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Transforming the CAF HRM System: Committing to a ‘People First’ Plan

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**TRANSFORMING THE CAF HRM SYSTEM:
COMMITTING TO A ‘PEOPLE FIRST’ PLAN**

By Major K.M. Simpson

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ABSTRACT

One of the biggest challenges facing the Canadian Armed Forces over the past several decades is an ineffective human resources management system unable to pivot and be responsive to a changing security landscape and evolving labour market. The inability of this system to address the stressors of military service and market itself as an employer of choice has resulted in the loss of highly skilled personnel to civilian industry and has presented challenges in recruiting new personnel to meet manning levels and diversity targets. The Canadian Armed Forces has been aware of these issues for decades and have attempted several reforms that have been unsuccessful due to federal budget cuts and increases in operational tempo, but primarily due to the complexity of the human resources system itself. The uniqueness of military operations and the challenges of working within the public sector context of Treasury Board Secretariat rules and regulations has created a rigid human resources governance structure that is unable to meet the human resources demands of the Canadian Armed Forces. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other allied military forces such as the United States Department of Defence and Australian Defence Force have faced similar challenges and taken holistic approaches to adapt their systems. This paper will argue that by creating a more agile governance structure, human resources system and human resources policies based on best practices of other government departments and allied forces, the Canadian Armed Forces will be responsive to evolving workforce requirements and able to address the long standing challenges of recruiting, retaining and diversifying its Regular Force to meet the demands of the current and future security environment.

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

With the Coronavirus 19 (COVID-19) pandemic virtually shutting down the global economy, military institutions, such as the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), have an opportunity to market themselves as an employer of choice, offering financial security, along with health and family benefits during these uncertain times. Over the past few decades, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) has gone to great strides to attract and retain pilots, creating extensive recruiting and retention schemes, but has been historically plagued with shortages due to the more attractive civilian aviation industry offering higher salaries, geographic stability, frequent flight hours and a sense of owning one's own career. With this industry significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, considerable layoffs have occurred and the CAF is now seeing pilots that released from service only 18 months prior seeking to rejoin. The CAF will welcome them with open arms and likely offer a substantial signing bonus in exchange for a commitment for another five to ten years of service, but will this be enough to meet today's requirements or the future needs of the RCAF? What is the CAF doing during this uncertain time to capitalize on the struggling global economy to market itself to high-value trades that are often in great demand in civilian industry? Unfortunately, the current challenges being faced by the CAF regarding recruiting and retention go well beyond the increased availability of skilled workers due to a struggling economy.

One of the biggest challenges facing the CAF over the past several decades is an ineffective human resources management (HRM) system unable to pivot and be responsive to a changing security landscape and evolving labour market. As in civilian industry, the primary strategic HRM objective for the CAF is to "have the right CAF member with the right

qualifications positioned in the right place at the right time.”¹ However, the methodology of going about addressing the most important part of an organization, the people, greatly differs between civilian and military organizations. As noted by the Government of Canada (GoC) Department of Finance, “high-wage, high-skilled, full-time and private-sector employment has been the main source of job creation”² in Canada’s labour market. The private and public service sectors often operate in open labour markets where there are limited constraints on who can fill specific positions and individuals are hired to do a specific job based on their skillsets obtained either through a university/college degree or apprenticeship training. Since the overall strategic goal of civilian companies is financial gain, private sector HRM systems can be more easily designed to ensure that “the organization’s workforce can accomplish assigned tasks and achieve intended objectives.”³ These organizations are easily capable of defining what their mission is and the best means of going about achieving it. They are also able to monitor market trends, adapt quickly to meet new demands, and adjust jobs and competencies as necessary to remain competitive. Some public sector organizations, such as DND and military organizations, like the CAF, struggle to define strategic objectives, the ends, as well as the means and ways to achieve them due to the specialized nature of their assigned tasks. This difficulty in defining a strategic mission and vision within the organization stems from having “multiple goals and priorities which often conflict with each other due to the demands of different stakeholder groups (central governments, citizens, service users, local politicians).”⁴

¹ Department of National Defence, *Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services) Report 1258-219: Evaluation of the Governance of Chief of Military Personnel*, (Ottawa: DND, 2016), Executive Summary.

² Department of Finance, *Jobs Report: The State of the Canadian Labour Market*, last accessed 14 Dec 2020, <https://www.budget.gc.ca/2014/docs/jobs-emplois/pdf/jobs-emplois-eng.pdf>.

³ Alan Okros, “Becoming an Employer of Choice: Human Resources Challenges within DND and the CF,” in *Public Management of Defence in Canada*, ed. Craig Stone (Toronto: Breakout Educational Network, 2009), 150.

⁴ Guest editors Eva Knies, Paul Boselie, Julian Gould-Williams & Wouter Vandenabeele, “Strategic human resource management and public sector performance,” *International Journal of Human Resource Management*,

With the ultimate mission of the CAF being to “defend Canadians and Canadian interests,”⁵ Canada’s latest Defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged* (SSE) provides a new vision and approach to achieving this mandate. *SSE* is unique from past defence policies in that it details a strategic outlook and capability-based planning to address national interests and emerging threats and matches them to a thorough implementation agenda with a recapitalized budget to meet most defence requirements over the next 20 years. Most importantly, it acknowledges that people are at the heart of any organization and “Canada cannot meet its defence needs at home and abroad without [its] dedicated, motivated and highly skilled people.”⁶ However, despite the first section of *SSE* being dedicated entirely to supporting the men and women of DND and the CAF, along with their families, it pales in comparison to the large portion of the document that describes the new agile approach to defence through capability-based projects. *SSE* is notably missing an Annex detailing an HRM strategy to deliver on all of these initiatives, including the “\$108 Billion dollars for the development and acquisition of capital equipment.”⁷ However, it does commit to growing the Defence Team by 3,500 Regular Force (to 71,500 total) and 1,500 Reserve Force (to 30,000 total) and an additional 1,150 civilians to support intelligence activities and procurement, but it does not detail how this will be achieved or when. Without the human resources to manage projects, operate new systems while phasing out old ones and leaders to lead change initiatives, DND will continue to have a capacity issue as has been seen in the past few decades with delays to major capital projects, struggling

Vol 26, no. 3, (2014): 421. Last, accessed 14 Dec 2020, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09585192.2014.980127?scroll=top&needAccess=true>.

⁵ Department of National Defence, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada’s New Defence Policy*, (Ottawa, DND, 2017), 14.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 101.

transformation initiatives and key occupation shortages. At the core of this capacity issue, is a HRM system plagued by outdated policies and sluggish oversight that struggles to “compete in Canada’s highly competitive labour market”⁸ and “have the right military and civilian personnel, in the right numbers, with the right competencies, at the right place and at the right time.”⁹

Despite numerous attempts to transform the existing human resource system, the CAF has been ineffective at improving recruiting, creating a more diverse force and retaining its highly trained members. As noted in the *DND Departmental Results 2019-20*, the CAF is seeing a decline in the number of required positions filled, only half of the Regular Force believe the CAF provides a reasonable quality of life for themselves and their families, and there continues to be diversity gaps with all visible minority targets not being achieved.¹⁰ This ineffectiveness has been due to the uniqueness of military operations, the challenges of working within the public sector context of Treasury Board Secretariat rules and regulations, and an internal system that has been unable to effectively adapt to changes in technology, the threat landscape, foreign policy, economy, and demographics. In 2002, significant time was invested in developing DND’s *HR Strategy 2020* which looked at those changes and defined strategic HR principles and an HR plan for the future.¹¹ Milestones for major HR reform initiatives along with a detailed investment strategy were laid out, but not all were realized. Some successes were achieved, such as the development of the series of CAF Leadership manuals still in use today, the creation of the online learning platform Defence Learning Network (DLN) and the advancement of a number of Quality of Life (QoL) initiatives focussed on the health and well-being of CAF members and

⁸ SSE..., 20.

⁹ Department of National Defence, *Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces 2019-20 Departmental Results Report*, 45. Last accessed 14 Dec 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/departmental-results-report/2019-20-index.html>.

¹⁰ *DND and the CAF 2019-20 Departmental Results Report...*, 51.

¹¹ Department of National Defence, *Military HR Strategy 2020: Facing the People Challenges of the Future*, (Ottawa: Canada Communications Group, 2002).

their families along with better support for veterans. However, despite a modern approach to HR planning with a proposed integrated HRM system and a variety of HR scenarios being considered, some of the key tenants to transform the policies and system like “fostering an open and positive culture,” “soliciting and managing feedback,” “facilitating open and timely communication,” “a framework that balances individual and organizational needs” and “flexible career options and a competitive combination of benefits” were never fully realized.¹² Fast forward to the release of *SSE* in 2017 with the increased resources and HR demands, and the CAF is left with a less than optimal workforce and a stressed system unable to meet the operational and institutional needs or ensure the CAF is an employer of choice.

Paramount to the achievement of any HR strategy is an invested leadership team and a governance framework that can be responsive to challenges and opportunities of an ever-changing environment. Given the complex structure of DND, with public servants, Regular Force (RegF), Reserve Force (ResF) and contracted personnel, the HRM systems and governance structures vary significantly for each of these groups. While each have their own unique challenges, the main strategic HR governance issues faced over the past several decades present themselves mostly in the CAF Regular Force. These HR governance challenges stem from a lack of an integrated and comprehensive strategic approach that balances personnel needs with operational requirements while considering a changing labour market. This paper will argue that by creating a more agile governance structure, HR system and HR policies based on best practices of other government departments (OGDs) and allied forces, the CAF will be responsive to evolving workforce requirements and able to address the long standing challenges of

¹² *Military HR Strategy 2020...*, 15-17.

recruiting, retaining and diversifying its Regular Force to meet the demands of the current and future security environment.

This paper has been divided into four primary sections: firstly, the human resources management issues currently being faced by the CAF will be presented, along with a review of barriers to diversification, retention and recruiting. Secondly, a comprehensive review of the policies and structures that govern HR within the GoC and the CAF will be completed with focus on their impact on the RegF HRM system. Thirdly, a comparison of the human resource policies of other GoC departments and allied militaries will be made with the intent of drawing out effective models for addressing some of the challenges being faced by the CAF. Finally, this paper will offer recommendations on various strategies that can be implemented to improve CAF HR governance making the CAF more agile to address future security challenges and more appealing to future generations as an employer of choice.

CHAPTER 2 – DOES THE CAF HAVE AN HR PROBLEM?

