youth Programming Gaps	General Programming Gaps
Mental Health	Relocation Due to Postings
Social/Interpersonal	Financial Stress
Child Care	Family Absences due to Ops tempo
Education	Mental Health and Well Being
	Relationship with Intimate Partner
	Op-related Injury/Death

Table 3.1 - Family Support Programming Gaps

Source: CFMWS, *The Mapping and Gaps Analysis of Services for Military Families Report, 2019*

Overall, there remains significant room for DND/CAF to improve the policies, programs and services it offers to families. DND/CAF is intent on “improving its attractiveness as an employer of choice for women, Indigenous peoples, visible minorities and members of the LGBTQ2 community”. In that case, policy development and implementation could consider a more comprehensive range of family perspectives,

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 67–70.

¹⁵¹ Department of National Defence, “Healthy Members, Strong Communities: Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services Strategy 2030”; Department of National Defence, “Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+.”

and “[p]articular attention should focus on the supports required by serving female members, single parents and single members.”¹⁵²

Provincial Governments and Organizations

Canada’s parliamentary system of government distributes powers between the federal and provincial governments. While powers related to national defence fall under the federal government, the provinces nonetheless play an integral role in the CAF family support domain. CAF family members, while inside Canada, hold no special status based on their connection to the military; hence, military family members are subject to the standards set by the province in which they reside for those areas over which the provinces hold power, such as education, child care, health care, provincial taxation and marriage law among others.¹⁵³ Furthermore, while not necessarily the sole or direct responsibility of the provincial governments, many professional organizations and accrediting institutions are province-specific. Devolution of powers to the provinces results in variations in service levels and regulations across the country, directly impacting military families when relocating between provinces. The GoC and DND/CAF have attempted to address the family challenges related to provincially governed services and supports through an initiative known as Seamless Canada. Seamless Canada is being driven in part by SSE and the CMFP, which included a requirement for DND/CAF to work with “federal, provincial and private sector partners to improve the coordination of services across provinces to ease the burden of moving.”¹⁵⁴ Under the purview of the

¹⁵² Fuhr, “Improving Diversity,” 8, 32.

¹⁵³ In contrast, CAF family members posted outside Canada are conferred special status. Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, “The Constitutional Distribution of Legislative Powers,” Government, Canada.ca, July 6, 2017, <https://www.canada.ca/en/intergovernmental-affairs/services/federation/distribution-legislative-powers.html>.

¹⁵⁴ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 108.

Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat, DND/CAF has hosted four meetings of provincial and federal representatives in an effort to coordinate efforts in support of CAF families across the country.¹⁵⁵ A coordinated federal-provincial approach is a necessary step towards improved family support; however, the tangible results of the four meetings held between 2018 and 2020 were limited and mainly consisted of additional provincial efforts to improve communications efforts aimed at military families regarding existing services.¹⁵⁶

Military Family Resource Centre Programs and Services

Since their creation in 1991, MFRCs have been responsible (within Canada) for managing and executing much of the Military Family Services Program (MFSP). Most MFRCs are independent, non-profit charitable organizations in the jurisdiction in which they operate.¹⁵⁷ MFRC's are run by an elected civilian Board of Directors comprised of at least 50% military family members. The fundamental premise underlying the MFSP is that MFRCs are run "by families, for families."¹⁵⁸ Funding is provided to MFRCs by

¹⁵⁵ Department of National Defence, "National Defence Hosts the Fourth Seamless Canada Roundtable with Provinces and Territories," Government, Canada.ca, December 10, 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/news/2020/12/national-defence-hosts-the-fourth-seamless-canada-roundtable-with-provinces-and-territories.html>.

¹⁵⁶ The Maple Leaf, "Canadian Armed Forces 'Seamless Canada' Initiative Launches in Toronto," The Maple Leaf, July 30, 2018, <https://ml-fd.caf-fac.ca/en/2018/07/16985>; "Military Families: Services and Support," Government, Ontario.ca, November 5, 2018, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/military-families-services-and-support>; "Military Families Resource," Government, Alberta.ca, accessed February 5, 2021, <https://www.alberta.ca/military-family-resource.aspx>; Canada Government of New Brunswick, "New Brunswick Announces Joint Pilot Project to Help Military Families," Government, gnb.ca, July 17, 2018, https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2018.07.0947.html.

¹⁵⁷ There are currently two exceptions to this description in Canada. The Yellowknife MFRC, governed under the same model as other out-of-country MFRCs, is run by Non-Public Property staff members under Military Family Services rather than by a volunteer board of directors. The MFRC National Capital Region is currently in the process of switching to this same governance model, as well. Lisa Bianco, "MFRC NCR Governance Transition - Family Letter, Jan 26, 2021," January 26, 2021, <https://www.cafconnection.ca/getmedia/c48c8958-86de-422b-bd70-0f2526407e2f/MFRC-NCR-Transition-Family-Letter-Jan-26-2021.pdf.aspx>.

¹⁵⁸ Department of National Defence, "Military Family Services Program: Retrospective," 26.

DND under the auspices of a Memoranda of Understanding between the Military Family Services and each MFRC Board of Directors.¹⁵⁹ This model offers MFRCs a consistent, predictable level of funding. Over time, the funding models of several MFRCs have come to rely heavily on additional sources of income, such as fundraising and provincial grants.¹⁶⁰ Recent reviews of CAF family support have highlighted the vital roles that MFRCs play in supporting military families. The Ombudsman’s report specifically recommended that DND/CAF reinforce the central role of MFRCs and that the *by families for families* framework be “re-confirmed and codified.”¹⁶¹

Under the MFSP, MFRCs are mandated to provide general supports to military families as detailed in *MFSP Parameters 4 Practice*.¹⁶² This document includes specific services such as crisis: counselling, emergency, casual and respite childcare; veteran family support; employment services; second language training; deployment support; and welcome and orientation services.¹⁶³ MFRCs also provide a wide range of additional services and supports based on local demographics and needs as determined through community engagement activities, such as focus groups, program evaluations, or community needs assessment surveys.¹⁶⁴ Still, usage rates for MFRC programs and services are typically relatively low, often less than 10% of eligible members or

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 18.

¹⁶⁰ “KMFRC Annual Report, 2019-20,” Government, CAF Connection, 22, accessed January 20, 2021, https://www.cafconnection.ca/getmedia/8fb062c7-ddd4-49e3-a653-bc9995cf42d5/KMF008_AnnualReport_English.pdf.aspx. and “Edmonton Garrison Military Family Resource Centre Annual General Report, April 2019 - March 2020” (Edmonton Garrison Military Family Resource Centre), 8, accessed January 20, 2021, https://issuu.com/mfrcedmonton/docs/agr_2019-2020.

¹⁶¹ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 79.

¹⁶² Department of National Defence, “Parameters 4 Practice.”

¹⁶³ Ibid., 17–18.

¹⁶⁴ See *Community Needs Assessment* and *MFSP Performance Management Matrix* links on this page. Department of National Defence, “Governance and Accountability,” Government, Personnel Support Programs (PSP), accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/MFS/GovernanceandAccountability/Pages/default.aspx>.

families.¹⁶⁵ The low usage rate contrasts with general awareness of MFRC programs and services, which is significantly higher (see Figure 3.2). The 2016 National Community Needs Assessment also indicated that “the degree to which the supports are meeting needs seems to be low across areas, as rarely did more than half of those using each service rate them as helping them well or very well.”¹⁶⁶

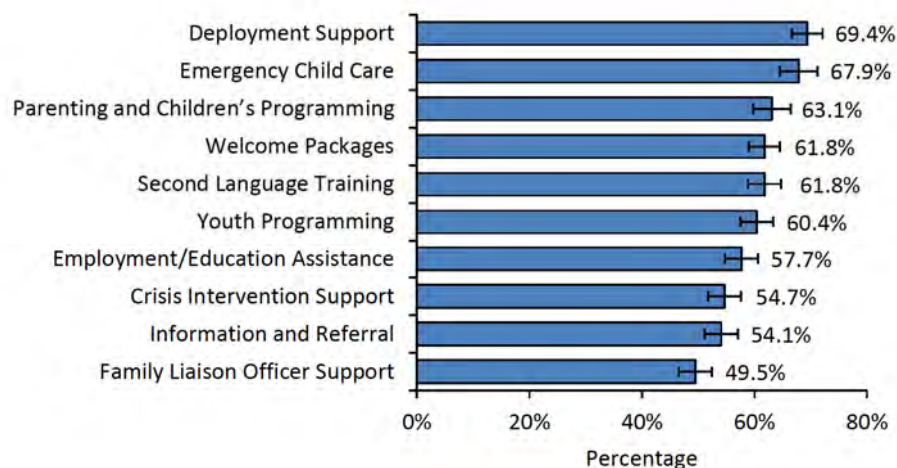


Figure 3.2 - Awareness of MFRC Programming

Source: Wang and Aitken, *Impacts of Military Lifestyle on Military Families: Results from the Quality-of-Life Survey of Canadian Armed Forces Spouses, 2016*

Numerous MFRCs have also recently faced organizational challenges that may impact their ability to provide high-quality support. Each MFRC is independently run, which provided needed flexibility to address local family challenges within the parameters of the MFSP; however, the strength of the Board of Directors and the

¹⁶⁵ Wang and Aitken, “Impacts of Military Lifestyle on Military Families: Results from the Quality of Life Survey of Canadian Armed Forces Spouses,” 27.

¹⁶⁶ Prairie Research Associates, “CAF Community Needs Assessment 2016 Report - Overall Results” (Winnipeg, MB: Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, August 2017), 91, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/MFS/FamilyResearch/Documents/2016%20CNA%20Results/CAF%20CNA%202016%20REPORT%20-%20OVERALL%20RESULTS.pdf>.

Executive Director, whom the Board hires, profoundly impacts the success of individual MFRCs. In recent years several MFRCs have experienced tremendous challenges related to the performance of EDs; these performance issues put stress on volunteer Boards and impact overall staff morale and performance.¹⁶⁷ In light of these issues, MFS has increased the level of training and human resources support available to MFRC Boards and, in the case of the MFRC National Capital Region, taken over the operation of the MFRC.¹⁶⁸ There has been very little publicity regarding some of these issues, and little is known about how these changes will impact CAF family support. Overall, MFRCs provide a wide range of valuable services to families and, 30 years after their founding, they remain the primary source of frontline support for CAF families.

Where Non-profit Organizations Fit In

Support Our Troops (SOT) is the official charitable cause of the CAF. CFMWS provides administrative and financial oversight for SOT under the auspices of Non-Public Property (NPP) regulations.¹⁶⁹ The primary role of SOT is to help meet the unique needs of the CAF community through the provision of financial assistance in the form of grants and/or loans that will help build family resilience. In particular, SOT is known for its

¹⁶⁷ EDs have been replaced at MFRCs in Valcartier, Ottawa and Winnipeg under challenging circumstances. The issues in Winnipeg were not publicly reported as they were deemed an HR matter; however, community members were made aware of the issues at the 2019 Annual General Meeting. “Une Histoire de Cœur Mêle Le Général Dallaire à Une Poursuite de 365 000\$ | TVA Nouvelles,” News, TVA nouvelles, accessed April 6, 2021, <https://www.tvanouvelles.ca/2019/04/05/une-histoire-de-cur-me-le-general-dallaire-a-une-poursuite-de-365-000>; “Former Ottawa YMCA-YWCA Director Pleads Guilty to Fraud,” *Capital Current* (blog), October 31, 2018, <https://capitalcurrent.ca/former-ottawa-ymca-ywca-director-pleads-guilty-to-fraud/>.

¹⁶⁸ Bianco, “MFRC NCR Governance Transition - Family Letter, Jan 26, 2021,” January 26, 2021.

¹⁶⁹ “Who We Are - Support Our Troops,” Support Our Troops, accessed February 22, 2021, <https://www.supportourtroops.ca/about-us/who-we-are>.

support to members, veterans and their families coping with a service-related physical and/or mental illness or injury.¹⁷⁰

A cursory review of the Military and Veteran charities category at www.Canadahelps.org helps demonstrate the wide range of non-profit, charitable organizations external to DND/CAF that are working to support military members and veterans.¹⁷¹ A smaller subset of these non-profits provides direct support or conducts work to benefit current CAF families.¹⁷² For example, the Together We Stand Foundation was founded in 2018 by Rick and Lilian Ekstein; the Ekstein's recognized a gap in CAF family-focused organizations among Canadian non-profit organizations. The Foundation's mission is to "...become the most trusted philanthropic partner of CAF families by ensuring they are acknowledged and honoured in a way that they have never been before."¹⁷³ Another longstanding Canadian non-profit organization, introduced in Chapter Two, is The Vanier Institute of the Family; following the publication of the Ombudsman's report, they began working partnership with MFS on a *Military and Veteran Families in Canada Initiative*.¹⁷⁴ The initiative aims to build awareness, capacity and competency surrounding military families in the civilian community through research and information sharing. For example, they worked with The College of Family Physicians of Canada to create a guide to inform family physicians across Canada of

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ "Military & Veterans Charities | Donate to Help Vets | CanadaHelps," Canada Helps, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/explore/charities/category/social-services/sub-category/military-veterans/>.

¹⁷² Note that there are a number of MFRCs listed by in the Canada Helps Military and Veteran directory. The reliance of MFRCs on charitable donations has already been addressed and hence they will not be further discussed in this section.

¹⁷³ "Together We Stand," Together We Stand, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://twsfoundation.ca/>.

¹⁷⁴ The Vanier Institute of the Family, "Military and Veteran Families in Canada Initiative," *The Vanier Institute of the Family / L'Institut Vanier de La Famille* (blog), accessed February 2, 2021, <https://vanierinstitute.ca/research/military-veteran-families-canada-initiative/>.

some of the pervasive challenges military families face both generally and in accessing health care. Finally, Wounded Warriors is a “national mental service provider...for Canada’s Veterans, First Responders and their Families”.¹⁷⁵ They provide programs for members and families and fund research through the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research. These are just a sampling of the many charitable organizations that provide support directly or indirectly to CAF families.

Families Helping Families

Military families are incredibly resilient and work hard to help support one another. Military families have long been part of a tight-knit, mutually supportive community; however, recently, efforts within the military family community have expanded to include community groups that explicitly seek to close systemic gaps in formal military support. The rapid increase in popularity of social media over the past decade has enabled and empowered these groups. For example, most CAF posting locations now have informal Facebook groups where family members congregate to share local information and seek both tangible and intangible support. In addition to geographically based groups, other groups have emerged with very specific purposes. One example is the *Unofficial CAF Relocation Site*, a private Facebook group with almost 10,000 members “for CAF military families ...posted throughout Canada and internationally to connect and discuss relocating [sic] issues”. Since the DND/CAF renegotiation of the relocation contract with BGRS, this and other posting-focused sites

¹⁷⁵ “Wounded Warriors - Home,” Wounded Warriors Canada, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://woundedwarriors.ca/>.

have become a pivotal place for many CAF members and their families to seek clarification regarding current relocation policies and procedures.¹⁷⁶

The Canadian Military Family Advocacy Group is another example of a Facebook group with a specific purpose.¹⁷⁷ A small group of CAF family members founded the group after connecting in another private Facebook group. Collectively, these family members recognized the limitations of the DND/CAF-based organizations to advocate for CAF families directly to provincial and federal government representatives and sought an alternative solution.¹⁷⁸ For the past three years, the group has proactively engaged with other stakeholders in the CAF family support domain, both internal and external to DND/CAF.

Summary

This chapter has discussed the wide range of organizations supporting CAF families both formally and informally. Although not a comprehensive summary of the policies, programs and services available, the chapter provided an overview of the types of support available and highlighted where they are and are not succeeding in meeting CAF family needs. In a few areas, the chapter highlighted where policies are potentially out of touch and fail to recognize the diversity and changeable nature of families. These gaps will grow if DND/CAF successfully recruits and retains more diverse members and more women. The information presented in this chapter will provide important context

¹⁷⁶ “Posting Season - Military Relocations | Groups | Facebook.”

¹⁷⁷ “Canadian Military Family Advocacy,” Canadian Military Family Advocacy, accessed February 2, 2021, <http://militaryfamilyadvocacy.weebly.com/>; “Military Family Advocacy Think Tank | Groups | Facebook,” Social, Facebook, accessed April 5, 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/309121496331716>.