The Problem

The intent of this Chapter is to demonstrate that the CAF has had a long-standing HR problem and will struggle to meet the initiatives identified in *SSE*. The primary focus of an institution's HR management system is to ensure that the organization possesses enough well-trained personnel to meet the current organizational goals while being postured to attract and prepare the next generation's workforce. *SSE* recognizes the need to increase the CAF size to support all the new capabilities that have been planned over the next 20 years, but it does not address the HR management changes that need to occur in order to ensure the system has the capacity to do so. Several speeches and presentations by senior CAF officers in the last couple of years have acknowledged that the CAF is still operating in silos, not an integrated system-of-system and as an institution, needs to stop doing half-baked approaches to transformation initiatives. Lieutenant-General (LGen) Rouleau during his time as Commander of Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC) and Vice Chief of Defence Staff (VCDS) expended significant effort to try to improve the way the CAF leads its people and modernize management practices. Peter Drucker, a well known management expert, provides that

Management is discipline...every achievement of management is the achievement of a manager. Every failure is a failure of a manager. People manage rather than 'forces' or 'facts'. The vision, dedication, and integrity of managers determine whether there is management or mismanagement.¹³

Although leaders like LGen Rouleau come with the vision, dedication and integrity necessary to drive change in a complex organization like the CAF, not all levels have the same commitment

¹³ Peter Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 14.

and discipline to see the change through. There are always higher priority requirements that distract managers with complex change initiatives falling to bottom of the list. Since the release of DND's *HR Strategy 2020* there have been a series of Office of the Auditor General (OAG) audits in 2002, 2006 and 2016 to determine "whether the Canadian Armed Forces implemented appropriate systems and practices to recruit, train, and retain the Regular Force members needed to achieve its objectives."¹⁴ In simplistic terms, to investigate whether CAF managers effectively planned for and managed CAF HR requirements. The recommendations and conclusions of the audits have been consistent and have identified significant failures within the CAF HRM system.

The most recent observations from the *2016 OAG Report* include:

- (1) a lack of appropriate representation goals for women and visible minorities along with a plan and the measures required to achieve set targets;
- (2) a recruiting and training capacity that is not aligned with the HR planning process to ensure that the recruiting plan reflects the personnel required in each occupation;
- (3) a lack of an action plan for each occupation with a three- to five-year target to meet recruiting needs, track progress, and take corrective action where necessary;
- (4) a recruiting strategy that does not include targeted measures to attract enough qualified applicants for all occupations for which it is difficult to attract applicants;
- (5) a slow selection process due to inefficient file management methods and inflexible recruitment process hindering the CAF's ability to maintain a sufficient pool of the best qualified applicants;
- (6) insufficient tracking mechanisms that enable the HR system to track members in occupational training in order to improve the timeliness of training; and
- (7) a lack of a retention strategy for each occupation.¹⁵

¹⁴ Office of the Auditor General of Canada, "Report 5–Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment and Retention–National Defence," *2016 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*, para 5.7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, paras 5.34, 5.44, 5.52, 5.71, 5.87, 5.101, 5.115.

The audits acknowledged that the CAF has made progress to improve the system, including better data monitoring, increased number of QoL initiatives, lengthened terms of service before pension eligibility and the change of the mandatory retirement age from 55 to 60. However, despite a variety of recruiting and retention initiatives and HR reforms, like the *HR Strategy 2020*, the CAF has been unable to address shortages in key occupations due to high attrition rates, training backlogs and under recruiting. The 2016 OAG audit identified that

the Regular Force was under its target of 60,500 members who were fully trained and effective in their occupations... [and] by the end of the 2015–16 fiscal year, the gap between the required and actual numbers of fully trained and effective members for the Regular Force had increased to about 4,200 members.¹⁶

The report further noted that the CAF was unable to meet its 1% growth target for representation of women to reach a total force representation of 25%¹⁷, 27 of the 85 occupations were under target enrollments to fill the gap between required and actual numbers¹⁸ and “there were 21 stressed occupations, and several of them had been stressed for a number of years.”¹⁹ The HR system and policies simply have not been adapted to meet the force size and composition targets and it does not possess the “vision, flexibility and adaptability...[necessary for] the development and sustainment of an operationally effective CF.”²⁰ As noted by Ross Fetterly, a former CAF member and defence analyst,

to respond to non-linear shifts in the international strategic environment, the Canadian defence establishment needs to adopt, as do our allies, a more responsive culture in resource management; one that focuses on rapidly working through a series of different ideas, while leveraging best options and creating agility. In defence, as in many other sectors, the competitive landscape is continually changing. What worked effectively a decade ago may no longer

¹⁶ OAG 2016 Fall Report..., para 5.24.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, para 5.30.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, para 5.50.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, para 5.51.

²⁰ *Military HR Strategy 2020...*, 4.

be effective. This environment places a significant burden on the leadership. Defence organizations that are unable to transform the environment in which they operate internationally must focus on internal transformation.²¹

The OAG observations highlight problems with strategy, planning, processes, and policies. These challenges speak to leadership difficulties in transforming the CAF's organizational culture and HR practices to balance the institutional needs with the needs of its personnel and the future workforce. A 2017 report by the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence identified that the CAF needs "leadership and the will to build a system that is indeed member-centric and fair to all...a well-supported military force, including their families and our next generation of leaders, will be a factor in determining success."²² To be effective, a strategic HRM model must be both a top-down and bottom-up approach. Managers must match strategic objectives with the processes, policies and resources necessary to produce the right number of personnel with the right competencies, while taking into consideration the individual needs of units, its people and society. The *HR Strategy 2020* laid out a solid foundation for transforming CAF HR processes based on the notion that

personnel policies and programs must be designed to enable leaders to develop and maintain the commitment, capabilities and well-being of their people, recognising that the value of people within the CF increases when they are effectively developed and employed with respect for individual attributes, aspirations and personal considerations.²³

It also recognized the specialized nature of military operations and that "flexibility and innovation are the key to the ability to effectively react to unforeseen events...to deal proactively with the future environment."²⁴ However, most of the initiatives in the strategy were never

²¹ Ross Fetterly, "Defence Business Planning in Canada," (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 11. Last accessed 6 Apr 2021, https://www.cgai.ca/defence_business_planning_in_canada.

²² Senate of Canada, "Reinvesting in the Canadian Armed Forces: A Plan for the Future," *Report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence*, (Ottawa: Senate, 2017), 3.

²³ *Military HR Strategy 2020...*, 4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

achieved. Faced with numerous competing priorities over the past two decades including increased operational tempo, a global market crash, budget reductions, a growing mental health problem amongst its members, cultural challenges of sexual misconduct, harassment and discrimination, and a rapidly changing security landscape, the CAF leadership has not been able to focus its energy and resources on addressing the issues of a complex organizational HR system. Despite the best intentions of the hard working leaders of the CAF, outdated policies and processes remain in place and the system lacks the tools necessary to monitor trends and be responsive to changing needs.

The CAF military personnel management system is the responsibility of the Chief of Military Personnel (CMP), who provides the functional guidance/direction and policies for all military HR matters, monitors compliance and manages the system. The goal of CMP leadership is to ensure that “the wide range of support services needed to manage military personnel are aligned and coordinated, and are provided in a manner that supports DND/CAF and Government of Canada priorities and objectives.”²⁵ The RegF personnel management system is comprised of various organizations including

military personnel research and analysis, career management, recruiting, professional development and training, health services, the Chaplain General, morale and welfare services, compensation and benefits, alternate dispute resolution, history and heritage and honours and awards.²⁶

As noted in a 2016 evaluation of CMP governance, this “excessive span of control” has left CMP management with too many responsibilities and resulted in a “misalignment of tasks and functions.”²⁷ These governance issues will be explored in the subsequent chapter, but it is

²⁵ Department of National Defence, *Evaluation of the Governance of Chief of Military Personnel (CMP)*, Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services) Report 1258-219 (ADM(RS)), 2016, Executive Summary.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Executive Summary.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Executive Summary.

important to understand that the variety of tasks and responsibilities entrusted to CMP are at the heart of the HR issues experienced by the CAF. They are impacting the CAF's ability as an organization to operate effectively, which is directly affecting the morale and welfare of its members. Consequently, people are choosing to leave well before mandatory retirement age causing the retention problems currently facing the CAF.

Retention

Following the 2016 internal evaluation of CMP and the OAG audit, the CAF recognized that the HR management system was slow, rigid and outdated and there was a need for change to address the long-standing issues of retention, recruiting and training. Understanding the strategic importance of retaining fully trained and experienced members, the CAF commissioned *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey*. The aim of the research and analysis was to identify the top internal and external factors influencing CAF members to release prior to completing their terms of service or before reaching mandatory retirement age. Table 1.1 provides a summary of the survey findings for the internal factors lumped into four specific categories: career management and progression, compensation and benefits, work environment and family well-being. The top external factors identified were a “lack of energy or motivation/need for a break or change, eligible for pension benefits, family issues (other), component transfer to ResF, [and] personal health reasons.”²⁸ The study provided some excellent indicators of the current state of the morale and well-being of its members and the motivating factors behind early release. Further analysis of the results pointed to areas of improvement in the each of the categories identified below. Relating to Career Management and Progression, several conclusions were made including: improvements were needed to give members more say in career management, postings and

²⁸ *Evaluation of the Governance of Chief of Military Personnel (CMP)...*, 32.

professional military education (PME), second language opportunities (since it is often required for promotion) needed to be increased and there was perception of procedural unfairness which correlated to a dissatisfaction with senior leadership.²⁹

Table 1.1: Internal Factors Motivating Release

Category	Internal Factors (% of participants)
Career Management and Progression	Job dissatisfaction (17.9%)
	Dissatisfaction with occupation (10.6%)
	Dissatisfaction with promotion (8.6%)
	Dissatisfaction with career management (7.2%)
	Dissatisfaction with postings (6.4%)
	Dissatisfaction with deployments (3.8%)
	Dissatisfaction with training and development (3.0%)
	Second language issues (2.9%)
Compensation and Benefits	Dissatisfaction with pay (9.6%)
Work Environment	Lack of meaningful, satisfying or challenging work (9.4%)
	Operational tempo (3.3%)
	Lack of recognition (2.5%)
	Lack of fairness and equity (2.4%)
Family Well-Being	Impact on spouse/partner (13.6%)
	Impact on children (10.5%)
	Lack of geographical stability (9.9%)

Source: Nicolas Bremmer and Glen Budgell, *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey: Descriptive Analysis*, (Ottawa: Human Resources Systems Group Ltd, 2017), 24.

Recommendations were made for the CAF to explore flexible work arrangements as a means of giving personnel an opportunity to provide input towards their career management and review the CAF HR policies to ensure procedural fairness.³⁰ Observations as they relate to the next

²⁹ Nicolas Bremmer and Glen Budgell, *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey: Descriptive Analysis*, (Ottawa: Human Resources Systems Group Ltd, 2017), 3-4.

³⁰ *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey...*, 107.

category, Compensation and Benefits, included a need to explore things like specialist pay and financial compensation for job locations where the cost of living is excessive compared to other posting locations (known as the post-living differential (PLD) program).³¹ The recommendations of flexible work arrangements and policy review for procedural fairness apply to this category as well since they will support improving financial security for CAF members by potentially allowing them to remain in one location or be compensated for moving to a less than desirable location. Additionally, it will also lessen the animosity that may be felt between different occupations based on benefits received due to being posted in a certain position or location. Several observations were made relating to the current work environment in the CAF, but converged on two main concerns, CAF members felt overworked and underappreciated. Due to increases in operational tempo with insufficient manning adjustments, work-life balance has been a struggle, burnout has been common and there exists cynicism towards the senior leadership. Again the recommendations of flexible work arrangements and procedural fairness apply and could support mitigating some the main dissatisfactions identified in this category, but a third recommendation regarding investigating improvements to member recognition programs was also made. The report does not offer where improvements could be made, but rather suggests that the CAF seeks additional input from its members.³² It was noted that members felt somewhat satisfied with the support services available for their families, which relates to the category of family well-being, but not being fully satisfied speaks to the fact that the effect of military life on families will continue to be a motivator for release. The recommendation of

³¹ *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey...*, 3.

³² *Ibid.*, 106-107.

flexible work arrangements will assist in offering a better work-life balance to members and possibly mitigate the impact that frequent postings have on spouses and children.

Overall, *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey* report provides CMP and the CAF with an understanding of the factors that cause their highly-skilled and experienced members to release and provides key areas of improvement for the current CAF HR management system, policies and practices. As noted in the evidence provided by the DND/CAF Ombudsman for the 2017 report by the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence,

military personnel from across the country have voiced concerns over a number of critical issues related to their service, from recruitment to retirement...From these engagements we produce reports that contain evidence-based recommendations — not suggestions — aimed at solving some of the longstanding systemic issues facing CAF members... reports recommend action, and their implementation would mean real change for our members in uniform... We have an ocean full of studies, and I am just waiting for somebody to wade into the waters and start making decisions. The concept of commissioning a study to study the results of a previous study will no longer pass the public sniff test. Some of these decisions may not be popular, some may not be as politically palatable as one might desire, but they are the right ones for the men and women who serve or have served this country.³³

Addressing the issues identified in *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey* requires a pan-CAF approach. The main internal factors identified in the categories of Career Management and Progression, Work Environment and Family Well-Being are significantly influenced by the leadership decisions made within the Environmental Commands of the RCAF, Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) and the Canadian Army (CA). Therefore, an integrated approach is needed to ensure the systemic changes are properly planned, directed, controlled, and organized to meet the complex staffing demands to support CAF operations.

Recruiting

³³ Senate of Canada, Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence, Issue No. 7, Evidence – Meeting of September 20, 2016.

When reviewing the issues experienced by the CAF HR system regarding retention, it can be seen that these issues would also cause the CAF to struggle with recruiting new personnel. Before exploring that thought, an understanding of the current CAF recruitment challenges is required. As summarized in *The 2016 OAG Report*, while the CAF was able to meet its recruiting targets in the years examined (2014 to 2016), the

Military Personnel Command's [branch of CMP] recruiting targets were significantly lower than the levels that had been recommended by the Regular Force through its occupation reviews. In the 2015–16 fiscal year, the Regular Force had identified the need for 5,752 new recruits (in addition to members who would be transferring from the Reserve Force), yet the target in the recruiting plan was adjusted to 4,200. Similarly, for the 2014–15 fiscal year, 4,567 members were needed, but the target was adjusted to 3,800.³⁴

This gap was attributed to the processing capacity of the Canadian Forces Recruiting Group (CFRG) and the basic military training capacity limitations at the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School (CFLRS). It is important to note that two of the main organizations targeted by DND for reduction during the GoC Deficit Reduction Action Plan (DRAP) was CFRG and CFLRS. So in essence, the recruiting and training capacities highlighted in the report, were partially due to DND's approach to the federal governments mandated reductions. This topic will be further explored in the Chapter on governance. In addition, of those recruited in the years examined, the CAF was unable to meet its diversity targets for women and visible minorities, and over-recruited in some occupations to account for the fact that the CAF was "unable to attract a sufficient number of qualified applicants for some [stressed] occupations."³⁵ In the detailed action plan produced by DND to address the recommendations of the *2016 OAG Report*, the CAF undertook a series of HR reforms to rectify the recruiting and training capacity challenges. Efforts included rebranding its recruiting campaigns to focus on under represented

³⁴ OAG 2016 Fall Report..., para 5.42.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, para 5.53.

groups and understaffed occupations as well as revamping the HR management governance structure to ensure personnel requirements, recruiting, training and retention systems were aligned and optimized. *SSE* embodied these changes as part of its commitment to reform its HR policies and practices to ensure its “people and their families are well-supported, diverse and resilient.” The initiatives in *SSE* that are particular to recruiting, training and diversification, include:

- (1) Reduce significantly the time to enroll in the Canadian Armed Forces by reforming all aspects of military recruiting;
- (2) Implement a recruitment campaign to promote the unique full- and part-time career opportunities offered by the Canadian Armed Forces, as well as to support key recruitment priorities, including hiring more women, increasing diversity, addressing priority occupations and the requirements of the Reserve Force;
- (3) Restore the Collège militaire royal in St-Jean as a full degree-granting institution to help prepare the next generation of Canadian Armed Forces leaders;
- (4) Increase the capacity of the Canadian Armed Forces Leadership and Recruit School, and its supporting organizations, to accommodate the increased number of recruits associated with a larger force size;
- (5) Develop and implement a comprehensive Canadian Armed Forces Retention Strategy to keep our talented people in uniform with a welcoming and healthy work environment;
- (6) Undertake a comprehensive review of conditions of service and career paths to allow much more personalized career choices and flexibility;
- (7) Modernize the Canadian Armed Forces Honours and Awards system to ensure military members’ service to Canada is recognized in a more timely and appropriate manner; and
- (8) Implement the first-ever, integrated strategy for human resources to balance the optimal assignment of tasks between the military, defence civilians and the private sector.³⁶

³⁶ *SSE*..., 107.

Based on these initiatives, *SSE* set targets to grow the RegF from 68,000 to 71,500 starting in 2019 and increase the representation of women by one percent annually to 25% by 2026.³⁷ So how is the CAF doing on implementing these initiatives? Examining the DND Departmental Results from 2019-20 relating to recruiting and the trained effective strength of the forces, a negative trend was observed in that only 96.50% of the RegF positions were filled in 2019-20 versus 99.23% in 2018-19 and 17.90% of occupations had critical shortfalls compared to 16.5% in the previous year. The percent of the Defence Team that identified as a woman increased from 15.7% to 16.0%, falling short of the 1% target growth per year and the percent that identified as a visible minority was increased from 8.7% to 9.4%, still below the target of 11.8%. While there have been many initiatives to increase retention, recruiting and diversification, such as *The Journey* and Operation GENERATION which will be discussed in the subsequent chapter on governance, some improvements have been seen, but in this author's opinion, the CAF is not focussing in the right areas. There has not been enough emphasis placed on understanding the motivating factors for why a person would or would not join the CAF. This is necessary in order to tailor the CAF Recruiting Strategy in the same manner as the retention strategies developed to address the factors identified in *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey*.³⁸ As noted by defence policy analyst Paxton Mayer, "the CAF faces two issues in its recruitment: public perception and organizational culture."³⁹

Public perception of the CAF is a difficult issue to summarize and could be an entire paper on its own. However, it centers on two key considerations that will be discussed: 1) the

³⁷ *SSE*..., 104.

³⁸ The issue of retention will be discussed later in Chapter 5 but it is important to note there are discussions on the CAF retention rate being better than our allies. This narrative along with the other narratives that sometimes comes in to play add additional complexity when the CAF tries to balance the multiple views of its members on what the priority should be.

³⁹ Paxton Mayer, "What's in a Soldier? How to Rebrand the Canadian Armed Forces," (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2020), 5.

CAF has not put enough emphasis on designing its marketing campaigns to accurately reflect life in the CAF while taking into consideration the values and beliefs of different generations and minority groups; and 2) there has not been enough focus on countering the negative media attention on things like the presence of a sexualized culture, hatred, discrimination and racism within the CAF. Consequently, the public has a false understanding of the demands of CAF life and a skewed perception of the organizational culture.

Each generation is motivated by the political and technological landscape, culture, and economy in which they are raised. Extensive studies have been completed on the different generational workforce motivating factors and

the modern North American workforce has different expectations and aspirations than the workforce for which the [CAF HR] system was created. Today's labour market is dramatically different than it was a couple of decades ago. The new reality includes tech companies, millennials' expectations and the fact that 20-year careers with one organization are practically unheard of in the private sector.⁴⁰

Traditionalist, Baby Boomers, Millennials and Generation Z all value and are motivated by different things in the work environment. "While millennials are often seen as more idealistic, and more motivated by purpose than a paycheck, Generation Z may lean more toward security and money...they care about making a difference, but are ultimately motivated by ensuring they have a secure life outside of work."⁴¹ The majority of the workforce in the CAF is comprised of Baby Boomers and Millennials, but the Generation Z population is growing and will be the workforce of the future. Additionally, the Canadian workforce is also becoming more diverse

⁴⁰ Lindsay Rodman, "Modernizing the Military Personnel System: Lessons from the Force of the Future," (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 1.

⁴¹ Deep Patel, "8 Ways Generation Z Will Differ From Millennials In The Workplace," in *Forbes Magazine*, 2017. Last, accessed 18 Dec 2020, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/deeppatel/2017/09/21/8-ways-generation-z-will-differ-from-millennials-in-the-workplace/?sh=335e4c1976e5>.

with the GoC focus on immigration. “By 2036, the share of immigrants in Canada’s population would stand between 24.5% and 30.0%...Moreover, nearly half of Canada’s population is projected to be made up of immigrants and second-generation individuals.”⁴² That is a substantial recruiting pool that deserves significant focus. Therefore, the CAF must adapt its practices to take into consideration the different motivating factors for each generation and a diverse Canadian population when developing its recruiting strategies and HR management policies.

Examining the results of *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey* as well as the *DND Departmental Results 2019-20*, it is clear that CAF lifestyle is simply unappealing to a large portion of Canadians, including those that serve,

people understand that by joining the CAF, they are agreeing to potentially being moved across the country, placed in international locations, or deployed to a conflict or conflict-prone zone. Moreover, Canadian CAF bases are located in small communities in more socially remote places, with very few of them in or near Canada’s largest urban centres. This can be especially challenging if an individual has a family or a spouse, as schooling and spousal employment often become issues.⁴³

Based on the recruiting campaigns developed by Assistant Deputy Minister (Public Affairs) (ADM(PA)), the most recent being “Dare to be Extraordinary,” the CAF has marketed itself as an institution always on operations, deploying frequently and while some women and visible minorities are featured in the campaigns, the force is presented as predominately white male. This campaign may appeal to Millennials and Generation Z looking for a strong sense of purpose, but does not necessarily bode well when attracting new members focused more on

⁴² Lahouaria Yssaad and Andrew Fields, “The Canadian Immigrant Labour Market: Recent Trends from 2006 to 2017,” *The Immigrant Labour Force Analysis Series*, Statistics Canada, 2018. Last accessed 18 Dec 2020, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-606-x/71-606-x2018001-eng.htm>.