¹⁷⁸ “Canadian Military Family Advocacy.”

when considering the implications of possible future changes to the domain over the next 20 years.

Opportunities to generate theoretically informed, evidence-based family interventions will contribute not only to testing theories about military families but also to advancing well-being for the next generation of service members and their families.

— Abigail H. Gewirtz, *A Call for Theoretically Informed and Empirically Validated Military Family Interventions*, 2018

CHAPTER 4 – THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF FAMILY SUPPORT

Theories are used to link the abstract world to the concrete world, to link concepts and ideas to empirical data. Theories can also be characterized as “an attempt to move beyond the “what” of our observations to the questions of the “why” and “how” of what we have observed.”¹⁷⁹ There is a broad range of sociological theories related to families that help expand our understanding of both families themselves and families’ interactions within society. When dealing with current research, theories are used to test and explain empirical data; however, they can also test hypothetical future data.¹⁸⁰ Chapter One introduced Hines’ and Bishop’s *Foresight Framework* strategic foresight methodology as a means of thinking critically about the future of the CAF family support domain. Integrating sociological theories of family into the implications’ analysis stage of the strategic foresight process will help deepen DND/CAF's understanding of how future changes could impact family support, a vital step in creating policies, programs and services that meet families’ needs. This chapter will review and discuss the limitations of two theories currently utilized in DND/CAF as foundations for policy, program and services: resilience theory and wellness theory. It will then discuss three alternative theories that could be used for future analysis of the CAF family support domain: family

¹⁷⁹ Barbara A. Mitchell, *Family Matters, Third Edition: An Introduction to Family Sociology in Canada*, Third (Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars, 2017), 51, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cfvlibrary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=6282172&ppg=7>.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

systems theory, social ecological theory, and intersectional feminist theory. Finally, it will highlight how these theories can be integrated into the strategic foresight process.

Resilience Theory

Much ink has been spilled in military circles over the past 20 years about resilience as a vital trait to be emphasized and nurtured based on the premise that increasing the resilience of members and families will equate to a decreased need for family support.¹⁸¹ What does it mean to be resilient? In its most basic terms, resilience is the ability of a system to adapt to changes or challenges that threaten its functionality, development, or very existence.¹⁸² Resilience applies not just to individuals but also to families and whole communities.¹⁸³ Research on resilience concerning stress or trauma has been conducted since the 1970s.¹⁸⁴ However, there is a more recent and growing body of research into resilience in military members and families. That research considers what enables resilience, how military family life events impact resilience, and what value resilient members and families bring to the military institution, and what risks are posed by less- or non-resilient families. In general, the theory proposes that systems with the “capacity to adapt,” both independently and synchronously, will provide some protection against the negative impacts of a wide variety of traumatic events.¹⁸⁵ For CAF, this means resilient members, families, and communities will be more able to cope with the inherent challenges of family life, military life and, perhaps most importantly, the

¹⁸¹ Ann S. Masten, “Resilience Theory and Research on Children and Families: Past, Present, and Promise,” *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 10, no. 1 (March 2018): 12, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12255>.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Jay A. Mancini et al., “Community Capacity,” in *Encyclopedia of Primary Prevention and Health Promotion*, ed. Thomas P. Gullotta et al. (Boston, MA: Springer US, 2003), 2, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-0195-4_45.

¹⁸⁴ Masten, “Resilience Theory and Research on Children and Families,” 13.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 12.

intersection of family life with military life. The current emphasis on resilience fails to account for the fact that even resilient people, families, and communities may struggle under circumstances where the programs and services needed to close systemic gaps are not available. For example, familial resilience is unlikely to fundamentally help a family who cannot acquire a quality, affordable childcare space following a military relocation. A resilient family may cope more effectively with the adjustments required under this scenario (for example, one parent needing to stay home and the resulting loss of income and indirect effects on family quality of life). Still, resilience alone fails to address the root cause of the challenge. Although resilience may be worth cultivating in members, families and communities, resilience theory has limited deterministic value when conducting implications' analysis of plausible futures.

Wellness Theory

Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services (CFMWS) currently uses wellness theory as part of the theoretical foundation for member and family support.¹⁸⁶ The most recent strategic framework on military and veteran family support identifies eight determinants of wellness – physical, psychological/emotional, intellectual, occupational, social/familial, spiritual/moral, financial and environmental – and articulates intent to align programs and services to address these determinants. While often used in social work practice focusing on individual wellness, wellness theory is also applicable at the community level. It can be used to empower disadvantaged groups, such as military families.¹⁸⁷ The theory acknowledges that wellness is not a static state but rather

¹⁸⁶ Department of National Defence, “Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+,” 22.

¹⁸⁷ Gwyn C. Jones and Allie C. Kilpatrick, “Wellness Theory: A Discussion and Application to Clients with Disabilities,” *Families in Society* 77, no. 5 (May 1, 1996): 260, <https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.914>.

something that evolves and must be developed to create a higher quality of life.¹⁸⁸ One of the values of wellness theory is that it looks at the individual as a whole, “mind, body, emotions, and spirit,” which has utility for holistic program development.¹⁸⁹ However, to truly appreciate the factors of individual wellness, a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of the individual, the family and other social organizations and structures around them is required. Like resilience theory, wellness theory is not well suited to the implications’ analysis portion of strategic foresight work.

Family Systems Theory

Family systems theory is based on general systems theory. The theory is constructed on the assumption that the family system is more than just a combination of independent parts or individual experiences. Family systems theory proposes that actions must always be considered “in the context of the larger system.”¹⁹⁰ The experiences of one family member influence and impact the family system as a whole to varying degrees. For example, in a military context, this may look like the negative feelings of an adolescent regarding a posting having the effect of increasing the anxiety level of a younger sibling over starting at a new school and, subsequently, the children’s stress harming the parents’ relationship. Family systems theory helps develop an understanding of the “dynamic pattern of relations between members and their families,” which is necessary for family support stakeholders to understand the influence of future changes on the domain.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 264.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 259.

¹⁹⁰ Blair Paley, Patricia Lester, and Catherine Mogil, “Family Systems and Ecological Perspectives on the Impact of Deployment on Military Families,” *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review* 16 (2013): 246.

Furthermore, family systems theory highlights that families typically seek to maintain a certain level of stability. Any change in the family system or family life transition (such as the temporary or permanent absence of a member or significant change in family life circumstance) requires the whole family to re-balance itself. All families experience transitions. However, military families may experience additional normative transitions (school changes, relocations, family member(s) coming and going from daily life due to service-related separations).¹⁹¹ Military families may also experience more frequent or more severe non-normative challenges (such as service-related injury or illness and extended absences with heightened levels of risk).¹⁹² Military families may also experience times when normative military challenges, such as relocation, overlap with non-normative challenges, such as requiring specialist medical care. In this instance, additional stress can result if a relocation causes the family to have to restart a diagnostic process over again in a new province or shifts the family to the bottom of a new waitlist, effectively delaying care. Using a family systems perspective, family support stakeholders can consider the family as a whole when determining potential implications of plausible futures on the people, systems and structures at the heart of CAF family support.

Social Ecological Theory

Social ecological theory expands the sphere of influence from the family itself to include elements external to the family.¹⁹³ The theory assumes that families are

¹⁹¹ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, "On the Homefront Update," 31, 37.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 17, 104.

¹⁹³ Urie Bronfenbrenner, "Ecology of the Family as a Context for Human Development: Research Perspectives," *Developmental Psychology* 22, no. 6 (1986): 723–42, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.22.6.723>.

influenced by external organizations and systems, such as work, school, daycare, where they live, and health care services and providers, among other things. There may be added outside influences in the military context due to the member's service, such as the Unit or Base/Wing, the member's trade or environmental community, etc. The theory conceptualizes an ecosystem in which the individual and family operate. Writing on American military families for the Committee on the Well-being of Military Families, Kizer and Menestral adapted this Urie Bronfenbrenner's model to depict military family systems.¹⁹⁴ The ecosystem is represented by a series of concentric circles, with the individual at the centre surrounded by incrementally larger systems of influence.¹⁹⁵ Moving out from the centre, the next ring is known as the microsystem; this layer of the ecosystem includes those individuals and organizations closest to the individual. In a CAF context the microsystem includes other family members, peers, school and health professionals and the member's unit. The second layer is the mesosystem, which is broader community context with which the microsystem individuals and organizations interact. The mesosystem for a CAF family includes not only the local community but also the Wing or Base and elements of the environment in which the member serves (CA/RCN/RCAF). The third ring is the exosystem. The exosystem is even broader and includes "economic trends and political systems, military and federal policy, social services, education and mass media and social media."¹⁹⁶ In Canada, this the level at which MFRCs and provincial policies that impact military families reside. The outer

¹⁹⁴ Committee on the Well-Being of Military Families et al., *Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society*, 48.

¹⁹⁵ Bronfenbrenner, "Ecology of the Family as a Context for Human Development," 723.

¹⁹⁶ Committee on the Well-Being of Military Families et al., *Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society*, 51.

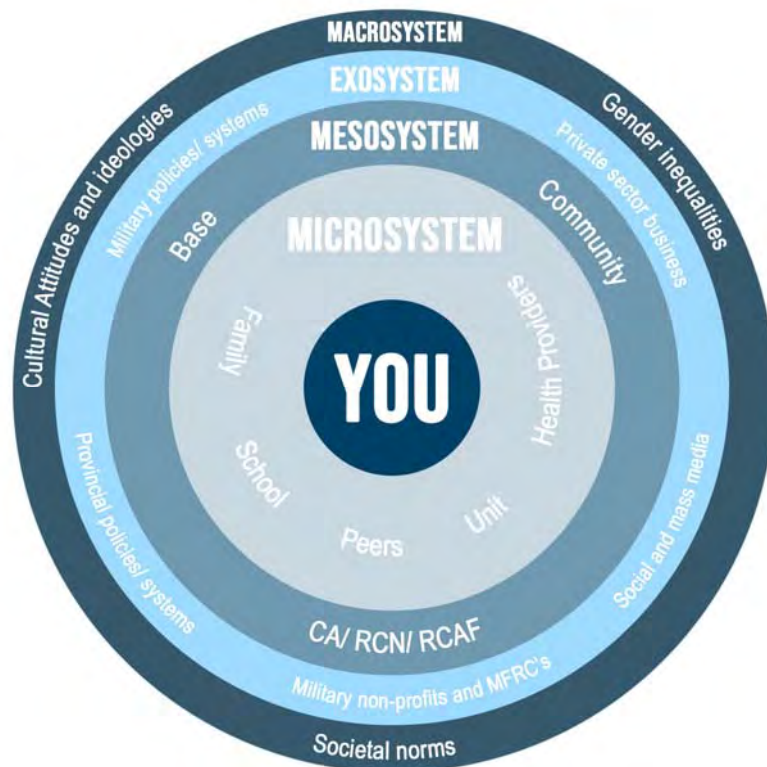


Figure 4.1 – Canadian Military Family Social Ecological Systems

Source: Adapted from Kizer and Menestral, *Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society*, 2019

most layer of the system is the macrosystem or cultural systems level; this is where CAF culture intersects with broader Canadian culture and where “societal level influences...such as gender inequalities, income inequality, social norms, policies and regulations” come into play. It is at this level of the system where there may be conflict between military norms and societal norms; on example of this is the disconnect between military regulations regarding hair length and style and broader social acceptance of a

wider range of personnel grooming options.¹⁹⁷ The Figure 4.1 provides a possible depiction of the CAF family ecosystem and helps demonstrate the depth and breadth of the layered systems that impact and interact with members of CAF families. Any analysis of CAF family support policies, programs, and services will be more thorough and robust if it takes into account the elements of the CAF family ecosystem.

Precedent exists within DND/CAF for utilizing a social ecological framework to structure and assess personnel-related policies and programs; *Balance: CAF Physical Performance Strategy*, published in 2018, acknowledged the need to address determinants of health at the “individual, interpersonal, organizational and policy levels.”¹⁹⁸ Viewing wellness through a social ecological lens, it is apparent that family and the broader community play a role in shaping the health behaviours of military members. This lens highlights that the military as an institution and the communities, organizations, and policies surrounding it also directly impact families' well-being. This use of a social ecological framework is the added step necessary to make aspects of wellness theory valuable in strategic foresight work on CAF family support.

A social ecological approach emphasizes that in developing policies, programs, and services, policymakers should consider the family system and the organizations

¹⁹⁷ A recent example of a decision stemming from this particular disconnect were 2019 changes to CAF Dress Instructions, including amendments that allow members who “express their gender as female” to wear ponytails in certain orders of dress, forego pantyhose and wear flat shoes while wearing skirts – dress and appearance conventions have long been the norm in the private sector. A similar order was issued in 2018 permitting men to grow beards. Department of National Defence, *CANFORGEN 048/19 - CMP 030/19 011939Z Apr 19 - CHANGES TO CAF DRESS INSTRUCTIONS TO WOMENS SERVICE DRESS* (Chief of Military Personnel, 2019); Department of National Defence, *CANFORGEN 058/18 - CMP 078/18 251819Z Sep 18 - AMENDMENT TO BEARD POLICY* (Chief of Military Personnel, 2018).

¹⁹⁸ Department of National Defence, “BALANCE: The Canadian Armed Forces Physical Performance Strategy” (Ottawa, ON: Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, 2018), 38, https://www.cafconnection.ca/getmedia/d244a0e1-3e52-4177-9649-3e19637f5173/BALANCE-Book_E.pdf.aspx.

external to the family. Measuring compensation and benefits through a social ecological lens would ensure policymakers identify where community-level systems will intersect with the family systems and how those intersections may or may not change the outcomes of prospective policies or policy changes. A current example where a social ecological approach would be valuable is the compensation model for the FCA. Under the current FCA policy, members can be reimbursed for the cost of commercially provided childcare, in excess of their normal expenses, at a rate of \$75 per 24-hour period.¹⁹⁹ However, in many communities, overnight commercial childcare is not available; members may end up being reimbursed at the non-commercial rate (\$35/day) and paying out of pocket for costs over and above that rate paid to non-commercial providers. Left without other options, families frequently claim the non-commercial rate to offset transportation costs to bring extended family members to the family as temporary care providers. If families could claim a portion of the transportation costs equivalent to the non-commercial rate, the financial burden on already disadvantaged families would be reduced. Overall, the policy fails to provide the full benefit intended because it fails to consider the systems at play outside the family. Using a social ecological lens to view plausible futures will help policymakers holistically assess the implications of changes on the larger family support ecosystem.

Intersectional Feminism

Many theories fall into the category of feminist theories, many of them dating back to the middle of the 20th century. Sociologist Barbara Mitchell argues that feminist theories have five themes in common:

¹⁹⁹ Department of National Defence, *Compensation and Benefits Instructions - Chapter 209 - Transportation and Travelling Expenses*.

1. Emphasis is placed on the female experience, since social life has traditionally been studied through the gaze of men.
2. Gender is an organizing concept of social theory and is seen as a set of relations imbued with power and inequality.
3. Gender and family relations need to be contextualized in their respective socio-cultural and historical situations and vary by social class, ethnicity, and geographic location.
4. There is not one single unitary definition of “the family.”
5. Instead of taking a ‘value-neutral’ orientation, feminists purport that inequality exists and should be eliminated.²⁰⁰

Many of these themes are relevant to CAF family support. For example, The CAF, as a historically male institution, has not always intuitively considered the female experience or perspective in the creation of programs, services and policies, and the need for a broader, more encompassing definition of family has been well documented.²⁰¹ More recent discussions in the CAF, such as the ongoing efforts to root out harmful sexual behaviour and hateful conduct, have highlighted the need to eliminate systemic inequalities in the organization. This goal is in line with feminist social theory.

Intersectional feminism looks beyond gender to include other human factors such as age, race, language, sexuality and economic status to help explain our “multidimensional social lives.”²⁰² The term intersectionality was coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw based on the following metaphor:

Consider an analogy to traffic in an intersection, coming and going in all four directions. Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in an intersection, it can be caused by cars traveling from any number of directions and, sometimes, from all of them. Similarly, if a Black woman is harmed because she is in the intersection, her injury could result from sex discrimination or race discrimination.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ Mitchell, *Family Matters, Third Edition: An Introduction to Family Sociology in Canada*, 35.