⁴³ Paxton Mayer, “What’s in a Soldier? How to Rebrand the Canadian Armed Forces,” (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2020), 3.

stability and security. As noted in the ADM(PA) Strategic Objectives for 2019/2020, “despite the fact that 89% of Canadians had an overall positive impression of CAF members...just 58% would have a favourable reaction if a young person they knew said they were joining the CAF.”⁴⁴ This can be directly related to what is seen on social media, in the news or in the CAF marketing campaigns themselves. The marketing campaigns focus on a small portion of the population that would be attracted to an adventurous lifestyle and does not accurately portray life in the military, which often involves significant administration and logistical work to support operations. By not accurately portraying the work environment, it deters the portion of the population focussed more on stability, while also giving a false impression to those who join for adventure, which could lead to early release. Adding to a possible negative impression of the CAF, is the frequent media reports showing a sexualized culture, mental health challenges, and the presence of hate and discrimination. While the internal communication on these issues is quite strong through initiatives like Operation HONOUR to eliminate harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour, there has been little effort to reiterate to the public that DND has gone to great efforts to change its organizational culture. Improvement is needed to change public perception and to develop policies and practices to support a diverse force and their families.⁴⁵

Summary

So why has the CAF failed over the years to address some of the key concerns identified in all of these audits and reports? That question is not easily answered, but it is related to how the CAF HR system is constructed and governed. With the release of *SSE*, it is clear that the CAF

⁴⁴ Department of National Defence, “Assistant Deputy Minister (Public Affairs) Strategic Messages Looking Forward: Second Quarter FY 2019-2020 July-September 2019,” (Ottawa: DND, 2019), 2.

⁴⁵ Past recruiting campaigns have been somewhat successful, especially during the Afghanistan years, but these campaigns were tailored to the climate at that the time and did not accurately display the real day-to-day life in the CAF. Highlighting benefits and an organization focused on continuous improvement may be more appealing to a wider audience.

understands the need to focus more on its people and that the current HR policies and practices are inadequate to recruit, retain and train its members. Of the 111 initiatives identified in *SSE*, 28 are directly related to improving the RegF HR system. From recruiting and retention strategies to leveraging Canada's diversity to improved health care, transitions services, support to families and improved culture, *SSE* commits the CAF to revolutionizing its HR system to provide an integrated and strategic approach to HR management. However, it does not provide a comprehensive strategy on how to accomplish such a significant transformation that has challenged CAF leadership for decades. This in lies the answer to why it is so hard to change the CAF HR system, a lack of change-enabling strategy both from a GoC and DND/CAF perspective. The next chapter will explore the GoC governance framework for human resources management and the framework within the CAF to identify why it has been so difficult to change HR policies and practices despite a long-term understanding of the issues.

CHAPTER 3 – IS GOVERNANCE THE CAUSE?

Human Resources governance in the CAF is extremely complex in that the system must be aligned with the policies and practices that govern the public sector in Canada, but remain agile so that it can meet the challenges and opportunities presented in an ever-changing environment in which the CAF must operate. It must be tailored to be responsive to labour market demographics, shifts in political ideologies, science and technology advancements, and a security environment that is rapidly evolving. Defence analyst, Ross Fetterly, provides that

to respond to non-linear shifts in the international strategic environment, the Canadian defence establishment needs to adopt, as do our allies, a more responsive culture in resource management; one that focuses on rapidly working through a series of different ideas, while leveraging best options and creating agility. In defence, as in many other sectors, the competitive landscape is continually changing. What worked effectively a decade ago may no longer be effective. This environment places a significant burden on the leadership. Defence organizations that are unable to transform the environment in which they operate internationally must focus on internal transformation.⁴⁶

The latest *Defence Team Human Resources Strategy (DT HR Strategy)* released in 2019 recognizes the need for internal transformation and that “the demands of the 21st century security environment and the demographic realities within the Canadian population are markedly different from those that shaped the workforces requirements, HR systems, and HR policies that are used in the DND/CAF today.”⁴⁷ Before discussing the strategies (and their utility) that have been produced as of late to re-orientate the DND/CAF HR system to meet the capability requirements of the present and future, it is important to understand the current structure in place and why it has created some of the HR issues discussed in Chapter 2.

⁴⁶ Ross Fetterly, “Defence Business Planning in Canada,” (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 11.

⁴⁷ Department of National Defence, *Defence Team Human Resources Strategy*, (Ottawa: DND, 2019), 11.

HR Legislation, Regulations, Policies and Directives

As with most Government of Canada organizations, DND and its human resources are governed by the public sector HR requirements put in place by various legislations and Treasury Board (TB) policies, directives, standards and guidelines. In addition to the requirements outlined in the mandate letters provided to the various Ministers, the *Financial Administration Act* (FAA) provides the framework for responsibilities relating to financial and human resources management, which is expanded upon in the collective policies on People Management approved by TB. As noted in the *Policy Framework for the Management of Compensation*, Treasury Board is

responsible for all matters relating to human resources management in the federal public administration...[but] Treasury Board is not the employer of ... the Canadian Forces. However, the *National Defence Act* [NDA] provides that Treasury Board is responsible for establishing pay and allowances of officers and non-commissioned members.⁴⁸

While the management of DND's Public Servants is governed by the same regulations and policies as OGDs, CAF governance is not as straightforward and involves a mix of different authorities for different functions of HR management. Table 2.1 summarizes the authorities of the Governor-in-Council (GIC), TB, the Minister of National Defence (MND) and the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) as detailed in the *NDA* for various HR functions within the CAF. As can be seen in the table, the force size, compensation and governing regulations are approved by the GIC and TB. The MND and CDS have the care and control of those resources and the responsibility to ensure they are used efficiently in the execution of the tasks assigned to DND/CAF.

⁴⁸ Canada, *Policy Framework for the Management of Compensation*, (Ottawa: TBS, 2017), <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12084>, last accessed 13 January 2021, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12084>.

Table 2.1: Authorities for CAF HR Governance

Function	Authority	NDA Article(s)
Force Composition (Regular and Reserve Force)	GIC	15 (2) & (3)
Regulations (organization, training, discipline, efficiency, administration and good government)	GIC	12 (1)
Regulations for Compensation (pay, allowances, reimbursement of expenses, pensions)	TB	12 (3)
Regulations ⁴⁹	MND	13
Force Structure/Organization	MND	17
Force Control and Administration (including orders and instructions for executing GoC direction)	CDS	18
Grievances	CDS	29.11

Source: *The National Defence Act, Statutes of Canada, 2009*, last accessed 13 January 2021, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/N-5.pdf>.

Although these specific requirements and authorities for CAF HR governance are outlined in the *NDA*, the various requirements outlined within the *Employment Equity Act*, the *Official Languages Act*, the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *Privacy Act*, the *Access to Information Act*, the *Federal Accountability Act*, and the *Financial Administration Act* also apply and must be factored into CAF's HR management practices. The requirements of these acts are expanded upon in various regulations and policy instruments to guide the decision-making process and provide the relevant principles to be applied for CAF HR management. The *Queen's Regulations and Orders (QR&Os)* are issued under the authorities of the *NDA*, and apply to all Regular Force, Special Force, Reserve Force personnel and all persons subject to the Code of Service Discipline. They cover most aspects of employment in the CAF, from enrolment to release including rank structures, career advancement, release, leave, etc along with providing the framework for the application of military law. Financial issues including salary, pension,

⁴⁹ The *NDA* specifies that the MND has authority only to make regulations on organization, training, discipline, efficiency, administration and good government as long as they do not contradict regulations already put in place by the GIC or TB.

deductions, benefits, etc are also included. The financial Chapter of the *QR&Os* only provides high level information regarding compensation and benefits for CAF members. Given the complexity of military service including varying threat levels during training and deployments, the need for frequent relocations, specialty occupations, etc, separate *Compensation and Benefits Instructions* (CBIs) act as the primary policy instrument for the management of pay and allowances, reimbursement for travel and other expenses arising from service as a CAF member.⁵⁰ CBIs are created under the authority of TB and can include orders issued by the CDS. For the day-to-day administrative stewardship of the CAF, the Deputy Minister (DM) or CDS issues the *Defence Administrative Orders and Directives* (DAODs), which do not have any financial considerations, but are considered lawful orders under the *NDA*.⁵¹ Amplifying instructions on operational, financial or administrative issues are provided as instructions or orders under the authorities invested in the Environmental Chiefs of the various Level One (L1) organizations by the CDS. For instance, CMP, whose mission is “to recruit, train and educate, prepare, support, honour and recognize military personnel and their families for service to Canada,”⁵² has a series of CF Military Personnel Instructions (CF Mil Pers Instr) and Military Personnel Command (MILPERSOM) Orders (MPCOs) that serve as procedural guides in executing CMP’s mission and for the management of CAF military personnel. The key takeaway from this summary is that there are a series of regulations, orders, policies and directives for military personnel management that are all governed at varying levels internally and externally to the CAF. Although it is CMP’s primary task to ensure that the policies in place are aligned

⁵⁰ Department of National Defence, *Military Personnel Command Order (MPCO) 1000-6 – CMP Policy Management Framework*, (Ottawa: DND, 2020.), 3.

⁵¹ It should be noted that the CAF can and does put further restrictions on CAF members through these various orders and regulations compared to Public Servants, who are subject to national joint council agreements with TB (the employer) via collective agreements.

⁵² Department of National Defence, *Military Personnel Command Order (MPCO) 1000-6 – CMP Policy Management Framework*, (Ottawa: DND, 2020.), 4.

with government direction, while simultaneously meeting the needs of the CAF, the excessive span of control, dispersed policy governance and procedural rigidity present significant issues when trying to adapt HR management practices to support emerging CAF requirements. This will be expanded upon further in subsequent sections, but it is also important to understand how the expenditure management framework outlined in the TBS *Policy on Results, Departmental Plan* (DP) and the *Departmental Results Framework* (DRF) interact with the regulatory framework to create resource planning challenges for CAF HR management.

Defence Human Resources Planning

In addition to the regulations and policies that describe the management of CAF personnel once they have joined, there is also the requirement to work within the government's framework for effective use of these personnel to achieve assigned missions, while simultaneously striving to hit diversity targets set by the GoC. The *FAA* serves as the overarching legislation for the financial management and accountability of the public sector within Canada, but it is the *TB Policy on Results* that provides the guidance on GoC requirements for the planning and management of resources to achieve government objectives.⁵³ The overall aim of this policy is for GoC organizations to develop a DP and DRF to explain their policies and decisions, expected results and account for their performance to ensure effective management and improvement of programs, policies and services. DPs are developed based on the GoC agenda and the priorities laid out in the mandate letters provided to ministers. It is the GoC's *Defence Policy* that provides the focus for DND by setting a vision for how Canada intends to meet the defence challenges of today and those that will emerge in the future. Unfortunately, defence policies prior to *SSE* often lacked a comprehensive defence strategy,

⁵³ There is also a directive on results that expands on the policy and provides the details on how departments are to implement the policy.

which has resulted in a series of issues throughout the past several decades, as noted by defence analysts Chapnick and Stone.

Historically, specific Canadian defence policy aims have typically been subordinated to grander strategic priorities. Canada does not face an existential threat to its immediate safety and security. As a result,...Ottawa could and did cut the defence budget aggressively in the early 1970s, the late 1980s and the mid-1990s without facing serious consequences for similar reasons. Although each decision compromised Canada's ability to achieve specific defence policy aims, the real interests of the government of Canada, including the security of Canadians at home and the stability of the Canada-US relationship, were never compromised.⁵⁴

SSE may be somewhat different from past defence policies in the way it has laid out the funding framework for implementing the GoC's current defence strategy, but it may be subject to the same challenges of previous defence policies, further budget cuts. Challenges with implementing *SSE* from a budgetary and HR perspective will be discussed later in this chapter, but *SSE* has provided DND and the CAF with a vision to plan towards, which has been translated into the current *Defence Plan 2018-2023*.

Defence Plan 2018-2023 lays out the foundation for *SSE* implementation during Horizon 1 [1-5 years] by setting priorities and synchronizing and resourcing Defence activities through the business planning process and performance management framework, and it sets the conditions for continued success in Horizon 2 (5-10 years) and Horizon 3 (10-20 years). From an integrated resource allocation perspective, the Defence Plan will include resource allocation for both financial and human resources.⁵⁵

The Defence Plan serves as the planning guidance to the L1 organizations to allow them to set goals and priorities for their functional areas and develop their Business Plans (BPs) to ensure they meet the strategic policy objectives as set out in the Defence Policy. The L1 BPs define what specific tasks and change initiatives will be undertaken in the next year, how the resources

⁵⁴ Adam Chapnick and J. Craig Stone, "From Policy and Strategy to Outcomes," in *Canadian Defence Policy in Theory and Practice*, ed. by Thomas Juneau, P. Lagasse, and S. Vucetic, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 70.

⁵⁵ Department of National Defence, *Defence Plan 2018-2023: Operationalizing Canada's New Defence Strategy*, (Ottawa: DND, 2018), 1.

will be allocated, and what risks or challenges are envisioned due to constrained resources. While they are detailed for the upcoming implementation year, they also provide a longer-term vision with a tentative plan for the subsequent three years. The L1 BPs are provided to DND's central staff, Chief of Programme (CProg) under the VCDS, who conduct resource prioritizations based on funds available, demand (previously approved and new), and analysis considering the contributions to strategic priorities, military operations, closing known capability gaps or meeting contractual obligations.⁵⁶ Once approved, the BPs provide the information necessary to develop the annual Departmental Plan. This Plan details "departmental priorities, strategic outcomes, programs, expected results and associated resource requirements, covering a three-year period beginning with the year indicated in the title of the report."⁵⁷ It details all of the human resources, major capital projects, grants and contributions, and net program costs that are essential to the delivery of defence services to the GoC and Canadians. Departmental Plans are tabled in Parliament by TB and approval provides DND with the resources necessary to execute the Defence Services Programme (DSP). It also details the performance measurement framework, the DRF, required by *The Policy on Results*, to report back to Government on results achieved. Fetterly notes business planning in defence establishments is extremely challenging due to changes in governmental frameworks, but more importantly, a rapidly evolving security environment,

DND is part of the Treasury Board Secretariat-directed performance measurement regime. This accountability framework can change dramatically. In 1996 the federal government implemented the Planning, Reporting and

⁵⁶ The BP process includes a meeting between L1s and the DM/CDS to discuss resource challenges and what offsets are required to fund higher priority tasks. However, most L1 organizations do not make similar trade offs with the lower levels in their organization. They generally default to cash managing resource challenges in the hope that funding will be available later in the year. This creates significant HR challenges, among many others, that amass year over year.

⁵⁷ Government of Canada, Departmental Plans Information Database, last accessed 26 Jan 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/planned-government-spending/reports-plans-priorities.html>.

Accountability Structure (PRAS) Policy. Then, in 2008 government departments were directed to implement a Management, Resources and Results Structures (MRRS) Policy. Following the 2016 election, the new government directed a shift to a policy on results – known informally as deliverology. The Liberal government instructed departments to develop results frameworks, establish program inventories and create performance information profiles. Changes to government rules, policies and procedures present challenges internally for the defence establishment. For consistency in managing and reporting on resource management and as a large, diverse organization, establishing new processes to match changed central agency information requirements can be a challenge. Shifts in the international security environment can be dramatic and consequential, driving rapid change in operational capabilities, training and equipment, thus bringing changes to defence that other government departments don't face.⁵⁸

The frequent change in reporting structures and evolving security landscape present unique challenges to the various L1 organizations who are functional authorities in their respective areas of expertise. They are often presented with internal competing priorities that must be reconciled to meet new defence challenges while at the same time competing with other L1s at the corporate level for the limited resources due to budget restraints and personnel caps put in place through the regulatory and fiscal frameworks. Historically, the main challenge this has presented for DND from an HR perspective is that each L1 conducts an independent analysis of its personnel requirements and incorporates growth demands into their annual business plan without internal offsets and coordination with other functional authorities such as CMP for training and other personnel management considerations. Additionally, the growth demands often exceed the force size caps in place, which now require the corporate level of DND to determine priorities for new HR demands and seek an increase in budget from TB. This is compounded by the fact that every time “the Federal government faces a revenue shortfall or the economy contracts, defence as the

⁵⁸ Ross Fetterly, “Defence Business Planning in Canada,” (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 3.

largest amount discretionary spending bears a large portion of spending reductions.”⁵⁹ Since capabilities are often the last thing to be cut in defence budgets, it is usually the support systems, like those for personnel management, or the force size itself, that receive the largest cuts. The past four decades have seen drastic changes in the defence budget and force size as a result of federal cuts, which has led to some of the challenges discussed in Chapter 2. In a 2018 article by Fetterly, he expands on the impact of these decisions, which created several experience gaps,

the most significant is the nine-year period driven by the 1990s budget cuts and reduction in size of the CAF, where recruiting was limited and serving members were given financial incentives to leave the CAF. More recently, retirements of baby boomers and limitations in recruiting and training capacity, driven by the federal deficit action plan earlier this decade, have contributed to fewer military in the first seven years of service than needed to maintain a stable personnel profile.⁶⁰

He goes on to explain that when these experience gaps are coupled with the growth requirements announced in *SSE*, it will further exasperate the CAF’s HR challenges.

The recruitment system was not built for an attrition rate of more than six per cent, and recruitment capacity was cut earlier this decade as part of the federal deficit reduction plan. The strategic challenge of recent attrition rates needs to be addressed. The military training system has capacity limitations. Further, the rapidly evolving security environment calls for greater numbers of cyber-warriors and for specialists in the space domain. Finally, the 2017 Defence Policy calls for increased numbers of both regular force and reserve force military personnel. Collectively, this unique combination of different circumstances is significantly intensifying existing military personnel challenges.⁶¹

The decisions made by DND/CAF during mandated budget reductions and the disconnect between the various functional authorities during the business planning process have greatly

⁵⁹ J. Craig Stone and Binyam Soloman, “The Political Economy of Defence,” in *Canadian Defence Policy in Theory and Practice*, ed. by Thomas Juneau, Philippe Lagassé, and Srdjan Vucetic, (Ottawa, ON: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 141.

⁶⁰ Ross Fetterly, “The Importance of People in Defence,” (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 6. https://www.cgai.ca/the_importance_of_people_in_defence.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

contributed to the HR challenges described in Chapter 2. The recent changes in the government framework to ensure effective and efficient use of resources and the DND efforts to align itself with this mindset have resulted in a number of initiatives to improve HR planning such as the *DT HR Strategy*, the Force Mix Structure Design (FMSD) and the Defence Team Establishment Plan (DTEP), which will be discussed in subsequent sections. However, central to the success of these initiatives will be correcting the governance issues of CMP who will be at the heart of implementing changes to the military personnel management system.

CAF HR Governance

Throughout this paper thus far, it has been noted that CMP governance has resulted in some significant challenges to the effective management of the CAF personnel system. This section will explore the governance in place for CAF personnel management and provide specific examples of how the complexity of the system in place has directly impacted CAF efforts to be responsive to members needs, shifts in the labour market, and a changing threat landscape. As previously discussed, CMP is responsible for all military personnel management policies and programs, from compensation and benefits to career management to health benefits. These policies and programs “affect the core ability of the CAF to operate and have critical influence on the morale and welfare of individual CAF members. As a result, they impact the overall health of the CAF as an institution.”⁶² Given the issues encountered with recruiting and retention of personnel as well as numerous Ombudsmen reports regarding mental health and poor morale and welfare of CAF personnel, an evaluation of the ability of CMP to properly manage the military HR system was launched in 2015. The overall findings of this assessment concluded that while CMP governance of military HR ensured that DND/CAF remained aligned

⁶² *Evaluation of the Governance of Chief of Military Personnel...*, Executive Summary.

with GoC roles, responsibilities, and priorities for personnel management, there were several areas that required improvement.

There are concerns over the lack of a meaningful performance management framework (PMF) throughout the organization, and evidence that risk management is not consistently applied nor understood across CMP for most major projects and programs. There are also issues concerning the span of control as it was deemed to be excessive in certain groups with commanders or leaders responsible for too many direct reports. This has the potential to distract from core responsibilities. Misalignment of tasks and functions within certain segments of the CMP organization were also detected, which resulted in difficulties for staff and for effective program delivery. Finally, there is a need to further improve staff training and succession planning, which, coupled with the frequent rotation of military personnel in the organization, is impacting the overall performance of program delivery.⁶³

The excessive span of control, misalignment of tasks, lack of performance measurement and frequent staff handover were noted to have resulted in a lack of long-term planning and uninformed decision-making. While plans were made for policy revisions, they were often not completed in a timely fashion, were poorly tested and resulted in inefficiencies and a large number of grievances by CAF personnel.

A supplemental analysis on CMP's governance of compensation and benefits (CBIs) was released in 2015 and concluded that a lack of clarity in policies have led to misinterpretations and "created a cycle where unclear policies lead to an increasing number of adjudications and grievances, which has led to a shift of resources from policy review to administration of adjudications and grievances, resulting in fewer policies being reviewed and clarified."⁶⁴ The evaluation further noted the CMP did not have a proper communication strategy for effective dissemination of benefit changes, lacked an overall plan for to update/clarify policies and they did not have a system in place to prevent and detect policy errors. Given such a broad portfolio

⁶³ *Evaluation of the Governance of Chief of Military Personnel*,... Executive Summary.