²⁰¹ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update,” 75.

²⁰² Mitchell, *Family Matters, Third Edition: An Introduction to Family Sociology in Canada*, 36–37.

²⁰³ Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics,” *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, no. 1 (n.d.): 149.

Intersectionality is more than the ways in which individuals or groups of individuals are different; instead, it describes the ways those differences intersect to “[compound] experiences of discrimination, marginalization, and, importantly, oppression.”²⁰⁴

As the CAF increases both the percentage of women who serve and the ethnic and racial diversity of serving members, intersectional feminism will become more valuable as a lens through which to view family support needs and policies. There is relatively little research on deployment as viewed through an intersectional feminist lens; however, one US study did identify a range of common reactions and coping mechanisms among spouses divided by ethnicity – Asians, Latinas and Blacks and Whites.²⁰⁵ This study demonstrates the value of continued use of intersectional feminism as an analytical tool when assessing the consequences of military life on members and families.

Gender Based Analysis + (GBA+) is an already mandated GoC framework for considering public policy problems through an intersectional lens. SSE further reinforces the requirement for DND/CAF to utilize GBA+ for all future program, policy and capability development, which is a good start.²⁰⁶ However, there remains room for improvement in the realm of family support, given that GBA+ may encourage untrained staff to prioritize gender over other variables.²⁰⁷ Hence, intersectional feminism as a

²⁰⁴ Marsha Henry, “Problematizing Military Masculinity, Intersectionality and Male Vulnerability in Feminist Critical Military Studies,” *Critical Military Studies* 3, no. 2 (May 4, 2017): 184, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23337486.2017.1325140>.

²⁰⁵ Roberto Cancio, “Military Life, Intersectionality, and Deployment: The Social Experiences and Difficulties of Mothers Who Stay Behind” (Ph.D., United States -- Florida, University of Miami, 2018), 78–87, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/2113460589/abstract/8F71385CA8534BDEPQ/1>.

²⁰⁶ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 24.

²⁰⁷ Olena Hankivsky and Ashlee Christoffersen, “Intersectionality and the Determinants of Health: A Canadian Perspective,” *Critical Public Health* 18, no. 3 (September 2008): 273, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09581590802294296>.

theory will help achieve a broader assessment of the implications of changes, especially the implications of change for diverse families.

Incorporating Sociological Theories into Strategic Foresight

One of the intended outcomes of the *Framework Foresight* methodology is implications' analysis of potential alternative futures. Hines and Bishop describe this step "as a transition from the description of the world *out there* to a focus on what it means for the client *in here*," and they emphasize the opportunity to evaluate change at different levels.²⁰⁸ Family systems theory, social ecological theory and intersectional feminist theory are valuable tools in this analysis. They will help build a more holistic picture of the 1st, 2nd and higher-order effects of plausible futures. The framework has integral structures to assist with this, such as the futures wheel, but implications' analysis ultimately requires a certain amount of creativity.²⁰⁹ The theories presented in this chapter are helpful tools to help guide that creative process and will encourage a complete analysis.

Summary

Since the publication of the Ombudsman's report in 2013, DND/CAF has emphasized the value of research into military families. Currently, DND/CAF's synthesis of available data on military families has relied heavily on resilience and wellness theories. These theories can help describe how military family members change and adapt due to the impacts of military and family life experiences, such as postings, deployments, relationship challenges or financial stress. The theories have been used successfully to argue in favour of CAF family supports that build resilience and facilitate

²⁰⁸ Hines and Bishop, "Framework Foresight," 46.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

wellness. However, these theories fail to fully account for how families interact with broader systems or for how those interactions reverberate through the family system itself. Viewing future CAF family support challenges through the additional lenses of family systems theory, social ecological theory and intersectional feminism will help ensure that a broader range of perspectives are considered when developing or making changes to policies, programs and services. These theories will be incorporated into the *Foresight Framework* process at the implications' analysis stage to build a more robust picture of how the future could impact families and how CAF family support could adapt to meet families' needs.

For time and the world do not stand still. Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or the present are certain to miss the future.

— John F Kennedy, 1963

CHAPTER 5 – FUTURE FORESIGHT

Thinking about the future is a natural human phenomenon. Futures thinking, though, is more than simply thinking about the future. *The Future Toolkit* describes futures thinking as “an approach to identifying the long term issues and challenges shaping the future development of a policy area and to exploring their implications for policy development.”²¹⁰ The term *futures thinking* is itself just one phrase used to describe the field of study that looks forward; it is also known alternatively as *foresight* or *strategic foresight*, although some scholars identify nuances between the various phrases.²¹¹ In a primer on using strategic foresight for improved governance, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) notes that “[s]trategic foresight is not the same thing as strategic planning,” nor is it the same thing as forecasting.²¹² Strategic foresight is broader than forecasting, which identifies a single, plausible future; moreover, strategic foresight helps develop better plans but does not replace them.²¹³ Essentially strategic foresight does not predict the future; rather, it uses a range of foresight methodologies “to recognize changing events and accurately plan for

²¹⁰ Great Britain, “The Futures Toolkit: Tools for Futures Thinking and Foresight across UK Government” (Government Office for Science, November 2017), 2.

²¹¹ There are other terms used as well, but these are the most commonly used today. Wendy Schultz L., “A Brief History of Futures,” *World Future Review* 7, no. 4 (2016): 325, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1946756715627646>.

²¹² “Strategic Foresight for Better Policies” (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, October 2019), 2–3, <https://www.oecd.org/strategic-foresight/ourwork/Strategic%20Foresight%20for%20Better%20Policies.pdf>.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

possible future outcomes.”²¹⁴ Strategic foresight is a valuable tool for analyzing the implications of potential future changes; it will allow DND/CAF to shift from addressing family support requirements reactively to providing family support proactively.

What Are the Origins of Strategic Foresight?

Futures thinking has been around almost as long as people have been thinking about the future. Futurist Wendy Schultz describes the origins of futures studies as beginning with the "oral tradition" of mystics and shaman.²¹⁵ The 20th century saw the disciplines of futures studies and foresight evolve rapidly, especially in the immediate post-WWII period when military and military-adjacent futures work being done in western Europe and North America. For example, Herman Khan’s work for RAND corporation on thermonuclear war was one of the earliest examples of scenario thinking, now a hallmark of foresight work.²¹⁶ By the late 1960s, futures thinking was becoming institutionalized “first in professional conferences, assemblies, and organizations, and later as formal academic programs.”²¹⁷ Royal Dutch Shell and General Electric in the 1970s were the forerunners among major private corporations using futures thinking and scenario planning to develop long-term strategic outlooks.²¹⁸ By the 1980s, scenario planning was commonplace in futures thinking, and foresight work had moved from the

²¹⁴ Deborah A. Schreiber, “Introduction to Futures Thinking in Organizations,” in *Futures Thinking and Organizational Policy: Case Studies for Managing Rapid Change in Technology, Globalization and Workforce Diversity: Case Studies for Managing Rapid Change in Technology, Globalization and Workforce Diversity*, ed. Deborah A. Schreiber and Zane L. Berge (Springer International Publishing AG, 2019), 3, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cfvlibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=5625037>.

²¹⁵ Schultz, “A Brief History of Futures,” 325.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 327.

²¹⁷ “The History of Foresight: The Short Version,” Foresight Futures, accessed March 18, 2021, <https://foresightfutures.net/the-history-of-foresight>.

²¹⁸ Angela Wilkinson and Roland Kupers, “Living in the Futures,” *Harvard Business Review*, May 1, 2013, <https://hbr.org/2013/05/living-in-the-futures>; “The History of Foresight.”

realm of military planning to the private sector.²¹⁹The introduction of “imagination into organizations as a legitimate activity, albeit disguised in a planning process” is one critical contribution of the scenario planning method to current work on futures studies.²²⁰

A more interdisciplinary view characterizes the current wave of futures studies. From WWII into the early 2000s, futures studies focused heavily on "technocratic and determinist theories and approaches," since that time, the discipline has shifted to include deeper consideration of the "social and cultural substructures of changing human systems."²²¹ The recent proliferation of digital, open-source media and social networks has also enabled the decentralization of futures work, making it globally accessible. One example of the easily accessible open-source information is the website shapingtomorrow.com. Shaping Tomorrow uses artificial intelligence (AI) to assist foresight practitioners with the horizon scanning and trends identification processes; members can select desired keywords and collect open-source media according to their identified needs, and the site will provide updated results according to a set schedule.²²²

Who Uses Strategic Foresight?

Strategic foresight is now widely used in both the private sector and public sector as a means to explore potential future risks and opportunities. Futures studies, as a discipline, is also now well established in the academic world. Various strategic foresight methodologies are used widely in the private sector, where the reaction to a changing

²¹⁹ “The History of Foresight.”

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Schultz, “A Brief History of Futures,” 328.

²²² “Shaping Tomorrow.”

future impacts the bottom line.²²³ While examples of private sector foresight work are not widely shared due to their proprietary nature, several case studies are available on *how* businesses are implementing and using the results of strategic foresight work to their advantage.²²⁴

After being heavily used in the national defence sector in the mid-20th century, governments at all levels are also now using strategic foresight “to facilitate strategic management and for allocation of resources, to prepare for emergencies and crisis, and even to encourage democratic and societal debates about desired ends.”²²⁵ Part of its usefulness in a government context is that it can provide concrete, analytical information upon which to base both strategic decisions and strategic plans.²²⁶

The GoC has established Policy Horizons Canada with a mandate to conduct foresight work and build foresight literacy across all GoC departments, including DND/CAF.²²⁷ Reporting to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Policy Horizons Canada has built a foresight method based on steps very similar to those established by Hines and Bishop, including horizon scanning, change driver mapping, scenario planning, and implications’ analysis.²²⁸ In addition to

²²³ C Ryan J Lee, “Strategic Foresight Methods in the Public and Private Sectors,” n.d., 64; Great Britain, “The Futures Toolkit: Tools for Futures Thinking and Foresight across UK Government”; “Home – Policy Horizons Canada.”

²²⁴ René Rohrbeck, Heinrich Arnold, and J. Heuer, “Strategic Foresight in Multinational Enterprises - A Case Study on the Deutsche Telekom Laboratories,” *ISPIM-Asia 2007 Conference*, February 12, 2007; Frank Ruff, “The Advanced Role of Corporate Foresight in Innovation and Strategic Management — Reflections on Practical Experiences from the Automotive Industry,” *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 101 (December 1, 2015): 37–48, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2014.07.013>.

²²⁵ Ian Roberge, “Futures Construction in Public Management,” *The International Journal of Public Sector Management* 26, no. 7 (2013): 534, <http://dx.doi.org.cfc.idm.oclc.org/10.1108/IJPSM-06-2012-0074>.

²²⁶ Maree Conway, “An Overview of Foresight Methodologies,” n.d., 2.

²²⁷ “About Us – Policy Horizons Canada,” Government, Policy Horizons Canada, accessed March 19, 2021, <https://horizons.gc.ca/en/about-us/>.

²²⁸ “Module 1: Introduction to Foresight – Policy Horizons Canada,” Government, Policy Horizons Canada, 4, accessed March 18, 2021, <https://horizons.gc.ca/en/our-work/learning-materials/foresight-training-manual-module-1-introduction-to-foresight/>.

providing foresight learning modules for use by other organizations, Policy Horizons Canada is also actively working on foresight projects related to economics, governance and social futures.²²⁹ They have also completed work on a number of other projects, including Canada 2030, which used a 15-year time horizon to review potentially disruptive social and technological changes that could transform “the relationship between Canada’s government and broader society.”²³⁰ DND/CAF has also leveraged their expertise for training and education.²³¹ Overall, Policy Horizons Canada is well placed to help further foresight work in other departments, including DND/CAF.

Despite its widespread use by government, foresight in a government context is sometimes limited by bureaucratic stovepipes, lack of interdisciplinary teams and political considerations.²³² As strategic foresight work becomes more commonplace in GoC departments, this narrow focus could pose challenges within the DND/CAF, where specialist organizations frequently conducted strategic planning in isolation. For example, the most recent CFMWS strategic plan for military family support specifically identified the evolution of “families, society and programs” as a foundational element of its program design and highlighted mission focus as a key decision-making criterion for future family support decisions.²³³ However, it failed to address the fact that the military itself, and the missions it is called to conduct, will change in the future. The publicly

²²⁹ “Module 1.”

²³⁰ “Our Work – Policy Horizons Canada,” Government, Policy Horizons Canada, accessed March 19, 2021, <https://horizons.gc.ca/en/our-work/>.

²³¹ Canadian Joint Operations Command recently offered a Design Thinking series of lectures to its staff that included a lecture on foresight by Policy Horizons Canada, and the syllabus for the Institutional Policy Studies stream (DS 557) of the Joint Command and Staff Program at the Canadian Forces College includes futures analyses. Department of National Defence, “Syllabus Canadian Forces College (CFC) Joint Command and Staff Programme (JCSP) Residential” (Canadian Forces College, 2020), 3-5/18.

²³² Roberge, “Futures Construction in Public Management,” 534.

²³³ Department of National Defence, “Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+,” 23.

available training from Policy Horizons Canada is one means of overcoming this potential shortfall.²³⁴ Properly done by an interdisciplinary team, strategic foresight may even help break down other communications barriers between civilian non-public property employees in CFMWS and military staff looking at future military family problem sets.

Foresight is also increasingly taught and utilized in academia. Universities worldwide now offer degree programs, post-graduate studies, diplomas and individual courses in strategic foresight or futures studies.²³⁵ Several academic journals are also dedicated to futures studies and strategic foresight research, and teams of researchers conducting futures research on specific topics. In Canada, for example, the Defence and Security and Foresight Group, directed by Dr. Bessma Momani from the University of Waterloo, is a team of Canadian academics conducting foresight-based research on a number of defence-related topics.²³⁶

DND/CAF is also currently using strategic foresight to consider future risks and opportunities. In 2017 the Canadian Army released a three-volume strategic foresight series entitled *Canada's Future Army*, which used a customized selection of foresight tools to analyse the military implications of four potential global scenarios for the year 2040.²³⁷ It is an in-depth example of how DND/CAF can use foresight to identify actions

²³⁴ "Module 1."

²³⁵ "The History of Foresight."

²³⁶ "Defence and Security Foresight Group: University of Waterloo," Defence and Security Foresight Group, September 11, 2019, <https://uwaterloo.ca/defence-security-foresight-group/home>.

²³⁷ Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 1: Methodology, Perspectives and Approaches*; Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 2: Force Employment Implications*, vol. 2, 3 vols., Canada's Future Army (Kingston, ON: Canadian Army Land Warfare Centre, 2017), http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2017/mdn-dnd/D2-354-1-2015-eng.pdf; Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 3: Alternate Worlds and Implications*, vol. 3, 3 vols., Canada's Future Army (Kingston, ON: Canadian Army Land Warfare Centre, 2017), http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2018/mdn-dnd/D2-354-3-2017-eng.pdf.

that can be taken now to prepare for the range of possible futures. *Canada's Future Army* recommends establishing a “process framework for an early warning system” that would alert the GoC and defence professionals to changes in the domain with enough lead time to take concrete action.²³⁸ These volumes represent and a substantial body of foresight work that is, nonetheless, very specific to the future of the Canadian Army. The work does highlight the range of possible challenges and opportunities within the future security environment, which suggests that other environments and organizations within DND/CAF could consider conducting strategic foresight projects.

A futures-focused view is required to ensure DND/CAF and other family support stakeholders meet military families' needs within the context of a rapidly changing future security environment. There are organizations and researchers in Canada and elsewhere, who are thinking about the future as it relates to military families, the challenges families are likely to face, and the barriers to support that may exist in the future²³⁹. In 2012, Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) did publish strategic foresight work on the employment of women in the CAF in 2022. While this material is now outdated and was not specifically designed to review CAF family support writ large, it did consider issues that overlap with CAF family support such as “the changing nature of

²³⁸ Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 3: Alternate Worlds and Implications*, 3:67.