⁶⁴ Department of National Defence, *Audit of Military Compensation and Benefits*, Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services) Report 7050-69 (ADM(RS)), 2015, Executive Summary.

of services and functions preformed by CMP, this means that plans and policies relating to recruiting, retention initiatives and the day-to-day management of services/supports to CAF members and their families were not being properly developed and managed. Referring back to the results of *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey*, the governance challenges of CMP directly impact the motivators for early release across all four categories of career management and progression, compensation and benefits, work environment and family well-being. Given the large price tag that often accompanies reform of CAF programs, specifically compensation and benefits, changes have been challenging to justify, plan and implement. In addition, conflicting L1 priorities have made it difficult for CMP to develop an integrated, comprehensive strategic approach that adapts HR policies and practices relatively quickly to balance personnel needs while remaining responsive to the evolving security environment and changing labour market. The civilian aviation industry, with its ability to more easily adjust its HR practices to remain competitive and profitable, provides a more attractive option for the majority of RCAF trades by offering higher salaries and geographic stability, both of which promote financial stability and family well-being.⁶⁵ As a result, attrition rates have been high and recruiting has been difficult in the RCAF. Of the six RCAF Officer occupations (Pilot, ACSO, AERE, AEC, CELE, and CONST ENGR), five are classified as critical, which is 10% or more below the preferred manning level (PML) and one is classified as cautionary, which is between 5% and 10% below PML. The Non-Commissioned Members trades are not any better off with over half of the trades being critical or cautionary (6 of 20 are critical and 6 of 20 are cautionary).⁶⁶ To remain

⁶⁵ Paxton Mayer, "What's in a Soldier? How to Rebrand the Canadian Armed Forces," (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2020), 3.

⁶⁶ Department of National Defence, *Director General of Personnel Requirements Occupational Status Report*, effective date 20 June 2018. Last accessed 27 Jan 2021, <http://cmp-cpm.mil.ca/en/suport/military-personnel/dpgr-index.page>.

competitive with civilian industries, the RCAF and CMP must focus their efforts on the issues that matter most to serving members and the Canadian population. Chapter 2 explained that the emerging workforce from Generation Z are motivated more by financial security and quality of life than by a sense of purpose. Therefore, a system is needed that can ensure the proper compensation and benefits and support programs are in place to support financial security and family well-being.

Control over one's financial security and family well-being is often limited for CAF members due to the requirement for frequent relocations to support organizational and operational needs,

mobility requirements associated with military life impact the military family's ability to participate in the housing market; find and maintain adequate and fulfilling employment; access adequate health care, education, and childcare; sustain stable social support networks; and preserve healthy relationships and mental health of the self.⁶⁷

Reform of several programs and policies are required to ease the financial burden of relocations on families and the impact on quality of life. A relevant example that demonstrates the challenges CMP has experienced when trying to reform policies that impact these two areas is the long outdated policy on Post-Living Differential (PLD). PLD provides financial compensation for posting locations where the cost of living is excessive compared to other posting locations. The PLD policy is managed by CMP and approved by TB. Complex policies like PLD, which should respond to fluctuations in the housing market, often have a huge price tag and do not get sent forward due to controversy over the necessity of CAF benefits.⁶⁸ This is partially due to a push over the past decade to align the compensation and benefits of the CAF

⁶⁷ Leigh Spanner, "Governing "dependents": The Canadian military family and gender, a policy analysis," *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis*, 2017, 484.

⁶⁸ This knowledge comes from personal experiences as a defence analyst working with the Treasury Board Secretariat to update the PLD policy to make it more responsive to market changes.

more closely with those of the Public Service. Increased pension contributions and termination of severance pay are examples of these efforts. However, unlike the Public Service, CAF members are frequently relocated with little control over posting locations and are often at the mercy of the local housing market. With expensive housing markets and a shortage of military housing in certain locations, such as Comox, Ottawa or Trenton where there is no PLD, it makes it extremely difficult for families to maintain a similar standard of living or quality of life when compared to less expensive locations like Edmonton or Cold Lake where PLD is still provided despite depressed housing markets. An Ombudsmen report completed in 2013 confirms that the financial stressors associated with volatile housing markets, geographic instability and the inability to have control over a work location are of primary concern for serving members and the future workforce.

The requirement for military families to pick up and move on a recurring basis has a highly disruptive influence on family life. In the view of many commanders, service providers and observers, it is the single most unsettling feature of the CF lifestyle. Military families move regularly, relocating three times as frequently as civilian families. Compounding the frequency of moves is the reality that they usually have limited influence over *where* they are posted, *when* they are posted, and for *how long*.⁶⁹

Relocations will always be required to support organizational and operational needs, but more holistic approaches exist to lessen the impact on members and their families. A 2018 Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services (CFMWS) study into the impacts of relocations on families confirms that “geographical relocations resulting from military postings do have financial impacts on the family, primarily due to changes in cost of living and employment.”⁷⁰ The United States Army has come to the same conclusion and one of the top causes of attrition is the:

⁶⁹ Pierre Daigle, “On the Homefront: Assessing the Well-Being of Canada’s Military Families in the New Millennium,” (Ottawa: Office of the Ombudsman, National Defence and Canadian Forces, 2013), 4.

⁷⁰ Lynda Manser, *Relocation Experiences. The Experiences of Military Families with Relocations Due to Postings – Survey Results*, (Ottawa, ON: Military Family Services, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, 2018), i.

compounding adverse effects of permanent changes of station (PCS) [or postings in CAF terms]...nearly every military move forces a short period of spouse unemployment...[which is] detrimental to lifetime earnings...the loss of lifetime earnings not only hurts a family's savings account and impedes the accrual of wealth and assets, it simultaneously grows stress and resentment... [the] Army looks, feels, and acts differently than it did 60, 40, or even 20 years ago. The officer corps is no longer composed of imagined 1950s-style nuclear families who all live on post and in which spouses do not have independent careers. Considerations for spousal career stability and employment prospects must become a more central factor in Army's decisions and structures if it hopes to retain top talent and maintain readiness.⁷¹

To address the challenges with the governance of the CAF HR system, CMP is leading and supporting several new projects aimed at prioritizing, synchronizing, planning, resourcing and implementing a series of initiatives to improve personnel management and support programs within the CAF.

New Approaches to Supporting CAF Personnel

Following *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey* and the release of *SSE*, CMP launched *The Journey* to reform the way the CAF supports its members and families, from recruitment to retirement. *The Journey* is essentially the campaign plan for the initiatives outlined in Chapter 1 of *SSE* to produce “well supported, diverse and resilient people and families committed to ensuring the CAF can act decisively with effective military capability.”⁷²

Table 2.2: *The Journey* Initiatives

Initiative	Description	Status
Modernize the Employment Model	Comprehensive review of conditions of service and career paths including Force Mix & Structure Design (FMSD) initiative, Universality of Service Review Project, Integrated HR Strategy and adaptive career paths	In Progress
	Modernize Honours and Awards	In Progress
	Implement tax relief for named international operations	Completed
	Align remuneration and benefits	In Progress

⁷¹ Paul Kearney, “The PCS Penalty and the Army Family,” United States Army War College War Room, last accessed 5 Feb 2021: <https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/articles/pcs-penalty>.

⁷² Department of National Defence, *The Journey Pamphlet* (Ottawa: DND, 2017), 2.

Leverage Diversity & Promote a Culture of Leadership, Respect and Honour	Promote diversity and inclusion as a core institutional value	In Progress
	Appoint Diversity Champion	Completed
	Reinvigorate core institutional values	In Progress
	Align conduct and culture with the better valours of the profession of arms	In Progress
Renew Personnel Generation	Reform all aspects of mil recruiting with a New Recruiting Model through a targeted Attractions campaign to increase diversity and overall numbers and decrease processing times	In Progress
	Enhance Training Production through pan-CAF training coordination, restoring CMR St Jean and increasing the capacity of CFLRS	In Progress
Improve Supports to Military Families	Develop a Comprehensive Military Family Plan	In Progress
	Enhance MFRC services with increased Family Access to Mental Health Services and Military Spousal Employment Network / Military Spouse Initiative	Completed
	Launch <i>Seamless Canada</i> , which involves working with provincial authorities to align programs and services for military members and their families that change within different provinces across Canada, such as health care, education, employment credentials, and licensing for vehicles and drivers.	In Progress
Optimize Health and Wellness	Launch Total Health & Wellness Strategy, which is a comprehensive approach to care that considers psychosocial well-being in the workplace, the physical environment impacting personnel's health (physical, mental, spiritual, familial)	In Progress
	Augment CAF Health System to provide the supports needed by CAF personnel across Canada	In Progress
	Implement Joint DND/VAC Suicide Prevention Strategy	Completed
	Remove barriers to care and stigmas surrounding mental health through increased communication and awareness campaigns	In Progress
Reinvent the Transition Experience	Create a new CAF Transition Group to improve the transition experience and ensure all benefits are in place	Completed
	Complete JPSU Renewal	In Progress
	Complete Release Process Renewal to ensure all benefits in place	In Progress

Source: Department of National Defence, *The Journey Pamphlet* (Ottawa: DND, 2017), 2.

One of the key initiatives of *The Journey* described in Table 2.2 above is the *Seamless Canada* initiative. *Seamless Canada* involves CMP's CFMWS organization working with

provincial, federal and territorial counterparts to explore initiatives to help families with common stressors that occur during frequent relocations, such as “finding new family health care providers, re-establishing childcare, moving children between schools and education systems, professional licensing, and dealing with inconveniences such as changing drivers’ and vehicles licenses when moving between provinces.”⁷³ These initiatives are progressing towards addressing some of main contributing factors to early release due quality of life issues associated with military service and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

In addition to the efforts of *The Journey*, the CAF launched Op GENERATION in 2018 to address “deficiencies in the recruitment system to enable the CAF and its Environmental Commanders to plan with certainty on personnel availability for the conduct of their respective missions.”⁷⁴ This effort is the first of its kind in that it established a standing domestic operation with the Commander Military Personnel Command (CMPC) within CMP as the lead Commander to address a long-standing issue with military personnel management. Op GENERATION is specifically focussed on:

- 1) meeting the CAF RegF and PRes growth targets identified in *SSE*;
- 2) achieving employment equity goals;
- 3) reducing time to enrol or complete a component transfer from PRes to RegF;
- 4) modernize recruiting activities using full-spectrum media;
- 5) reduce wait time for training; and
- 6) market the CAF as an employer of choice.⁷⁵

⁷³ Department of National Defence, “The Journey of the JOURNEY,” Ottawa: DND, 2018.

⁷⁴ Department of National Defence, “JOINT CDS/DM Directive: Operation Generation,” (Ottawa: DND, 2018), 10.

⁷⁵ Department of National Defence, “JOINT CDS/DM Directive: Operation Generation,” (Ottawa: DND, 2018), 12.

The main efforts of this initiative are to attract the right talent in the right numbers, streamline the intake process to reduce wait time, and increase institutional capacity for recruiting and training. CMP is central to these efforts given they manage recruiting, enrolment and initial basic military training of all applicants. Streamlining the intake processes will greatly reduce wait times for component transfers, recognition of previous skillsets and decrease the amount of time to produce a fully trained and effective member.

So has *The Journey* or Op GENERATION made an impact on the CMP governance to assist with HR reform to improve recruiting and retention within the CAF? The DRF is the primary means leveraged for gauging progress on strategic initiatives of this nature and given the negative trends or minor changes in stats detailed in Chapter 2 from the *DND and the CAF 2019-20 Departmental Results Report*, there is more work to be done in these areas. The ADM (RS)' *Evaluation of the Governance of CMP and Audit of Military Compensation and Benefits* highlight the need for improved long-term HR management planning within the CAF in order to address these issues as well as to ensure the CAF HR management system is postured to address future workforce needs.

New Approaches to CAF HR Planning

There are three initiatives that have been undertaken since the release of *SSE* to address some of the defence human resource planning challenges in implementing the 111 initiatives identified in the Defence Policy. They include the Force Mix Structure Design (FMSD), the Defence Team Establishment Plan (DTEP) and the *DT HR Strategy*. The *DT HR Strategy* identifies that amongst the L1 organizations, there are “significantly divergent methodologies of resourcing and measuring each part of the workforce. Separate allocations and budgets engender a lack of flexibility, willingness and ability for the DND/CAF to move resources between

Defence Team components to meet Defence priorities.”⁷⁶ The CAF military HR system is divided amongst several functional areas where certain L1 Senior Officials have been given functional authorities to develop and issue policies/directives, as well as certain responsibilities/authorities related to force design, composition, generation and employment. Under this construct, Environmental Commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force as well as the other L1s work with Chief of Force Development (CFD) and Chief of Programme to determine future force requirements through the Capability-Based Planning (CBP) process. To better align the outputs of this process to ensure the CAF force structure is able to meet the requirements of SSE, FMSD was established. “FMSD is an analytical process...conceived and developed as an enduring, programmable and adjustable multi-year process...to support stakeholders regarding the structural adjustments required to optimize DND/CAF’s workforce.”⁷⁷ It is focused on improvements to the Force Employment Structures within the L1s along with the Force Generation and Institutional Structures to determine the right mix of Regular Force, Reserve Force and civilian personnel to improve effectiveness and efficiency within DND and the CAF.⁷⁸

DTEP is the primary means of implementing the results of the FMSD and enables integrated HR decision-making by “bridging the CAF [HR planning] model based on APS [Annual Posting Season], and the BP based on FY.”⁷⁹ By aligning the HR planning process with the BP process, it will allow for an integrated approach to resource management that will enable

⁷⁶ Department of National Defence, *Defence Team Human Resources Strategy*, (Ottawa: DND, 2019), 4.

⁷⁷ Department of National Defence, “Initiating Directive – Defence Team Establishment Plan 2021,” (Ottawa: DND, 2019), 2.

⁷⁸ An update on the progress of this initiative was not available at the time of this paper, but the *DND and the CAF 2019-20 Departmental Results Report* provided that the initial estimates from the analysis have been completed and are guiding further research into the CAF organizational structures and training system.

⁷⁹ Department of National Defence, “Initiating Directive – Defence Team Establishment Plan 2021,” (Ottawa: DND, 2019), 3.

the corporate level of DND to more easily prioritize HR pressures and capability investments. The *DND 2020-21 Departmental Plan* does not specifically discuss the efforts of DTEP, but throughout the planning highlights for each core responsibility, the plan speaks to the need to better analyze information to determine how to focus human resources to achieve strategic and operational directives. A positive step towards balancing the workforce amongst the Environmental Commands.

The *DT HR Strategy* “describes the matrixed authority and accountability framework”⁸⁰ necessary to operationalize the FMSD and DTEP processes to ensure an integrated and synchronized approach to strategic capability development. The strategy focusses on four key objectives:

- 1) Optimize the Workforce (Align the Defence Team size and composition in accordance with Defence Policy) — adopt HR approaches;
- 2) Improve Recruiting/Attraction/Staffing/Retention (Get to capacity) — anticipate future HR challenges;
- 3) Ensure a Representative, Inclusive and Respectful Workplace — act to enable Defence Team; and
- 4) Ensure the well-being of DND/CAF personnel and their families — act to enable Defence Team.⁸¹

Significant governance has been put in place with a DT HR Committee, a series of sub-committees and a Committee Office to oversee and coordinate all DT HR initiatives and activities to achieve the above objectives. The committees are in place to:

- 1) Set priorities at the departmental level in support of L0 [Corporate] HR management accountabilities;
- 2) Establish and guide policies to be consistent with government priorities and legislative and policy frameworks;

⁸⁰ *Defence Team Human Resources Strategy...*, 4.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

- 3) Direct change to existing processes and structures in furtherance of the *DT HR Strategy* Goals;
- 4) Provide support to CMP and ADM (HR-Civ) in the exercise of their functional authorities; and
- 5) Play a consultative role in the resource management of the Department including recommending the alignment of resources through the Defence Team Establishment Plan.⁸²

Establishing the FMSD, DTEP and DT HR Committees are vast improvements towards coordinating HR management within the CAF. The *DT HR Strategy* is intended to produce a series of Action Plans on how the DND/CAF will go about achieving the objectives detailed above and these plans will need to be coordinated with TB in a similar fashion to the approach taken for the capability investments identified in Annex B of *SSE*. Fetterly supports this as a future focus area for defence policies and provides that:

while ships and aircraft get much of the attention in defence procurement, hundreds of other procurement initiatives support military capability. This is also an apt metaphor for business planning in defence, and highlights the importance of transferring inputs of financial, people, materiel and equipment resources into the desired next fiscal year and three future years' capability outputs.⁸³

This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, but the key consideration from an HR management perspective is that if the DND/CAF does not take a similar approach to HR planning as it has taken towards capability acquisitions, it is very likely that the CAF will find itself in a situation where it will not have the workforce to operate or sustain these capabilities despite having the funding to procure them.

⁸² *Defence Team Human Resources Strategy...*, 14.

⁸³ Ross Fetterly, "Defence Business Planning in Canada," (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 10.

Summary

The interactions between the regulatory framework and defence resources planning has shown that in order for DND and the CAF to be effective at strategic HRM and correct some of the issues discussed in Chapter 2, there needs to be increased collaboration both internally and externally with the various stakeholders and governing bodies. Working closely with TB during the planning of the HR transformation initiatives required to achieve the objectives of the *DT HR Strategy* will be essential, but it is also important to correct some of the internal HR oversight issues that have led to the silo and asynchronous approaches of the past by the DND L1 organizations. The FMDS and DTEP processes are working towards improving CAF HR requirements planning to address these issues and *The Journey* and Op GENERATION have begun the CAF effort to tackle the retention and recruiting challenges impeding the CAF's ability to meet the current and future force requirements. However, despite these initiatives, the excessive span of control of CMP and complex governance of the CAF HR system will continue to make it challenging to adapt HR policies and practices to compensate for and alleviate the stressors of military service. Additional steps need to be taken to transform the HRM approach within the CAF. Several OGDs and allied militaries have also struggled with similar recruiting and retention challenges, but have taken a more comprehensive approach to HR reform. If these approaches are emulated in the CAF, it could greatly improve the current governance structure and HR system, shifting from a "Mission First/People Always"⁸⁴ to a "People First" mentality, which could address the long-standing issues of recruiting and retention.

⁸⁴ *Defence Team Human Resources Strategy...*, 6.

CHAPTER 4 – DOES ANYONE HAVE IT RIGHT?

HR governance is extremely complex and encompasses the roles, responsibilities, authorities, decision-making, performance management and overall accountability framework for the effective management of human resources to achieve the organization’s strategic vision. This is translated into policies, processes and practices that constantly need review and revision as the goals of the organization change or as the operating environment evolves. In public sector organizations this adds an additional layer of complexity as has been shown in the previous chapter due not only to internal HR governance focussed on program efficiency and effectiveness, but also external HR governance providing the overall policy guidance necessary to embody societal values and ensure “good governance and service to Canadians.”⁸⁵ Despite the unique roles of public sector organizations, they must follow the same external HR governance practices as described in Chapter 3, but it is the internal HR governance systems that differ and influence their ability to conduct strategic HR management. In addition to traditional public sector organizations, most allied militaries follow a similar construct and have taken some unique approaches to improving their HR governance to address recruiting and retention challenges. This section will focus on exploring OGDs and allied militaries to highlight some of the recent best practices that have been put in place.

OGDs HR Governance Best Practices

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

When reviewing the list of other GoC departments, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is a natural choice for comparison of HR policies given the similarities between employment concepts, overall objectives of the organizations and the exceptions that exist for both within the

⁸⁵ Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada, *Policy on People Management*, last accessed 3 March 2021, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/topic-sujet-eng.aspx?ta=40>.

GoC regulatory frameworks. Similar to DND, there are numerous exceptions for the RCMP throughout various governing legislations, such as the *FAA* and the collective policies on People Management approved by TB. The *TB Policy Framework for the Management of Compensation* notes that

the RCMP is listed in Schedule IV of the *FAA* as a part of the core public administration. The *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act* provides the Commissioner of the RCMP with certain powers and authorities normally exercised by Treasury Board. However, the Treasury Board is responsible for establishing pay and allowances to be paid to members.⁸⁶

As such, the *RCMP Act* much like the *NDA* sets out the governance framework for RCMP HR management and they are subject to the same departmental resource planning and oversight as DND through the *TB Policy on Results*. Understanding that both organizations are governed by similar external processes allows for easier analysis of internal HR governance to determine if any best practices exist.

Much like the various reports that often spark change in DND, such as *The Deschamps Report*⁸⁷ on sexual misconduct and harassment in the CAF or the annual Ombudsman Reports⁸⁸, changes to the RCMP organization often come about after major reports are released, such as *The Brown Report*⁸⁹, the *Rebuilding the Trust Report*⁹⁰ or the *Broken Dreams, Broken Lives Report*.⁹¹ The latest reform efforts within the RCMP to address governance and cultural issues is

⁸⁶ Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada, *Policy Framework for the Management of Compensation*, last accessed 3 March 2021, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=12084>.

⁸⁷ *The Deschamps Report* reviewed CAF policies and procedures relating to the handling of sexual misconduct and can be accessed at <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/sexual-misbehaviour/external-review-2015.html>.

⁸⁸ Ombudsman Reports can be accessed at <https://www.canada.ca/en/ombudsman-national-defence-forces/reports-news-statistics.html>.

⁸⁹ *The Brown Report* can be accessed at <https://www.crcc-ccetp.gc.ca/en/report-workplace-harassment-rcmp> and discusses workplace harassment in the RCMP.

⁹⁰ *Rebuilding the Trust Report* reviews culture and governance within the RCMP and can be accessed at https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/tsk-frc-rcmp-grc/_fl/archive-tsk-frc-rpt-eng.pdf.