²³⁹ Department of National Defence, “Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+.” Coppola and Wadsworth, “Understanding the Challenges and Meeting the Needs of Military and Veteran Families.”, Committee on the Well-Being of Military Families et al., *Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society*. Linda Hughes-Kirchubel, Shelley MacDermid, and David Riggs, *A Battle Plan for Supporting Military Families: Lessons for the Leaders of Tomorrow* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2018)., John D. Winkler et al., *Reflections on the Future of Warfare and Implications for Personnel Policies of the U.S. Department of Defense* (RAND Corporation, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.7249/PE324>.

family” and the “decline in consistency of available medical support across Canada.”²⁴⁰

However, there are no examples of future foresight analysis specific to CAF family support.²⁴¹ If DND/CAF intends to meet the goal set out in SSE of “well-supported, diverse, resilient...families,” this gap must be closed.²⁴² Strategic planning based on today’s reality is not enough. DND/CAF must start critically analysing a range of possible futures and establish family support policies, programs and services that can rapidly adapt as any possible futures become a reality.

How Can Strategic Foresight Be Applied to Problems?

There is a broad range of methodologies and frameworks that can be used to conduct strategic foresight. What they have in common is that they provide a way of making sense of an immense amount of uncertain and complex data.²⁴³ Foresight methodologies help incorporate long-term thinking into policy development and traditional strategic planning. The real benefit of embedding longer-term thinking into an organization is the ability to be proactive, rather than reactive, in the face of future challenges and opportunities.²⁴⁴ The following describes the overall benefit to organizations well:

²⁴⁰ Department of National Defence, *The Employment of Women in the CF - Deep Dive* (Ottawa, ON: Chief of Military Personnel, 2012), 3.

²⁴¹ The closest example of strategic foresight connected to family support the author was able to locate was the *Future* Forum, hosted in October 2020 by Ontario Tech University. LGen (Ret’d) Romeo Dallaire was the keynote speaker and the aim of the forum was to “systematically explore community mental health and wellness is evidence of its continued innovative approaches and support to CIMVHR and the wider CAF and first responder communities.” The work at this forum was focused primarily on mental health within, not family support write large. Michael A. Rostek and Brenda J. Gamble, “Origins: The Community Mental Health and Wellness Futures Forum,” *Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health* 6, no. S3 (December 1, 2020): 1, <https://doi.org/10.3138/jmvfh-6.s3-0001>.

²⁴² Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 19.

²⁴³ Conway, “An Overview of Foresight Methodologies,” 1.

²⁴⁴ “Module 1,” 1.

[S]trategic thinking focuses on futures options available to an organisation, before decisions are made about which options to pursue. Action is then taken to implement the chosen options. Foresight is a strategic thinking capability, so the use of foresight methodologies occurs at this first stage of the strategy development process – that is, the use of foresight methodologies seeks to expand the perception of the range of strategic options available to an organisation.²⁴⁵

The UK government has developed a helpful toolkit for policymakers that presents a wide range of tools for gathering information about potential futures, analysing dynamics of change, describing what the future could look like, and evaluating potential policies or strategies.²⁴⁶ *The Futures Toolkit* breaks the foresight process down into four steps: “gathering intelligence about the future”; “exploring the dynamics of change”; “describing the what the future might be like”; and “developing and testing policy and strategy.”²⁴⁷ It then offers some specific tools that can be used to complete each step, such as driver mapping. Driver mapping, for example helps teams with the following:

- Understanding the dynamics of change
- Identifying issues that have a high impact on the policy areas
- Distinguishing between drivers with a certain and an uncertain outcome.²⁴⁸

The value of *The Futures Toolkit* is its ability to help a team customize their approach to a specific foresight problem, especially as it relates to the government policy development.

Hines and Bishop provide another possible methodology focused on building baseline and alternative futures. Their methodology, referred to as *Framework Foresight*,

²⁴⁵ Conway, “An Overview of Foresight Methodologies,” 2.

²⁴⁶ Great Britain, “The Futures Toolkit: Tools for Futures Thinking and Foresight across UK Government,” 8.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 42.

is more structured than the UK's *The Futures Toolkit*.²⁴⁹ Ultimately, futures work is highly flexible and can be adapted to meet the specific needs of businesses, researchers, or policymakers.²⁵⁰

For this paper, Hines and Bishop's *Framework Foresight* methodology will be applied to CAF family support as an example of how DND/CAF could utilize strategic foresight to address the future of family support more proactively. Hines' and Bishop's methodology will be used to identify plausible futures that could impact what family support will be required and how family support will be delivered in 2040. This method was selected for its structure and the available guidance on how to implement it, which Hines and Bishop detail in their book *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight*.²⁵¹ Hines and Bishop provide a step-by-step process for applying select foresight tools to a specific domain; however, they also acknowledge the unique nature of every foresight project and encourage practitioners to adapt as necessary, according to the particular needs of a given project.

The Foresight Framework methodology walks through six steps: framing, scanning, forecasting, visioning, planning and acting. The first step, framing, is an opportunity to gather a team and begin to define the scope of the problem; time taken at the beginning of a project is vital to ensure the right problem is being addressed.²⁵² Framing also helps set the boundaries of the work to be done. There are a number of tools that can be used at this stage, including visually mapping the domain. Mapping a domain begins by identifying main categories and subcategories until the whole domain has been

²⁴⁹ Hines and Bishop, "Framework Foresight," 32.

²⁵⁰ Hines and Bishop, *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight, 2nd Edition*.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 19.

captured. Hines and Bishop recommend using STEEP (Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, Political) categories in addition to any internally identified categories to capture as many aspects of the domain as possible. Other elements of identifying the domain include defining a geographic scope, selecting a time horizon and highlighting any key issues or questions.²⁵³

Scanning, the second step, is the effort to look internally and externally to identify those forces that could change the future trajectory of the domain in question.²⁵⁴ This step includes looking forwards as well as backwards. Looking forwards identifies potential future changes to the system while looking backwards can identify cycles or trends that may recur. Hines and Bishop describe the “current assessment” of the domain as being “like a snapshot, a magic camera that takes a picture of the domain in the present.”²⁵⁵

The third step, forecasting, is the point at which “a wide range of creative possibilities” for the future are developed and then prioritized for deeper consideration.²⁵⁶ This step helps capture a wide enough range of possibilities to significantly reduce the likelihood of surprise when the future becomes the present; forecasting in particular benefits from an open-minded, creative, interdisciplinary team. At this stage in the process, Hines and Bishop emphasize the use of horizon scanning – looking for any “early warning signs of change” in the environment – as one of the primary methods for building baseline and alternate futures.²⁵⁷ The baseline future can be conceptualized as the “expected” future if current trends and predictions continue and if there are no

²⁵³ Ibid., 375–77.i

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 85.

²⁵⁵ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 37.

²⁵⁶ Hines and Bishop, *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight, 2nd Edition*, 127.

²⁵⁷ Great Britain, “The Futures Toolkit: Tools for Futures Thinking and Foresight across UK Government,” 27.

surprises to shift the domain off its current trajectory.²⁵⁸ On the other hand, alternative futures are created by other, less predictable drivers of change and are bounded only by the limits of plausibility.²⁵⁹ Figure 5.1 was developed by Hines and Bishop to visually depict the idea that the further out you move on the time horizon, the alternative futures create a cone shape; as the domain moves further into the future, the cone widens, and the limits of plausibility expand.²⁶⁰ It is also essential to understand that the baseline future is not any more likely to occur than the alternative futures.

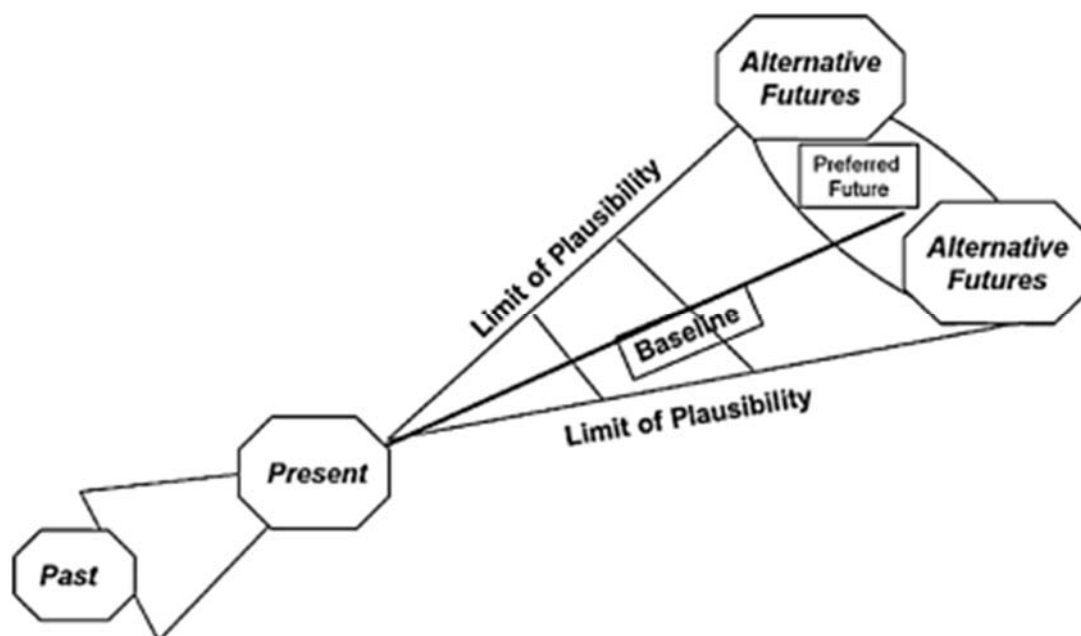


Figure 5.1 - Cone of Plausibility

Source: Hines and Bishop, *Framework foresight: Exploring futures the Houston way*, 2013

²⁵⁸ Hines and Bishop, "Framework Foresight," 37.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

Step four, visioning, is when the organization asks “so what” and works to determine the impact that potential futures *could* have.²⁶¹ This is also the step where the organization begins to make decisions about what they *want* to happen. Visioning is a critical step in the process, where critical thinking and analysis of the implications of future changes are required.

The final two steps are planning and acting. Planning is the step when the vision starts to become a strategy for future action.²⁶² Developing a wide range of options at this point will help to retain flexibility. Acting is the final step where strategic foresight can “demonstrate a link to the organization’s mission, purpose, effectiveness, [or] performance.”²⁶³ Given that the future is highly uncertain, this step involves identifying “leading indicators” of change.²⁶⁴ Indicators are metrics or information that point to the future moving in one direction as opposed to another; they will help determine the appropriate action to be taken to address the arriving reality. At this step, when plans are turned into action to help the organization stay on a path towards the desired future, the true value of the process is realized.

The steps laid out by Hines and Bishop offer a robust and straightforward means for DND/CAF to work through a strategic foresight process. They are detailed but also flexible enough for use in an area of study, such as CAF family support, that bridges multiple public, private, non-profit and personal systems. The process will enable DND/CAF to move from its typically reactive posture vis-à-vis CAF family support to a more proactive support model. A proactive approach to CAF family support would

²⁶¹ Hines and Bishop, *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight, 2nd Edition*, 221.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 267.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 297.

²⁶⁴ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 48.

address families' *needs* before they become *challenges*. Still, careful consideration should be given to several potential pitfalls before moving forward with a foresight analysis of CAF family support.

First, careful selection of the team assigned to conduct this work is critical. Creative thinking plays a big part in building plausible futures; the team must be open-minded when assessing future inputs that could potentially impact the domain. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter Four, the analysis of implications using sociological theories is a crucial step in the process. The team also needs to think outside the box and beyond their normal area of expertise to truly add value to the process. The team must be comprised of members capable of being both creative and of thinking critically and logically about how future events in other domains may shape the domain. Finally, an interdisciplinary team is vital to the assessment of CAF family support. Chapter Three established that the domain includes a wide range of stakeholders from CAF personnel and families to non-profit organizations, private businesses, and provincial governments. The team could also include individuals who have an in-depth understanding of how families are organized and operate. Attempting to undertake a robust strategic foresight process without input from each of these groups would limit the final utility of the work. While the core team may not require full-time representation from each of these groups, they could be consulted at various stages to enhance the value of the final product.

Second, conducting strategic foresight work is a time-intensive process. The foresight work that led to the three volumes on *Canada's Future Army* was completed

over four years.²⁶⁵ As Chapter Two established, families already face several significant challenges. Analyzing these existing challenges through a futures lens, plus identifying any potential new challenges futures changes may bring about, will require dedicated staff time.

Finally, there must be an institutional desire to address the problem, or the process will simply eat up personnel and financial resources to no practical end. The method may identify actions to be taken that are widely outside the current norm for family support. That is the benefit of strategic foresight; it helps organizations look over the horizon to find new ways to adapt business practices to meet future goals. The organization, in this case, DND/CAF and the GoC, must be willing to monitor the leading indicators of change and act on them as required. If the organization is not empowered to implement the changes that foresight has deemed necessary to respond to the new reality, the process has ultimately been for naught. The actions of GoC departments are constrained in ways that private businesses are not; hence, the boundaries of acceptable actions would need to be carefully considered during the planning process. Change in GoC policy is not impossible, but the challenges associated with that level of change must be considered in advance.

Overall, Hines' and Bishops' methodology for applying strategic foresight to problems is robust and flexible. *Framework Foresight* logically lays out the steps to follow to define the problem and think critically about that problem in the context of an uncertain future. The process acknowledges that specific steps will apply to certain

²⁶⁵ Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 1: Methodology, Perspectives and Approaches*, 1:13. Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 2: Force Employment Implications*. Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 3: Alternate Worlds and Implications*.

problems more than others. Some problems may require additional steps or different approaches to reach a more fulsome conclusion. Hines and Bishop's methodology has been successfully taught to and utilized by students for almost two decades; hence it is well-suited for use in this paper to demonstrate what strategic foresight could look like when applied to CAF family support. Chapters Six and Seven will apply *Framework Foresight* to CAF family support. For the reasons outlined in the previous section, the analysis here is limited in scope. It is being conducted by an individual researcher, not a team of subject matter experts. This paper will not attempt to analyse the implications of all possible baseline and alternate futures. Instead, the following two chapters will present several examples to demonstrate how CAF family support stakeholders could use the *Framework Foresight* methodology and how the methodology will enable DND/CAF to holistically consider the future of family support in the context of broader socio-political changes.

Summary

Thinking about the future is an inherently challenging task; almost no one will get it completely right, nor is that the goal of strategic foresight work. The inherent uncertainty does not mean that futures work is a fruitless or unworthy task. Rather, by thinking about possible futures now, identifying change drivers, and highlighting signals that will clue the organization into impending change so that they can react more expeditiously as the future becomes the present. This chapter discussed some of the history of strategic foresight as a field of study. It demonstrated how various organizations are using the process to improve how they think about the future. It also walked through the steps of Hines' and Bishop's *Framework Foresight*. In doing so, it

presented strategic foresight as a concrete means through which DND/CAF can shift its thinking about the future of CAF family support from the current *reactive* posture to a preferred *proactive* posture. Chapters Six and Seven will apply four of the six steps presented in this chapter - Framing, Scanning, Forecasting and Visioning – to CAF family support. Chapter Seven will also discuss how DND/CAF could approach the final two steps, Planning and Action.

All too often insufficient time and thought is given at the outset of a project to defining the scope and focus of the issues facing an organisation...It is therefore not simply a matter of asking the right question, but of framing it within the context and purpose of the organisation.

— John Ratcliffe, Insights Newsletter, 2017

CHAPTER 6 – ESTABLISHING THE CAF FAMILY SUPPORT DOMAIN

Provision of support to CAF families, as established in Chapter Three, is intended to ensure that their connection to the serving member does not disadvantage CAF families compared to civilian families in Canada. Support is not designed to provide military families with any unfair advantages. As outlined in Chapter One, GoC and DND/CAF have recognized their responsibility to support CAF families. Policies, programs and services have typically been implemented reactively or retroactively. While reactive and retroactive policy-making may occasionally be necessary, CAF families would benefit more if DND/CAF and other family support service providers were able to work more proactively. Given that CAF families are operational enablers, to continue to provide effective and efficient support, DND/CAD must think about how the changing future will change the needs of CAF families. This chapter will apply the first two steps of Hines' and Bishop's *Framework Foresight*, Framing and Scanning, to the domain of CAF family support. The work in the chapter will provide a necessary foundation for the application of the remaining steps in Chapter Seven.

Step 1: Framing the Problem

This first step delves into the problem by defining the domain in terms of content, time, and space and identifying key issues.

Domain Description

For this paper, the domain of CAF family support will focus on the support required to ensure that RegF and ResF members, and the individuals who make up their families, are not disadvantaged by the member's service. This focus relies on the definition of family established by MFS and discussed in Chapter Two; however, it limits the domain to RegF and ResF families and excludes veteran families and civilians connected to DND/CAF. Although some aspects of the domain may apply to veteran families or civilians, this paper will not discuss them further.²⁶⁶ The following sections will further refine what is included and what is excluded from the domain by virtue of geography and time.

Geographic Scope

Geography is not a primary concern for the domain of CAF family support; however, a small number of geographic limitations should be taken into account. First, the vast majority of military families (RegF and ResF) live in Canada. A much smaller number (approximately 5,000 in 2017) accompany the military service members on postings outside Canada (OUTCAN).²⁶⁷ For this paper, only military families in Canada will be considered for two main reasons. First, military families are screened before OUTCAN postings to ensure their ability to cope with the unique challenges of these types of posting.²⁶⁸ Second, additional factors could potentially impact the future

²⁶⁶ The exclusion of veteran families does not negate the fact that CAF veterans and their families often require a significant amount of family support, some of which is provided under the auspices of the MFSP. However, the focus of this paper is the family support needed to ensure families remain operational enablers. Hence, veteran families have not been considered fully at this time. Given that the GoC also has a moral responsibility to support veterans and their families, further foresight work could be conducted that does include this family persona.

²⁶⁷ Manser, "State of Mil Families," 5.t

²⁶⁸ Department of National Defence, *CANFORGEN 177/05 ADM(HM-MIL) 091 251819Z NOV 05 - SCREENING POLICY FOR OUT OF CANADA (OUTCAN) AND ISOLATED POSTING*, 2005.

experiences of OUTCAN families, such as the support available from the nation in which the family is being hosted. Addressing all the potential OUTCAN factors is beyond the scope of this research. Second, military families live in communities all across Canada, and those communities may experience unique changes that directly or indirectly impact the domain. For example, while national trends related to home prices nationally may be considered part of the domain, Alberta's next boom/bust cycle would not be considered. It is not feasible for this paper to adequately identify and analyse all possible local trends or changes.

Time Horizon

The domain time horizon specifies how far into the future the framework intends to look. Identifying a specific time horizon is essential to gauge how the probability of a particular future changes over time.²⁶⁹ There is no perfect or standard number of years to consider, and the horizon will vary by project. This paper will consider a time horizon of approximately 20 years, out to the year 2040. There are several reasons for selecting this time horizon. First, existing future-focused CAF military research, such as the foresight work done by the Canadian Army, also looks out to this approximate horizon.²⁷⁰ From a timeline perspective, it is logical to align the future needs for family support with the future of the force, given that changes in both the CAF and the nature of conflict are expected to impact the domain. Second, history tells us that a 20-year time span is ample time for significant change to occur in the social constructs, expectations and dynamics of

²⁶⁹ Hines and Bishop, "Framework Foresight," 34.

²⁷⁰ Department of National Defence, "Canada in a New Maritime World: LEADMARK 2050" (Royal Canadian Navy, March 2017), http://navy-marine.forces.gc.ca/assets/NAVY_Internet/docs/en/analysis/rcn-leadmark-2050_march-2017.pdf. M. A. Rostek and Queen's University (Kingston, Ont.), eds., *Toward Army 2040: Exploring Key Dimensions of the Global Environment*, The Claxton Papers 14 (Kingston, Ont: Defence Management Studies Program, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, 2011).

Canadian families and the military. Looking back 20 years, we can see that Canada was just beginning the war in Afghanistan - a defining event in Canadian military history and one that drove fundamental changes in how Canadian military members and their families are supported. However, 20 years is not so far out that horizon scanning is impossible. For example, that timeframe will essentially find today's recruits in mid-life and mid-career, facing familial challenges within the domain. 2040 is also just beyond the timeframe currently being addressed by the strategic foresight work on social futures by Policy Horizon's Canada.²⁷¹

Domain Map

A domain map depicts “what’s in and what’s out” of the domain, as well as how the domain elements are interconnected.²⁷² Domains are further defined by those elements which are explicitly excluded. Building the domain map is not an exact science; different researchers would approach the domain differently. There is no right or wrong way to build the domain; however, how the domain is constructed may also change over time. As more information becomes available, researchers must monitor and adjust the domain as required. The domain map is also a starting point from which potential future trends, plans, cycles and projections can be forecast.

A domain map begins by identifying main categories and subcategories. Main categories may have multiple subcategories, and subcategories may fall under more than one of the main categories (in these cases, they are cross-linked on the domain map). Two methods were used to build out the CAF family support domain for this paper, as seen in Figure 6.1. First, three of the main categories were informed by research

²⁷¹ “Our Work – Policy Horizons Canada.”

²⁷² Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 34.

highlighting unique characteristics of the military family lifestyle as discussed in Chapter One: risk of injury or death; geographic mobility; and periodic separation from family.²⁷³ Second, Hines' and Bishop's STEEP method was used to complete the main categories of the domain map.²⁷⁴ The main categories were then built out based on a combination of the author's previous professional experience with military family support and a review of relevant research on current military family challenges, as discussed in Chapters Two and Three.

Key Issues or Questions

The final aspect of building the domain is identifying a key question or questions to determine the ultimate problem statement or statements to be explored.²⁷⁵ The question for the future of the CAF family support domain is: What does CAF family support need to look like in 20 years to address the future needs of military families? To answer this question, the status of potential future changes to three specific areas must be considered: changes in the nature of military conflicts; changes in the nature of the armed forces; and changes in the nature of families.²⁷⁶ Beyond these three sets of changes, there may also be broader changes within the STEEP categories that may change to domain.

²⁷³ Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 16.

²⁷⁴ Hines and Bishop, "Framework Foresight," 34.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Coppola and Wadsworth, "Understanding the Challenges and Meeting the Needs of Military and Veteran Families."

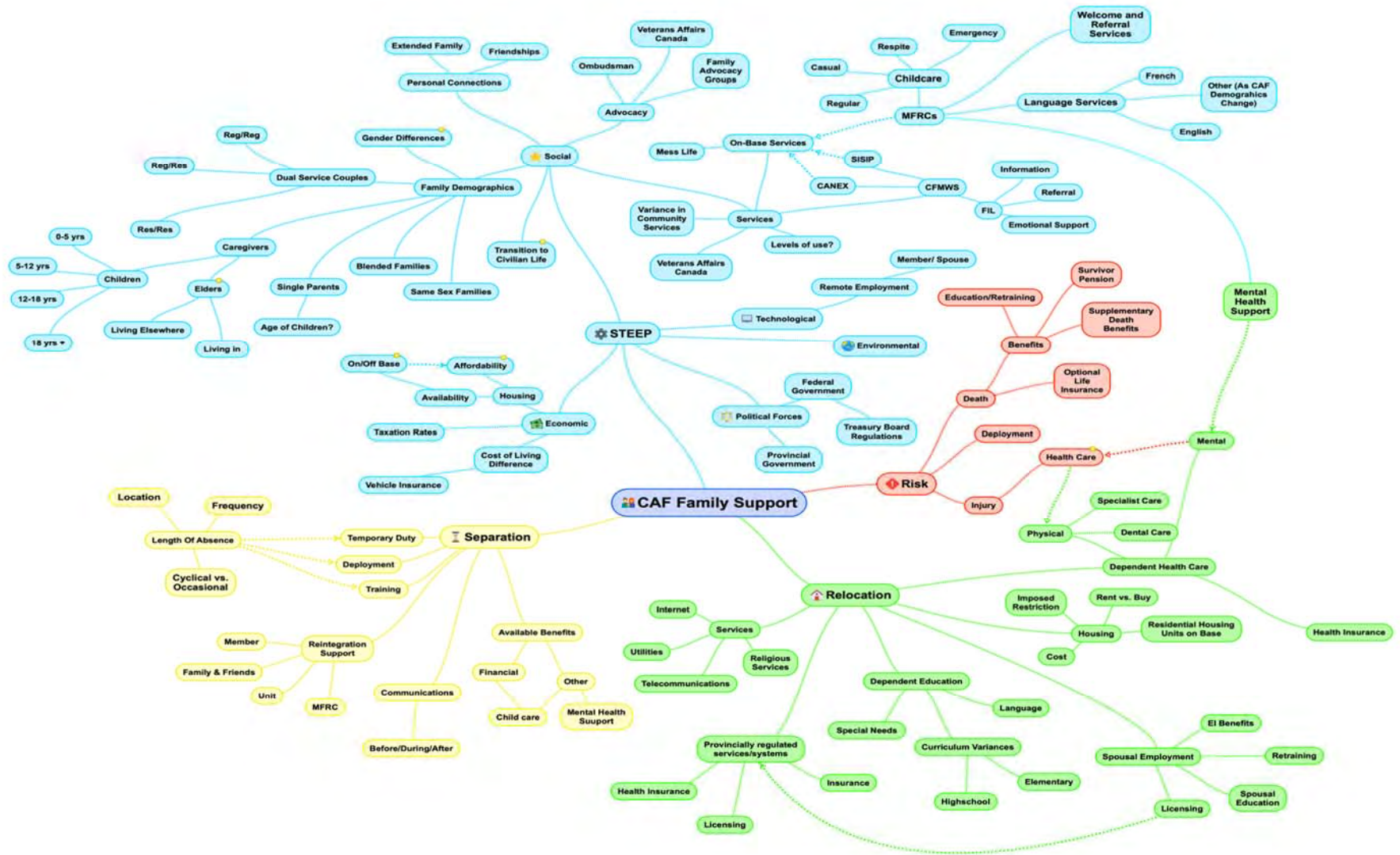


Figure 6.1 - CAF Family Support Domain Map

Step 2: Scanning the Domain

The second step in the foresight process is to assess both the current state of the domain and consider how the domain ended up where it is now. This step provides an opportunity to start building a picture of the influences that have shaped the domain up to the present point in time, which is necessary before looking to the future.

Current Conditions

To conduct a foresight project, researchers must first have a solid understanding of the current state of the domain. The goal of assessing current conditions is to produce a shortlist of “need to know” information about the domain.²⁷⁷ Chapters Two and Three discussed many of the factors currently affecting CAF family support, including detailed information about members, families, DND/CAF and other organizations involved in the domain. From that, the following five key aspects of the domain are considered salient to this foresight process. (1) The ultimate intent of CAF family support is to close the gap between military and civilian families such that military families are neither unfairly *disadvantaged* nor unfairly *advantaged* by their military family status. (2) Support to families is provided by a complex array of organizations – CAF, CFMWS, MFRCs, charitable organizations, federal and provincial organizations. Changes in how any one of these organizations operates or approach family support will likely change the domain. (3) Many of the issues facing families are challenging because military families exist at the intersection of federal and provincial regulations and policies. Hence, CAF family support is, in effect, a politicized domain. (4) Definitions of family utilized by DND/CAF are not standardized.²⁷⁸ Some policies and programs within the domain may continue to

²⁷⁷ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 35.

²⁷⁸ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront.”

use more limited definitions; however, the domain as a whole should utilize the broadest definition possible in any given circumstance. (5) Families are complex systems that are constantly in flux and exist within a more comprehensive set of environmental circumstances. The three sociological theories discussed in Chapter Four, family systems theory, social ecological theory and intersectional feminist theory, can be used to help identify where family composition and family-life events intersect with other community and military systems.

Stakeholders

Hines and Bishop define stakeholders in a domain as those “individuals and organizations” that will impact the future of the domain.²⁷⁹ However, consideration of stakeholders in the domain must consider more than just a list of people or groups. It must also consider the “values, political interests and relationships” of these stakeholders.²⁸⁰ Using the domain map (Figure 6.1) is instructive in helping to establish a list of stakeholders. The list begins with three primary stakeholders: families, DND/CAF as an overarching institution, and CAF members themselves. Within DND/CAF itself, some sub-organizations may need to be considered independently. For example, the Chief of Military Personnel is responsible for managing all personnel policies for the CAF, including the leave and family care policies discussed in Chapter Three. As the entity responsible for the MFSP and governance policy for MFRCs, they are also a critical stakeholder within DND/CAF.

MFRCs are also pivotal stakeholders within the domain. Given the recent changes to MFRC governance and the different models under which various MFRCs operate

²⁷⁹ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 35.

²⁸⁰ Hines and Bishop, *Thinking about the Future: Guidelines for Strategic Foresight, 2nd Edition*, 379.

(non-profit vs. subsidiary entity of MFS), they sit somewhere in between internal and external on the spectrum of stakeholders.

Shifting the focus outside of DND/CAF, social ecological theory can highlight other organizations known to dynamically influence family systems through either policy creation or delivery of programs and services. These would include, for example, federal, provincial and municipal governments, public and private health care providers, child care organizations, community-based organizations and non-profits, private-sector businesses and industries, and schools or other elements of the education system. From a relationship perspective, interactions between the federal and provincial governments related to military families pose additional challenges. Provincial governments do not bear the same level of responsibility for service members or, by extension, their families; in its current context, this relationship poses some significant challenges within the domain, especially under the relocation category. Private-sector businesses are also stakeholders in the domain. For example, businesses such as real estate agents and lawyers market themselves to military families during relocations. CFMWS also partners with private businesses that provide discounts to military families in exchange for marketing opportunities.²⁸¹ Although the influence of the private sector on family support is currently somewhat limited, their motivation for participating in the domain must always be considered based on the understanding that private business is profit-driven. Finally, because changes in the nature of conflict may impact the domain, it is also reasonable to consider potential future military allies and adversaries as stakeholders.

²⁸¹ Department of National Defence, “CFOne,” Government, CAF Connection, accessed April 11, 2021, <https://www.cafconnection.ca/National/Programs-Services/CFOne.aspx>.

Ultimately, stakeholders will have varying levels of interest in and influence depending on the future trajectory of the domain.

History Era Analysis

Hines and Bishop argue that some historical information is necessary to be able to more accurately assess how the future may unfold.²⁸² They recommend reviewing only the previous era and consider an era to be defined as a “period[] of relative stability and coherence that have a distinct identity.”²⁸³ Eras change when there is a significant discontinuous event. Much of CAF family support history was discussed in Chapter One and relevant details further expounded upon in Chapters Two and Three.



Figure 6.2 - Era Analysis

²⁸² Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 35.

²⁸³ Ibid.

The current era is considered the “post SSE” era. We are relatively early in the era timeline, which began with SSE publication, as the CAF focuses on achieving the initiatives laid out in that document. SSE was chosen as the start of the current era of family support because it directed the creation of the Comprehensive Military Family Plan (CMFP). Efforts to develop the CMFP have resulted in a wealth of new military family research and plans to update the governance model of the Military Family Support Program (MFSP); these plans have the potential to significantly impact MFRC operations throughout this era.²⁸⁴ Figure 6.2 depicts the previous five eras, going back to the mid-1980s when military families first began truly advocating for themselves and the MFSP was established as a formal mechanism for the support of CAF families. Only time will tell if an era analysis is truly correct; no one can predict when the next discontinuous event will occur and shift the domain into a new era. Still, the domain’s history shared in Chapter Three leads to the reasonable conclusion that SSE began the current era in 2017, and the era analysis outlined here provides sufficient context to move forward with steps 3 and 4 of the *Framework Foresight* methodology.

Summary

This chapter has applied the first two steps of Hines’ and Bishop’s *Framework Foresight*. Although these steps may seem somewhat intuitive to subject matter experts in the field of family support, they are an essential part of the process. Establishing the domain, what’s in and what’s out, and fully articulating the current status of the domain are foundational steps in the strategic foresight process. This foundational understanding

²⁸⁴ Department of National Defence, “Modernized MFSP 2020+ and Formalized MFRC Governance,” Government, CFMWS, February 2, 2021, <https://www.cfmws.com/en/aboutus/mfs/governanceandaccountability/pages/modernized-mfsp-and-mfrc-governance-nouveau-psfm-et-gouvernance-des-crfm.aspx>.

of the domain enables detailed analysis of plausible futures and will ensure that stakeholders fully consider the possible implications of changes affecting the domain.

Chapter Seven will analyze steps 3 and 4 of the methodology, Forecasting and Visioning, in detail. It will also discuss steps 5 and 6, Planning and Action; however, these steps will require further application and analysis to fully articulate the possible strategic implications of *Framework Foresight* on CAF families of the future.

Perhaps the greatest power of scenarios, as distinct from forecasts, is that they consciously break this habit [of extrapolating the present]. They introduce discontinuities so that conversations about strategy—which lie at the heart of any organization’s capacity to adapt—can encompass something different from the present.

— Angela Wilkinson and Ronald Kupers,
Living in the Futures in
Harvard Business Review, May 2013

CHAPTER 7 – PLAUSIBLE FUTURES AND IMPLICATIONS’ ANALYSIS FOR CAF FAMILY SUPPORT

Chapter Six established the *domain* of CAF Family Support and described how it is bounded in time and space. It also built on the domain description by discussing domain stakeholders and the current status of the domain. This chapter will build on the foundations laid in Chapter Six by walking through steps 3 and 4 of Hines’ and Bishop’s *Framework Foresight*. These stages of the methodology are the means through which DND/CAF can explore some of the possible future challenges and opportunities within the domain of CAF family support. The chapter will conclude by briefly discussing steps 5 and 6. These steps involved planning for the future and acting on signals of change. Although they will not be applied in detail here, they would be vital steps in a more fulsome foresight analysis of the domain.

Step 3: Forecasting Plausible Futures

The third stage, Forecasting, is where the baseline and alternative futures are built. The baseline future is the future that will come to pass if the domain stays on its current trajectory, and alternative futures describe plausible shifts in the domain based on a range of future uncertainties. Uncertainties are defined as “those elements projected to be important...in the future, but how they play out is difficult to anticipate.”²⁸⁵ For this

²⁸⁵ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 43.

paper, the uncertainties discussed have been captured through a horizon scanning process, which reviewed various materials, including news media, government foresight work, and future-focused academic materials, to gather a list of plausible uncertainties that could impact the domain. The focus was generally, but not exclusively, limited to the three identified areas in which change is expected to occur that will impact the domain: conflict, the CAF and families. Throughout the process of brainstorming both the baseline and alternative futures, the main categories of the domain (Relocation, Separation, Risk and STEEP) were used to reflect on a range of ideas and possibilities. However, the list of factors identified herein as influencing the domain's baseline and alternative futures is not exhaustive. There are many more potentially impactful changes that could occur over the next 15 years. The items discussed in the following sections provide a solid starting point from which to build potential futures and base recommendations for additional foresight work by DND/CAF.

Baseline Future

The baseline future is built by looking both internally and externally to determine constants, trends, cycles, plans, and projections that are likely to impact the future of the family support domain.²⁸⁶ This is the future that will exist if these somewhat predictable forces of change play out as expected. It is more immediate and can be developed with greater accuracy, although its occurrence is no more likely than another future.

Constants. In the domain of family support, there are likely to be some constants. Hines and Bishop describe constants as those “conditions or quantities that are expected not to change within the time horizon.”²⁸⁷ In the next 15-20 years, the core mission sets

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 42.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 38.

of the CAF, as assigned by the GoC, are unlikely to change; defence of Canada, defence of North America and global engagement will continue to be priorities for which the CAF and its personnel must be prepared.²⁸⁸ The general force structure of the CAF also likely to remain the same; there will continue to be a majority of members in the RegF with the balance of the force in the Reserves and the CA, Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), and Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) will continue to exist. SINCE WWII, the CAF has been structured roughly in this manner with only minor changes over almost 80 years; hence, significant changes in general force structure are expected in the next 15-20 years. Current SSE expenditure plans also corroborate this assessment.

For families, the general role and purpose of families are also unlikely to change over the 15- year time horizon.²⁸⁹ The function of families – to provide for the basic physical and emotional needs of members – has not changed since the advent of the family support domain.²⁹⁰ While the composition of families may change, the role is not likely to.

Trends. SSE identified three key security trends that are likely to impact the baseline future as they affect the nature of conflict and the nature of the CAF.²⁹¹ First, the growing complexity of conflict (resulting from conflicts that have multiple drivers). Second, the prevalence of hybrid warfare actions in the grey zone, just below the threshold of armed conflict, will continue to increase.²⁹² Third, the rapid evolution of

²⁸⁸ Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 2: Force Employment Implications*, 2:25.

²⁸⁹ The Vanier Institute of the Family, "What's in a Name? Defining Family in a Diverse Society," *The Vanier Institute of the Family / L'Institut Vanier de La Famille* (blog), 4, accessed March 21, 2021, <https://vanierinstitute.ca/family-definition-diversity/>.

²⁹⁰ The Vanier Institute of the Family, "Definition of Family."

²⁹¹ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 53.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 49.

technology, leading to the increased relevance of the space and cyber domains, will continue.²⁹³ Rapid technological change is also expected to increase military use of AI, data analytics and machine learning, and the adoption of autonomous land, air and sea vehicles.²⁹⁴ These changes will drive workforce changes as technical skills become even more desirable among serving members. Remote employment is another trend, fueled partially by technological advancements and then vastly accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, expected to increase somewhat over the next 20 years, both for employed family members and CAF members.

From a family perspective, the 2011 Census also demonstrated changing trends in the composition of Canadian families; there are more single-parent families, blended families, and multigenerational families than ever before and a noticeable trend towards less-formal family relationships.²⁹⁵

Cycles. Cycles in a domain are patterns of similar events that are prone to repeating at somewhat predictable intervals. On the military side of the family support domain, defence spending may be considered to operate on a cycle. Although defence spending has trended upward over time since the end of WWII, spending nonetheless goes through cycles of higher and lower expenditures. For example, after increasing in the 1980s with various large equipment purchases, the post-Cold-War period saw funding cut in the 1990s. It then increased dramatically during the war in Afghanistan, only to be

²⁹³ Ibid., 55.

²⁹⁴ “Fighting for the Future,” Deloitte Insights, accessed March 6, 2021, <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/public-sector/future-us-military-workforce.html>.

²⁹⁵ “Generation 2030: Changing Families,” Generation 2030, accessed March 3, 2021, <https://www.generation2030.ca/trend-s->. OECD, *The Future of Families to 2030* (OECD, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264168367-en>.

cut again post-Afghanistan.²⁹⁶ Currently, SSE increases provide \$74.2 billion in funding over 20 years to rebuild several CAF capabilities.²⁹⁷ Beyond that, the cyclical nature of the defence spending, compounded by the fact that defence is discretionary, indicates that funding could be reduced again right around the time horizon of this foresight work.

Military life and military family life may also be expressed in terms of cycles. MFS has conceptualized the military family experience as a combination of the “military journey” and the “family journey” (Figure 2.1); however, there are aspects of “military journey” that are cyclical, such as postings, training, deployment and promotions.²⁹⁸ For individual families, this translates into cycles of separation and integration, both from the perspective of individual members and the community.

Plans. Hines and Bishop describe plans as “intentions to act”; they are generally announced and known to the stakeholders of the domain.²⁹⁹ Currently, SSE represents the most robust plan for the CAF. Specifically, plans in SSE to increase the percentage of women and diversify the CAF are relevant to the family support domain. SSE also specifies plans to grow the Reserve Force and add new roles such as cyber operators and light urban search and rescue.³⁰⁰ These planned changes to the nature of the force have the potential to impact the needs of families in various ways. An increase in the number and importance of reserve force members to specific operations, for example, will likely further highlight the fact that very little is known about the demographics or needs of ResF families.

²⁹⁶ “Canada Military Spending/Defense Budget 1960-2021,” Macrotrends, accessed March 23, 2021, <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/CAN/canada/military-spending-defense-budget>.

²⁹⁷ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 102.

²⁹⁸ Department of National Defence, “Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+,” 9.

²⁹⁹ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 43.

³⁰⁰ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 68.

As recently as 24 March 2021, the Acting Chief of Defence Staff highlighted a number of ongoing personnel-related initiatives that also inform the baseline future. These include potential updates to the UoS policy, a new “Adaptive Career Path initiative[] that will offer more options to CAF members and their families,” a new Retention Strategy and a new HR Strategy.³⁰¹ These are in addition to the ongoing work with the Provinces related to Seamless Canada.

In September 2020, MFS also released a new strategic plan specific to the family support domain. Under the 2020+ strategy for the MFSP, MFS introduces changes to the governance model of MFRCs that will encourage “collaborative delivery of baseline standard of services aligned with the needs of families” and shared measurement standards.³⁰² Implementation of this updated strategic plan is designed to help close previously identified programming gaps; it may have the follow-on impact of reducing duplication of efforts across Canada’s 32 MFRCs.³⁰³

Projections. Baseline futures related to the domain that others have already developed are considered projections. They are no more likely to occur than any other future change. Still, when they emanate from reliable sources, they can prove helpful in establishing a baseline future for the domain.³⁰⁴

Statistics Canada has projected changes to Canada’s labour force over the next 15 years that could impact the nature of the CAF from a personnel perspective. A decrease

³⁰¹ Wayne Eyre, “March 24: Letter from the Acting Chief of the Defence Staff (A/CDS),” March 24, 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/maple-leaf/defence/2021/03/march-24-acting-cds-letter.html>.

³⁰² Department of National Defence, “Services for Military and Veteran Families: Strategic-Framework2020+,” 33.

³⁰³ Department of National Defence, “Gaps Analysis.”

³⁰⁴ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 43.

in personnel in the labour force primarily due to population ageing is expected by 2036; at the same time, an ageing population will see one in four people in 2036 over 55.³⁰⁵

Statistics Canada also produces population projections every five years. Current projections show that immigrants will likely make up between 24.5% and 30% of the population by 2036, and up to 50% of Canadians will be either immigrants or second-generation Canadians, the highest those statistics have been since 1871.³⁰⁶ By 2036, more people will immigrate to Canada from Asia than anywhere else in the world.³⁰⁷ Of those, 65.5% of immigrants and 44.9% of second-generation Canadians (those with at least one parent born abroad) will be between the ages of 25 and 64 and potentially eligible for military service.³⁰⁸ Simultaneously, approximately 20-30% of Canadians may have a first language that is neither English nor French, an increase of up to 10% from 2011.³⁰⁹ Immigrants who arrive at a young age and second-generation Canadians generally transfer the language spoken at home to either French (in Quebec) or English (rest of Canada); however, older immigrants (>50 years old) may not ever transfer the language spoken in the home.³¹⁰

Baseline Future Description

Taken together, what this list of constants, trends, cycles, plans and projections depict is a baseline future comprised of increasingly complex military operations, rapidly changing workforce demographics and continued diversification in the composition of

³⁰⁵ Statistics Canada, “The Labour Force in Canada and Its Regions: Projections to 2036,” March 20, 2019, 1,5, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2019001/article/00004-eng.htm>.

³⁰⁶ Jean-Dominique Morency and Statistique Canada, *Immigration and Diversity: Population Projections for Canada and Its Regions, 2011 to 2036*, 2017, 6, http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2017/statcan/91-551-x2017001-eng.pdf.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 78.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 119. Statistics Canada, “The Labour Force in Canada and Its Regions,” 1.

³⁰⁹ Morency and Statistique Canada, *Immigration and Diversity*, 6.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

families. If the future tracks the baseline, the CAF will continue to operate domestically, cooperate with the United States in defence of North America, and contribute to missions that will help increase global stability and reinforce the rules-based international order. MFS will continue to be the focal point for support to CAF families and should remain focused on providing evidence-based programs and services to address the changing needs of families identified through increasingly robust military family research. The CAF could accelerate the work being done to update existing policies and emphasize the importance of applying a robust GBA+ process to all initiatives.

Alternative Futures

Suppose the baseline future represents the domain continuing along a somewhat predictable course. In that case, alternative futures are what happens if something – an emerging issue, a significant event, or a new and unexpected idea – causes the domain to take a sharp left or right turn. Hines and Bishop argue that the baseline addresses “certainties,” while alternative futures address “uncertainties,” future occurrences that could go one way or another.³¹¹ However, they make clear that even uncertainties must be grounded in plausibility; for example, while the Covid-19 was unexpected and likely shifted many domains off their baseline course, a global pandemic was not outside the realm of possibility as evidenced by other pandemics in history.³¹² This section will discuss plausible events, emerging issues and ideas that, if realized, would move the family support domain off the baseline track.

Events. Unanticipated events of all kinds can change the trajectory of a domain away from the baseline future and towards an alternate future. These types of unforeseen

³¹¹ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 43.

³¹² Ibid.

events could emanate from any of the three change categories, changing conflict, changes to the force, or changes related to families. It is conceivable that Canadian participation in a future large-scale conflict, especially if it is a protracted one, would significantly change the family support domain, as occurred during the war in Afghanistan. Rising casualties in Afghanistan and a recognition that extant policies did not account for differences in family composition spurred administrative changes to enable the attendance of additional family members at repatriation ceremonies.³¹³ A major shift in the role of the Reserves could have domain implications, in much the same way as opening all trades to women impacted requirements for family support. A change to the census definition of family, which currently requires cohabitation, could also expand the domain in ways similar to the recognition of same-sex couples and common-law couples.

Wild card events have an extremely low probability of occurring but would have a game-changing impact on the domain if they did. One such wildcard event would be a global-scale conflict, above the threshold of war, against a near-peer such as Russia or

³¹³ The QR&O on travel entitlements for Next of Kin (NOK) was updated in June 2012. Around the same time changes were introduced to internal forms used by CAF for members to identify NOK. Prior to this time period the Personnel Emergency Notification, or PEN form, was the only form in use. Following the change to QR&Os, the NOK Form, DND 2587, was implemented to allow members to list all NOK and provide amplifying information about their personal circumstances. The form instructions include detailed information about its purpose. The PEN form was replaced with CF742 – Emergency Contact(s); this form identified only who should be notified in case of an emergency and has no bearing on financial entitlements. Note that the author was unable to determine the exact date that these new forms were implemented. Canada, “Orders In Council - 2012-0767 - Regulations Amending the Queen’s Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Forces” (Privy Council Office, June 7, 2012), <https://orders-in-council.canada.ca/results.php?lang=en>; Department of National Defence, “Chapter 902.02 - Entitlements Next of Kin,” in *Queen’s Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Armed Forces*, vol. 3, 3 vols., 2019, https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/migration/assets/FORCES_Internet/docs/en/about-policies-standards-queens-regulations-orders-vol-03/Volume%20III%20-%20Final.pdf. Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “Military Life Events - Important Documents,” Government, Canada.ca, November 25, 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/ombudsman-national-defence-forces/education-information/caf-members/career/military-life-events-important-documents.html>. “Canada and the War in Afghanistan | The Canadian Encyclopedia,” accessed April 27, 2021, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/international-campaign-against-terrorism-in-afghanistan>.

China. Such a conflict would have wide-ranging impacts on all of Canada and its allies; it would fundamentally change the family support domain, likely in ways never seen before. A second potential wild card event would be an economic downturn greater than the Great Depression of the 1930s. Although the Covid-19 global pandemic thrust Canada into a deep economic downturn, the economy started to recover more quickly than expected, even though the pace of future recovery remains uncertain.³¹⁴ A longer, more severe economic downturn would have even more drastic and wide-ranging effects on the nation and, hence, the CAF family support domain.

Issues & Emerging Issues. Issues and emerging issues are similar but subtly different. Hines and Bishop describe issues as the area of a domain where there is a decision to be made over which there remains a debate.³¹⁵ On the other hand, emerging issues “have not yet appeared on the public agenda”; they are not entirely unheard of but aren’t yet receiving the attention they should within the domain.

One defence and security issue that can impact the domain, and for which decisions have not yet been made, is the role of human performance enhancement will play in future conflicts to overcome both physical and psychological limitations of service members.³¹⁶ For example, the future may see the use of Memory Altering Drugs (MADS) to enhance the emotional resilience of soldiers and treat/reduce PTSD or the use

³¹⁴ “Canada’s Economy Endured an Historic Collapse in 2020, but Surged into 2021 Faster than Most Expected | Financial Post,” Financial Post, accessed March 27, 2021, <https://financialpost.com/news/economy/canadas-economy-endured-an-historic-collapse-in-2020-but-surged-into-2021-faster-than-most-expected>.

³¹⁵ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 44.

³¹⁶ Breede, Bélanger, and von Hlatky, “Introduction: A Call to (Enhanced) Arms,” 17.

of exoskeletons as a means of easing the physical burden of soldiering on the member.³¹⁷ Implications for the family support domain related to personnel enhancement are not only limited to decisions made by DND/CAF about Canadian service members but must also consider that unenhanced CAF members may encounter enhanced adversary soldiers.³¹⁸ The Canadian Army has already recognized a requirement to optimize individual performance in the realm of “psychological and socio-cultural readiness and resilience in combat” in the future.³¹⁹ Still, technology is developing at a faster pace than legal policies, creating potential ethical gaps. Furthermore, existing family support strategic documents do not yet capture the potential implications for the domain.

Although it has already been identified a trend driving the baseline future, other issues are related to the rapid pace of technological change are still developing as elements of the domain. For example, the rise of big data and the materialization of surveillance society is an emerging issue that has not been addressed in terms of potential impacts on CAF family support. Individuals are increasingly the subject of pervasive surveillance in public and private spaces, including military and military family members

³¹⁷ Colin Farrelly, “Insulating Soldiers from the Emotions of War: An Ethical Analysis,” in *Transhumanizing War: Performance Enhancement and the Implications for Policy, Society, and the Soldier* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020), 22, <https://www-deslibris-ca.cfc.idm.oclc.org/ID/458320>. Linda Bossi et al., “Rationalizing the Approach to Militate Soldier Physical Burden: Are Iron Man or Captain America the Magic Bullet?,” in *Transhumanizing War: Performance Enhancement and the Implications for Policy, Society, and the Soldier*, ed. Christian H. Breede, Stéphanie A.H. Bélanger, and Stefania von Hlatky (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020), 132, <https://www-deslibris-ca.cfc.idm.oclc.org/ID/458320>. Winkler et al., *Reflections on the Future of Warfare and Implications for Personnel Policies of the U.S. Department of Defense*, 17.

³¹⁸ Australian Defence Force, “Future Land Warfare Report, 2014” (Canberra: Directorate of Future Land Warfare, April 2014), 16, https://researchcentre.army.gov.au/sites/default/files/flwr_web_b5_final.pdf.

³¹⁹ Wasilow and Thorpe, “Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Ethics, and the Military.” Department of National Defence, *Close Engagement: Land Power in an Age of Uncertainty : Evolving Adaptive Dispersed Operations*. (Kingston, ON: Canadian Army Land Warfare Centre, 2019), 40, http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/201/301/weekly_acquisitions_list-ef/2019/19-37/publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2019/mdn-dnd/D2-406-2019-eng.pdf.

in Canada and abroad.³²⁰ From a personnel policy perspective, the US DoD is already considering questions of ownership as it relates to data collected on military members during the conflict, recognizing that “[acquisition and control of data] presents a new and nebulous medium for warfare.”³²¹ In a surveillance society, there is also the possibility that CAF adversaries may try to target families to gain an advantage against the CAF.

On the other hand, futures that include various levels of cyber warfare bring them the prospect of conducting military operations in a degraded communications environment.; however, the follow-on impact of this possibility for families has not yet been considered.³²² The rise of the internet and cellular networks worldwide means that even remote operating bases are well connected to the outside world much of the time. Although previous generations of military families were used to infrequent communications, today’s families have grown accustomed to communicating regularly when separated from members; in a degraded communications environment, limited access to communications and social networks would fundamentally shift how families connect. Futures work by Policy Horizons Canada has already identified loneliness as a future potential public health crisis, even though we are “hyperconnected” and acknowledged that connection via technology doesn’t adequately replace human contact.³²³ The challenge of connection and other emerging issues in the realm of mental health, such as recent studies connecting adverse childhood events (ACE) or “toxic

³²⁰ Ziya Tong, “Opinion: In Our Surveillance Society, Somebody Is Always Watching,” *The Globe and Mail*, June 10, 2019, sec. Opinion, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-in-our-surveillance-society-somebody-is-always-watching/>.

³²¹ Winkler et al., *Reflections on the Future of Warfare and Implications for Personnel Policies of the U.S. Department of Defense*, 10.

³²² Australian Defence Force, “Future Land Warfare Report, 2014,” 15.

³²³ “Exploring Social Futures – Policy Horizons Canada,” Government, Policy Horizons Canada, accessed March 3, 2021, <https://horizons.gc.ca/en/2020/03/20/exploring-social-futures/>.

stress" in childhood to significant health challenges in adulthood (physical and mental), could impact the domain in multiple ways.³²⁴ The combination of an already lonely and disconnected population, with increased mental health care needs and families facing deployments without the ability to communicate, needs to be considered in future discussions about family support requirements.

An emerging issue from a family perspective is the future uncertainty surrounding the real estate and housing markets. Fluctuation in both housing prices availability has an outsized impact on military families due to cycles of relocation.³²⁵ CMHC has warned of a potential drop in housing prices of up to 50% by 2030.³²⁶ CMHC considers that housing prices could drop by 33% under a moderate Covid-19 economic recovery scenario or up to 48% under a 'very severe' recovery scenario. Conversely, an increase in housing prices could also pose significant challenges for military families; especially, in a scenario where more families are multigenerational.

Ideas. Ideas can also change the trajectory of a domain. Hines and Bishop highlight how ideas related to politics, religion and social welfare have shaped world history for centuries.³²⁷ Several ideas related to the domain have not yet been broadly accepted; if they are accepted, they will prompt alternate futures. For example, our homes are becoming increasingly automated; the future might look different for families if automation in homes increased to a level where it could take over the vast majority of

³²⁴ Nicholas Long, "Looking into the Future: The Potential Impact of Emerging Trends on Child and Family Mental Health Services," *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 23, no. 1 (January 1, 2018): 3–8, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359104517749365>.

³²⁵ Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, "On the Homefront Update," 59.

³²⁶ "CMHC Suggests Worst-Case Scenario of Nearly 50% Drop in Housing Prices," *Storeys* (blog), January 21, 2021, <https://storeys.com/cmhc-presents-50-drop-housing-prices-2030/>.

³²⁷ Hines and Bishop, "Framework Foresight," 44.

household tasks such as laundry, grocery shopping and household cleaning. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to increases in online shopping for everything from groceries to clothing to cars, and if the future world of commerce moved entirely online, there would also be impacts on the domain. If rapid transit options suddenly made it possible to move between distant places extremely quickly, like getting from Vancouver to Halifax in an hour instead of 6, the necessity of relocation might completely disappear.

Some ideas may seem less desirable but would nonetheless fundamentally change the domain. For example, one proposal from a National Democratic Party Member of Parliament at the party's annual convention was to scrap the CAF in favour of a domestic emergency service.³²⁸ Although the motion was neither debated nor supported by party leadership, if such an idea were eventually adopted, questions arise as to whether family support would be required at all or perhaps only in a minimal capacity. While these ideas may seem far-fetched, it is important to recall that it is challenging to predict the future accurately. The value of strategic foresight lies in the consideration of many plausible futures.

Alternative Future Description

This discussion of plausible future events, issues, and ideas highlights some ways in which the world could change; these changes would have implications for various elements of the family support domain. Conceivably, each of the possible alternative futures could be analysed in-depth to determine how they would impact the domain; however, practically speaking, foresight practitioners generally choose a smaller number

³²⁸ David Thurton, Olivia Stefanovich · CBC News · Posted: Apr 04, and 2021 4:00 AM ET | Last Updated: April 4, "Who Wants to Abolish Billionaires? A Look at the Federal NDP's Convention Resolutions | CBC News," CBC, April 7, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/ndp-2021-convention-resolutions-1.5972881>.

of compelling futures to explore in detail. In the CAF family support domain, some uncertainties would be especially valuable to explore further, such as family support in the face of different levels of conflict (from below the threshold of war to high-end conflict with a near-peer), drastic changes in either direction to the cost and availability of housing; significant shifts in burden-sharing responsibility between the federal and provincial governments, the impact of either hyperconnectivity or social isolation or, the widespread adoption of personnel enhancement technologies within the conventional force.

Step 4: Vision for CAF Family Support in 2040

Hines and Bishop present a wide range of methodological options for exploring potential alternate futures as a means of shifting focus back into the domain after having examined possible changes in the world outside the domain.³²⁹ One option is to use a futures wheel to highlight implications and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd order effects under each main category from the domain main.³³⁰ Another option is to simply describe both the most “important” and most “provocative” implications of each future and then identify the resulting “issues or opportunities within the domain.”³³¹ An interdisciplinary team would generally undertake this step to ensure the full range of possible implications is considered across each of the plausible futures. That level of analysis is outside the scope of this paper; however, to demonstrate both the process and type of information that can be discerned by applying the process, a modified implications’ analysis is provided in this section. For this analysis, the following baseline and alternate futures will be analysed: a

³²⁹ Hines and Bishop, “Framework Foresight,” 46.

³³⁰ Ibid., 40.

³³¹ This method is used by Policy Horizons Canada to present the implications of their Social Futures foresight work. Ibid. “Exploring Social Futures – Policy Horizons Canada.”

possible increase in multigenerational families; increased privatization of health care in some provinces; and an increasing percentage of the Canadian population made up of immigrants and second-generation Canadians.

Future 1	Increase in multigenerational families (Baseline)
Categories	Social and Relocation
Key Implication	<p><u>Relocation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications for housing and relocation benefits (currently CRA dependant status is required for eligibility). <p><u>Social:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional family members need to be considered during program and services development, especially concerning separation, relocation and risk.
Additional Implications	<p><u>Relocation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this future intersects with a prohibitive increase in home costs, may be increased demand for larger RHUs. • May drive an increase in IR or requests for remote employment if the whole family is not willing/able to move. • Increases the number of family members impacted by relocation challenges such as lack of family doctors in a community or long waitlists for specialists. <p><u>Social:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of non-parent adults in the home may provide protections to the health and well-being of military children. • May impact eligibility for other benefits, such as FCA.
Issues and/or Opportunities	<p><u>Issues:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May pose recruiting/retention challenges for DND/CAF if support is not available to these families. • There will be a need to consider how an expanded family system, with multiple generations, may cope with separation and other military life events, such as injury or illness. If individual family members are impacted by the relationships of other members, how does the increased network of relationships under a single roof change those impacts? Are the recognized impacts of multiple deployments on levels of sadness and anxiety amplified if more people are living together who are sad or anxious?³³² Or is the effect ameliorated by the presence of an additional generation? <p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to provide programs and services to a broader range of family members.

Table 7.1 - Future 1

³³² Paley, Lester, and Mogil, "Family Systems and Ecological Perspectives on the Impact of Deployment on Military Families," September 2013, 248.

Future 2	Increased Privatization of Healthcare in Some Provinces (Alternative)
Categories	Relocation
Key Implication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased difficulty accessing public health care services as more practitioners either move to provide private care or split their time between private and public care.
Additional Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further decrease in the number of practitioners providing care in remote and rural locations where many Bases/Wings are located. Those posted to urban centres may be able to access care more readily. Greater inequality between families; those at higher ranks or with higher family income may afford private care more readily. If this future intersects with an increase in diversity in the CAF, Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) military families could experience even greater inequalities, given that they already face barriers and service level discrepancies when accessing health care.³³³ Members and families may increasingly accept or decline potential postings based on access to medical care or choose IR as an alternative to moving the whole family.
Issues/ Opportunities	<p><u>Issues:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May limit CAF's ability to recruit and retain members, especially from a more diverse spectrum of Canadian society. <p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibly an argument for military family health care to transition back to being a federal responsibility.

Table 7.2 - Future 2

Tables 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3 use a hybrid of the various analytical options provided by Hines and Bishop to highlight the following: key implications and additional implications according to the applicable domain category(ies); and potential issues and opportunities for domain stakeholders to consider. At this stage, it is also important to remember that implications are not necessarily negative, and changes may provide opportunities to capitalize on the change in a constructive manner.

³³³ “Racial Inequality in Access to Health Care Services | Ontario Human Rights Commission,” Ontario Human Rights Commission, accessed March 28, 2021, <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/race-policy-dialogue-papers/racial-inequality-access-health-care-services>.

Future 3	An increasing percentage of the Canadian population made up of immigrants and second-generation Canadians (Baseline)
Categories	Separation, Economic
Key Implication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, MFS and MFRCs reliably provide services in both official languages; however, as the ethnocultural demographics of the CAF changes, there may be a need to offer certain critical services in other languages.
Additional Implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a larger proportion of the population has a first language is neither English nor French, and the CAF recruits more diversely, there may be a need for MFS and MFRCs to offer certain critical services in other languages. • The families-of-origin for recent immigrants are more likely to be concentrated in Canada’s metropolitan areas, where only limited military family support is currently available. The MFRCs in Canada’s largest cities are small relative to the population of the community in which they operate and provide support primarily to reserve units and small groups of RegF families.
Issues/ Opportunities	<p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFMWS researcher Lynda Manser recommended in 2018 that language and ethnocultural statistics be monitored annually, but this has not been done to date.³³⁴ • The limited data published in 2018 only covered the RegF; there is a critical need to study and track ResF data. <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to explore additional virtual/remote support options that can provide service in a range of languages and to families not co-located with the member.³³⁵

Table 7.3 - Future 3

This analysis, while not exhaustive, provides an example of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd order implications of changes within the domain; it sheds some light on the issues family support stakeholders might need to consider moving forward. A more detailed analysis conducted by an interdisciplinary team would help to identify overlapping implications of various futures and could be a central part of any further foresight work related to CAF family support. For example, all of the futures analysed here have one implication in common, an increase in requests for IR. IR has potential follow-on implications under the

³³⁴ Manser, *Profile of Mil Families*, 78.

³³⁵ Mancini et al., “Community Capacity,” 2.

social and economic categories, which could be felt unequally by different families and could be explored further.

Future Scenarios

Another means of considering the future that is quite popular in the field of strategic foresight is the building of future scenarios. The entire third volume of *Canada's Future Army* series of reports is dedicated to scenario exploration and implications' analysis.³³⁶ There are multiple ways of coming up with scenarios to analyse; for this paper, the 2x2 grid method, recommended by Hines and Bishop, is used. The grid places one plausible spectrum of change on the X-axis and a second plausible spectrum of change along the Y-axis, creating four separate boxes. Each quadrant houses a different future scenario for the domain. Based on the horizon scanning presented in the Visioning section, the following two plausible spectrums of change will be used to discuss possible implications for the domain: level of societal connectivity from disconnected to hyperconnected; and type of military conflict from conflict below the threshold of war to high-end, conventional warfare with a near-peer. Figure 7.1 shows the grid and the scenarios that could stem from each of these combinations:

Hyperconnected/Conventional Near Peer War; Disconnected/Conventional Near Peer War; Hyperconnected/Below the Threshold of War; and Disconnected/Below the Threshold of War. To build out descriptions of each scenario, potential implications of each scenario were assessed by considering the three unique characteristics of military families – risk, separation and relocation – as well as applicable theories, as presented in Chapter Four.

³³⁶ Department of National Defence, *Canada's Future Army, Volume 3: Alternate Worlds and Implications*.



Figure 7.1 - Future Scenario Grid

Global War in the Backyard: Hyperconnected/Conventional Near Peer War.

Increased readiness requirements characterize this scenario, deployments with no set end date and economic shifts away from consumer goods and towards military equipment and goods. High levels of connectivity would mean that families will still likely be able to access goods and services they require, even if timelines for doing so are extended. A war economy may increase employment opportunities for spouses, driving an increased need for family care solutions for children and possibly older adults in multigenerational families. This scenario comes with drastic increases in physical and mental risk to the

member as conventional warfare meets with human enhancement technologies.

Hyperconnectivity would likely allow family support service providers to capitalize on higher levels of awareness among families regarding policies, programs and services.

This scenario, underpinned by robust and global communications networks, could also see more detailed news and information about the conflict brought more fully into the sphere of the family, which may have negative impacts on family mental wellness. A hyperconnected world could increase virtual and physical access to previously isolated locations, such as Canada's North, bringing conventional warfare with a near-peer closer to home. Even if war is not being waged on our Canadian soil, hyperconnectivity means that physical shocks in another part of the globe will impact families. For example, imports of goods and services that families rely on may be less available; however, strong local connections to the community and family support stakeholders may offset the negative impacts of some of these challenges.

Alone and Afraid: Disconnected and Isolated/ Conventional Near Peer War. This scenario is also characterized by increased readiness requirements, longer deployments, and a higher risk of a near-peer war and a social landscape where people are isolated and lonely, despite technological advancements. It may produce a robust wartime economy driven by high resource consumption rates of global military forces. However, social disconnection may limit families' means of connecting and acquiring goods, by mail, for example, especially in more physically isolated communities as greater resource competition becomes the norm. Social disconnection, both from deployed loved ones and from other formal and informal supports, may also lead to longer-term health consequences for members and family members. A disconnected world may continue to

necessitate geographic relocations for a large number of families. That same disconnection could make re-establishing community connections and accessing required services even more difficult. A concurrent rise in multigenerational families who opt not to move with the member may mean that families are even more disconnected from the military community, losing awareness of critical supports that seek to build and reinforce individual and family resilience in a time of major conflict. This scenario would likely increase risks of physical and mental injury or illness to members, and disconnected families may struggle to cope with member-care requirements if they are unaware of available supports. On the part of service providers, creativity would be vital to reach out to a geographically dispersed and increasingly socially isolated community. Working in partnership with non-military service providers would also be essential to ensure all military family members have access to necessary services and support. However, this type of collaboration could be more challenging if conventional warfare impacts non-military Canadians more broadly.

Anywhere and Everywhere: Hyperconnected/Below the Threshold of War. This scenario is characterized by a highly connected society that is informed and wary of the accuracy of information and military operations that increasingly involve threats in the emerging domains of cyber and space. Demands on members – and families – may shift quickly from one type of conflict to the next, requiring immense flexibility from members, family members and service providers. Adversaries may target different family personas that are not as widely accepted elsewhere as they are in Canada. An intersectional feminist lens would also indicate that these types of threats may be more pronounced for families with previous connections to a given adversary. Robust global

connectivity may simultaneously reduce the need for relocation and limit separation, which may keep families geographically stable but physically removed from traditional military communities. Awareness of services and support is likely higher in this scenario. Still, families' needs are also likely to be more diverse depending on the nature of a given conflict and the associated risks and overall deployment schedule (which will vary widely). Risks in this scenario may be more mental than physical for a broader cross-section of military members. The connectivity in this scenario may lessen the burden of some common military family challenges, such as relocation, as families may stay connected to previous service providers and other social supports. Hyperconnectivity may also push the provinces and federal government to cooperate to a greater extent on military family support.

Isolated Targets: Disconnected and Isolated/Below the Threshold of War. This scenario is characterized by a social landscape of isolation and distrust in a world with pervasive low-level conflict in various domains. Relocation and frequent short terms separation would both likely remain hallmarks of the military family journey life. Disconnected and isolated families may be less aware of available services and support and face additional struggles accessing them when required. Levels of risk experienced by military members would likely ebb and flow depending on the type of conflict in which the CAF is engaged, but risks to mental health would remain widespread. Furthermore, mental health challenges would likely be exacerbated among members and families by high levels of social disconnection. Adversaries may exploit social isolation through increased use of disinformation. Countering disinformation will be more difficult for service providers, especially among “invisible” family members at the periphery of

the military community where communications are especially challenging. Shifting, low-level conflict in emerging domains coupled with the general disconnection of broader Canadian society may mean less national interest in military family challenges. Less interest could impact funding levels and the engagement of non-profit groups and the private sector in the domain. Disconnection from society writ large may insulate individual families, leading to more multigenerational households and necessitating the provision of family support to a larger population.

These four descriptions are merely an example of how a scenario analysis could be developed to help DND/CAF think more holistically about the plausible futures of the domain. The scenarios provide an idea of what the future might hold under each of these scenarios; however, one of the limitations of this analysis is that it is the work of the author alone. The scenario descriptions provide the bones for an initial implications' analysis based on consideration of the key CAF family support domain categories, risk, separation and relocation. A more fulsome analysis of all the STEEP categories by an interdisciplinary team would capitalize on the imagination and creativity of a broad spectrum of DND/CAF professionals and members of other stakeholder groups to capture 2nd, 3rd and higher-order effects of changes. As noted in *The Futures Toolkit*, "One way to strengthen the connection is to involve as wide a group of policymakers as possible. Not only will this raise awareness of the project, but gathering intelligence from key stakeholders will build a bridge to current policy and strategy activity."³³⁷ Of course, these scenarios are not the only possible scenarios either. A larger group of stakeholders,

³³⁷ Great Britain, "The Futures Toolkit: Tools for Futures Thinking and Foresight across UK Government," 5.

diving deeper into the plausible futures, might choose to identify a different set of uncertainties from which to build a 2x2 scenario grid.

Steps 5 And 6: Planning to Take Action

The last two steps in Hines' and Bishop's strategic foresight process are Planning and Acting. Conducting these steps is beyond the scope of this paper as the implications' analysis and scenario building would need to be more robust to undertake the key activities associated with this stage. Typically, the planning process would include prioritizing all of the issues and opportunities identified during the implications' analysis. This identification would involve assessing the relative likelihood of different futures, assessing the impact of various futures and determining how prepared or unprepared DND/CAF and other stakeholders are for specific changes.³³⁸ Since only some plausible changes were analysed in this paper, and only from one person's perspective, prioritization is not possible.

In addition to prioritization, the planning stage of a complete strategic foresight process would identify leading indicators of change for key uncertainties in the domain. For example, what social indicators would lead stakeholders to believe that the social world was becoming hyperconnected versus disconnected and isolated? What indicators would need to be monitored to identify changes in where the CAF sits on the spectrum of conflict? Once these indicators are understood, they would be monitored by stakeholders as the future becomes the present.³³⁹ Future activity in the domain can then be planned against each plausible future and plans simply put into action as indicators dictate. Planning is a step that the CAF is familiar with, as operational planning for potential

³³⁸ Hines and Bishop, "Framework Foresight," 47.

³³⁹ Ibid.

future conflicts is a common military activity. However, this type of planning for future family support needs has never been done.

Summary

The analysis presented in this chapter, using the *Framework Foresight* methodology, represents the informed beginnings of a more holistic strategic foresight project for the CAF family support domain. The information captured under Hines' and Bishop's foresight steps – Framing, Scanning, Forecasting and Visioning – is based on a robust review of research related to the domain as well as a limited horizon scanning process that sought to identify plausible future changes that could impact the domain; however, the depth and breadth of the analysis could be improved upon if it were undertaken by a larger, interdisciplinary team. The Planning and Acting steps are beyond the scope of this paper to complete. They could be addressed by organizations within DND/CAF in conjunction with key external stakeholders responsible for planning and delivering CAF family support. Ultimately, the use of Hines' and Bishop's methodology demonstrates the value in systematically considering the future to gain insight for strategic planning.

In times of rapid change and uncertainty, responsible policy must take multiple future possibilities into account. Strategic foresight offers the means to do that.

— OECD, Strategic Foresight for Better Policies, 2019

CHAPTER 8 – CONCLUSION

Every CAF member has a family. Although CAF families share many characteristics with civilian families, CAF families face unique challenges related to separation, risk and relocation. The GoC has long recognized a moral responsibility to support military families to alleviate the strain caused by this unique trio of military family challenges. The efforts of the DND/CAF, on behalf of the GoC, can be broadly summarized as CAF family support. Since the founding of Children's Education Management in 1947, the suite of policies, programs and services available to CAF families has grown extensively, to the point that more support is available to Canadian military families in 2021 than at any other time in history. However, both CAF families and the world they live in are rapidly changing. It is difficult to predict what the family of the future will look like or how a changing world will impact families. DND/CAF actively seeks to increase the representation of women, Indigenous Canadians and diverse ethnic groups in the CAF. Still, family support stakeholders know little about how an increase in diversity will change family support requirements. Perhaps it will be routine for three or more generations to live under one roof again. Maybe blended families or single-parent families will be the norm. Bringing a picture of family life in 2040 into focus becomes even more challenging when potential changes in the structure of the CAF and changes in the nature of armed conflict are considered. Perhaps hybrid warfare will reduce the number of annual military relocations and, hence, the need for relocation support. Maybe a significant increase in the operational tempo of reservists will lead to

ResF families seeking support more regularly. The answers to these questions will directly influence the type of support CAF families will require in 2040.

Ensuring that CAF family support continues to meet families' diverse and ever-changing needs is an incredibly complex problem without a simple solution. This paper has suggested strategic foresight as a valuable tool that could allow DND/CAF to holistically consider CAF family support in the context of a range of possible futures out to 2040. The review of the CAF family support domain in Chapters Two and Three identified several areas that would benefit from further research. The limited application of Hines' and Bishop's *Framework Foresight* methodology conducted in Chapters Six and Seven also identified several ways in which DND/CAF could enhance a full-scale strategic foresight project on CAF family support. These conclusions are discussed below.

Further Research

Since the publication of the Ombudsman's report in 2013, DND/CAF has emphasized empirical research regarding CAF families and the military family life experience. The breadth of new research conducted between 2013 and 2021 is significant; however, gaps remain that should be closed if DND/CAF wishes to pursue a robust strategic foresight project on CAF family support. First, more data is required about the demographics of ResF families. This sub-group of families has historically been understudied, in part because they dispersed across the country and are more difficult to access. As discussed in Chapter Two, ResF families make up just over 28% of CAF families. If the ResF continues to play an increasingly important role in CAF

operations, a possibility discussed in Chapter Seven, providing adequate support to these dispersed families will be even more vital.

The CAF is also working to diversify its membership; however, very little information is available about the ethnocultural demographics of CAF families. Without ethnocultural data, it is difficult to understand how the needs of CAF families from different ethnic or racial communities, such as Black or Indigenous families, differ from the needs of White CAF families. Hence, establishing a baseline and monitoring language and ethnocultural statistics for CAF families would help ensure changing trends can be identified as quickly as possible.³⁴⁰

The analysis in Chapters Six and Seven also excluded some information from the CAF family support domain that could be useful in a more robust strategic foresight project. For example, this paper did not consider the needs of veteran families and OUTCAN families were not considered in depth. Still, these families are served by existing policies, programs and services and will continue to require support in the future.

Finally, this paper did not fully account for geographic variations in CAF family needs and available family support. Chapter Three identified that provincial governments are key stakeholders in the CAF family support domain, and many military family life challenges related to relocation have a provincial nexus. As a federal institution, DND/CAF understandably faces challenges ensuring that national policies, programs and services meet families' needs across ten provinces and three territories. However, if DND/CAF hopes to support families and build familial and community resilience, future

³⁴⁰ Manser, *Profile of Mil Families*, 78.

plans will need to fully consider and account for the impacts and variance of provincial regulations, policies, programs and services.

Personnel within DND/CAF involved in developing and implementing CAF family support policies, programs, and services are generally aware of the gaps discussed here.³⁴¹ With strong connections to external stakeholders and access to the necessary research funding, a solid interdisciplinary team could use foresight to help close the current gaps in CAF family research.

Recommendations for Family Support Foresight Work

Chapter Five discussed the history of futures studies, including how the GoC and DND/CAF have used foresight work in the past. The analysis in Chapters Six and Seven went further and provided an example of what the strategic foresight process might look like for the CAF family support domain. These chapters applied Hines' and Bishop's *Framework Foresight* methodology to CAF family support. In doing so, they articulated the domain of CAF family support, highlighted a range of plausible futures that could affect the domain and analyzed some of the implications of those futures. This application of Hines' and Bishop's methodology helped identify several recommendations worth considering if DND/CAF opts to use strategic foresight to plan for the future of CAF family support. Specifically, it helped identify what organization should take the lead, who should participate in the process, what implications analysis tools the team should use, and what specific foresight tools may be valuable.

Organizationally, strategic foresight work on the CAF family support domain could reside within Chief of Military Personnel (CMP). There are several reasons for

³⁴¹ Ibid.

recommending CMP take the lead on this type of project. First, CMP oversees CFMWS, the organization responsible for the Military Family Services Program and MFRC governance issues. Second, CMP is responsible for developing and overseeing the vast majority of CAF personnel support policies. Finally, CMP staff are well-acquainted with the interface between DND/CAF and the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada, which ultimately makes personnel and benefits-related funding decisions. However, to be successful, a project of this magnitude requires buy-in from all senior DND/CAF leaders and must be appropriately resourced, with both personnel and funding. Expertise in strategic foresight already exists elsewhere in DND/CAF and within the GoC, and futures studies are already being harnessed to prepare the CAF for future conflicts. This expertise could be leveraged for work on the CAF family support domain as well.

Choosing the right team to conduct foresight work on the CAF family support domain is also critical to the project's success. The domain of CAF family support is extensive. It is impacted by changes in several other domains, and its stakeholders are both internal and external to DND/CAF and the GoC. An interdisciplinary team consisting primarily of traditional family support stakeholders, such as CFMWS staff and MFRC representatives, military representatives and family members, would be best suited to tackle a project of this magnitude. Less-traditional stakeholders, such as provincial government representatives and subject matter experts from fields like technology, medicine, immigration and urban and rural planning, could also be included at appropriate junctures. The goal of having a broader cross-section of team members is to deepen the implications' analysis and inject creativity into the strategic foresight process.

The right team will help ensure that the crucial implications analysis stage is well done. However, clear directions should also be provided regarding the type of theoretical analysis the team should undertake. In addition to resilience and wellness theories, which DND/CAF currently uses, the team could consider the theories presented in Chapter Four – family systems theory, social ecological theory and intersectional feminist theory – as part of their implications’ analysis. Furthermore, the team may wish to continually monitor sociological research on families to determine if new or modified theories could benefit the final analysis.

Finally, for this paper, Hines’ and Bishop’s *Framework Foresight* methodology provided a practical starting point for thinking about the future of CAF family support. However, a more customized set of foresight tools may be more applicable to a larger scale strategic foresight project on CAF family support. For example, *The Futures Toolkit*, mentioned in Chapter Five, discusses driver mapping as a practical step in future work aimed at improving policy development.³⁴² Driver mapping, which helps pinpoint events that are likely to push the future towards one future or another, could be embedded into step three of Hines’ and Bishop’s methodology, between horizon scanning and implications’ analysis.

As presented in Chapters Six and Seven, the strategic foresight process is one example of how DND/CAF could frame critical thinking about the future impacts of change on CAF family support. The recommendations provided in this section would help ensure a more fulsome analysis of the domain and its plausible futures.

³⁴² Great Britain, “The Futures Toolkit: Tools for Futures Thinking and Foresight across UK Government,” 42.

Summary

Over the past 30 years, policies, programs and services to support CAF families have often been developed and implemented only after public reports of military family challenges, such as the SCONDVA report (1998) and the Ombudsman’s report (2013).³⁴³ These reports acknowledged how families and the world around them have changed. However, the reports and the CAF family support implemented in their wake do not account for how the future will change conflict, change the CAF or change families. There are also known gaps in existing family support policies, programs and services. If DND/CAF cannot meet families’ current needs, how will they effectively identify and address the implications of future changes on CAF family support? The use of a strategic foresight framework, such as Hines’ and Bishop’s *Framework Foresight* methodology, would help DND/CAD be more proactive and less reactive in its family support endeavours.

CAF families are known as “the strength behind the uniform.”³⁴⁴ They face significant challenges related to frequent relocation, relentless separation from the military member and the constant risk of severe injury or illness acquired in service to Canada. Knowing that “the CAF suffers when essential members are compelled to leave due to organizational factors such as outdated personnel policies...” DND/CAF has a vested interest in closing existing CAF family support gaps and preventing new gaps from forming.³⁴⁵ Moreover, the GoC has a moral responsibility to care for those who

³⁴³ House of Commons, “Moving Forward: A Strategic Plan for Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Forces”; Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “On the Homefront Update.”

³⁴⁴ Department of National Defence, *Strong Secure Engaged*, 28.

³⁴⁵ Department of National Defence, “CDS Strategic Initiating Directive: CAF Retention” (Ottawa, ON: Chief of Defence Staff, March 14, 2019).

serve Canada with unlimited liability. By extension, this moral responsibility extends to CAF families. Strategic foresight offers a sound, flexible process that could help DND/CAF ensure CAF family support lives up to that moral commitment well into the future.

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