⁹¹ *Broken Dreams, Broken Lives Report* can be accessed at <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/final-report-implementation-merlo-davidson-settlement-agreement>.

known as *Vision 150*. Reviewing the *RCMP Departmental Plan for 2020-21*, it commits to modernizing the RCMP by putting its people first to provide the best service possible to Canadians through this five-year initiative. *Vision 150* focuses on measurable and time-bound change initiatives to transform the way that the RCMP operates under four key themes, their people, culture, stewardship and policing services. Each of these themes focus on HR management policies and practices that need reform to “keep pace with the evolving nature of policing.”⁹² Similar to the *DT HR Strategy*, *Vision 150* seeks to improve recruiting and retention strategies, reform policies and programs to be more simple, adaptive, modern and relevant, increase wellness and mental health supports, streamline training, foster a professional environment free of harassment, leverage innovation and conduct strategic planning to more effectively employ uniformed and civilian resources.⁹³ The efforts under *Vision 150* very much mirror those identified in *SSE*, the *DND/CAF 2021-22 Departmental Plan* and the various HR reform initiatives including the *DT HR Strategy*, *The Journey*, Op GENERATION, the CAF Cultural Realignment Strategy for Sexual Misconduct, the National Victim Support Strategy, the Defence Team Total Health and Wellness Strategy, the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, the Path to Dignity and Respect, and the Defence Innovation Strategy.⁹⁴

There are two main differences between the RCMP’s and DND’s approaches to these modernization and reform efforts: SMART objectives and communication. SMART objectives

⁹² Royal Canadian Mounted Police, *RCMP 2020-21 Departmental Plan*, last accessed 3 March 2021, <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/wam/media/3873/original/ea90cea3ae18402aaa2016c217c2c0f.pdf>, 3.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁹⁴ *The Journey*, Op GENERATION, the CAF Cultural Realignment Strategy for Sexual Misconduct, the National Victim Support Strategy, the Defence Team Total Health and Wellness Strategy, the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, the Path to Dignity and Respect, and the Defence Innovation Strategy are in various stages of development and are available on the secure Defence Wide Area Network. A few of these strategies are available on the GoC webpage and can be accessed at <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications.html>.

are classified by the GoC as specific, measurable, audience-specific, realistic and time-bound.⁹⁵ The RCMP conducted a focused four-month consultation with the various stakeholders and governing bodies, including TB, to create SMART objectives for each initiative under *Vision 150*. A key aspect of their efforts was introducing mechanisms, such as increased use of analytics, to support greater transparency, accountability and communication of these initiatives. Published on the RCMP public home page is a link to *Vision 150* which shows the progress on the initiatives for each theme, which is updated on a quarterly basis.⁹⁶ While there is room for improvement in identifying the specific status of each individual initiative, this allows those internal and external to the RCMP to see the efforts being invested towards addressing some of the HR challenges that have existed for decades. A review of the HR initiatives in *SSE* and the various individual strategies often do not provide implementation timelines, performance measurement and they are not widely publicized on the open-source National Defence homepage. While *SSE* initiatives are listed, the only progress updates available are through the Defence Wide Area Network (DWAN), the secure DND network and are limited to capability acquisitions as listed in *SSE* Annex B. The only means for the average Canadian or CAF member to determine what these initiatives are doing and how far DND has progressed is through the annual DND/CAF Department Results Report. Therefore, the approach taken by the RCMP to combine all of the initiatives relating to improving HR management practices and governance under one plan and provide easily accessible updates on each initiative through open-source media, not only improves transparency and promotes accountability, but it communicates to

⁹⁵ Government of Canada, “Writing Smart Objectives,” last accessed 3 March 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-funding/tools-for-applying/writing-smart-objectives.html>.

⁹⁶ Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Royal Canadian Mounted Police *Vision 150* Tracker, last accessed 3 March 2021, <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/vision150/tracker-suivi-eng.htm>.

serving members and future members that their well-being is top priority for leadership and the institution is dedicated to changing for the better. The CAF should likely follow the RCMP's improved performance monitoring and communication for current and future initiatives and this will be explored in more detail in the next chapter. Performance monitoring and open, transparent communication of initiatives have also been best practices of allied militaries in their recent transformation efforts along with several other approaches that will be explored in the following section.

Allied Militaries HR Governance Best Practices

It is difficult to conduct a comparison with allied militaries due to varying governance constructs that exist as well as differences in force size and structures. However, several countries have undertaken similar efforts as of late to improve their HR planning and management practices. Allied militaries, such as the United States and Australia, have adopted concepts comparable to the efforts of FMSD to address challenges of acquiring and retaining specialized skillsets by working to determine the right mix of full time, part-time military personnel and civilian force to “maximize output while facilitating the implementation of a more flexible concept that will accommodate individual needs and the retention of ill and injured personnel.”⁹⁷ Therefore, this review has been limited to allied militaries with comparable HR constructs to the CAF, such as the United States (US) Department of Defense (DoD) and the Australian Defence Force (ADF), that have recently undergone significant reforms.

US DoD Force of the Future HR Reform initiative

The US DoD currently exceeds two million military personnel (Active and Reserve) and over two million retirees receiving benefits⁹⁸, and with the variety of military operations globally

⁹⁷ *Defence Team Human Resources Strategy...*, 15.

⁹⁸ United States Department of Defense, United States Department of Defense webpage, last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://archive.defense.gov/about/>.

that the US DoD is involved in annually, it requires a very complex HR system to ensure they are resourced and postured correctly to “compete, deter and win in a more competitive and dangerous international security environment.”⁹⁹ One of the greatest challenges facing the US DoD is that “propensity to serve is declining and each of the services as well as the civilian sector are vying for the same limited talent pool.”¹⁰⁰ This is due to some of the similar reasons as the CAF from *The 2016 CAF Retention Survey*, in particular, a shift in mentality from service before self to the desire for a better work-life balance. “Changes in societal norms and technological advances means recruits and troops want flexibility in career and family decisions.”¹⁰¹ In 2015, the US Secretary of Defence Ash Carter, announced the *Force of the Future* initiative aimed at “maintaining and growing a diverse and talented military and civilian force.”¹⁰² It was a phased approach to address a variety of HR challenges including talent management, compensation and benefits, training, transition services, force structures, increased use of analytics, diversification, and culture to make a career in the military more appealing than private-sector opportunities.¹⁰³ It was centered on improving existing regulations to support

⁹⁹ Lisa Ferdinando, “Military Leaders Highlight Efforts, Challenges in Recruiting, Retention,” in United States Department of Defense News. Last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/1493328/military-leaders-highlight-efforts-challenges-in-recruiting-retention/>.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/1493328/military-leaders-highlight-efforts-challenges-in-recruiting-retention/>.

¹⁰¹ Emma Moore and Captain Mike Martinez, “It’s Only Going to Get Harder to Recruit and Retain Troops in a Post-Pandemic World,” in *Defense One* Newsletter. Last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2020/05/its-only-going-get-harder-recruit-and-retain-troops-post-pandemic-world/165555/>.

¹⁰² United States Air Force, “Carter announces new Force of the Future initiatives,” in United States Air Force News. Last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/795782/carter-announces-new-force-of-the-future-initiatives/>.

¹⁰³ Mark F. Cancian and Todd Harrison, “The Force of the Future,” Center for Strategic and International Studies. Last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/force-future>.

greater flexibility for senior leaders within the US DoD to make decisions regarding promotions and force structures. It was also focussed on actions to

overhaul longstanding policies in needed areas to attract and retain the best mix of personnel and ensure the continued strength of the U.S. military into the future. The policies are currently regulated under the 1982 Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) and policy changes must first be approved by Congress and signed by the president.¹⁰⁴

Within the *Force of the Future* program, there were countless initiatives across six themes that include: Maintaining DoD’s Competitive Edge; Strengthening Family Benefits; Improving Officer Promotion System; Attracting Top Civilian Talent; Expanding and Enhancing Military Recruiting; and Reinvigorating Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC).¹⁰⁵ The various efforts under each theme have been drawn from the US DoD public webpage dedicated to summarizing and providing updates on the *Force of the Future* program and are condensed in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: US DoD Force of the Future Initiatives

Theme	Initiatives
Maintaining DoD’s Competitive Edge	Made up of 80 individual reform initiatives that focus on improving technological agility through partnerships with the private sector, implementing web-based talent management systems, introduction of Exit Surveys for retiring members and a new reward programs for military recruiters when intake targets were achieved.
Strengthening Family Benefits	Will improve the quality of life of military parents so they may better balance commitments they make to serve in uniform and start and support a family. Initiatives ranged from standardizing and expanding parental leave to extended child care, mother’s rooms at military installations for breastfeeding mothers, and to changes in relocation policies to permit members to remain at a location of their choice for family reason.
Improving Officer Promotion System	Common sense improvements to the Defence Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) system. There are several military HR initiatives included in this effort including enhancing lateral entry authority to enable experts/specialties to join the military at a mid-

¹⁰⁴ J.G. Noll, “What the Forces of the Future Means for Military Personnel,” in *MilSpouseFest: The modern network for military spouses and families*, last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://milspousefest.com/forces-future-initiative-military-personnel/>.

¹⁰⁵ United States Department of National Defence, “Force of the Future,” in US DoD Special Reports, last accessed 5 Mar 2021, https://dod.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0315_Force-of-the-Future/.

	career level, addition of voluntary “Opt Out” of promotion to remove the “up-or-out” mentality, adjustment of lineal numbers to incentivize performers through early promotion, flexibility in HR process for critical career fields and improved technologies and analytics for recruiting, intake process and talent management.
Attracting Top Civilian Talent	These initiatives are designed to encourage and incentivize public service, streamlining the path to DoD employment. Specifically, it will enable direct hiring of students or recent graduates, establish a two-way employee exchange program with innovative private companies, improved paid benefits and parental leave, and expand hiring authorities for experts.
Expanding and Enhancing Military Recruiting	This effort is centered on three strategic focus areas of better communication the value and benefits of military service, building and solidifying the DoD Brand, and Office of the Secretary of Defense support to military service recruiting efforts. Specific initiatives include increased outreach to better educate audiences on military service, a review of best practices from military recruiters, development of a sustained advertising and marketing campaign, improved military recruiters access to youths and technological advancements to recruiting tools.
Reinvigorating Reserve Officers’ Training Corps	This theme is also centered on strategic focus areas including enhancing access to quality ROTC participants, enhancing quality of ROTC instructors and training, and enhancing ROTC program administration. This involves improving access to funding and grants for university or college-level education, increased validation of training and expansion of training opportunities, establishing a rewards program to recognize educational institutions and ROTC instructors for support to ROTC development and improved technology tools to consolidate and share leadership, administrative and support services for ROTC units.

Source: United States Department of Defence, “Force of the Future,” in US DoD Special Reports, last accessed 5 Mar 2021, https://dod.defense.gov/News/Special-Reports/0315_Force-of-the-Future/.

For the purpose of this review, four key initiatives including lateral entries, lineal numbers adjustments, increasing flexibility in HR processes and specialist compensation will be expanded upon given their relevance to CAF HR management and governance challenges.

The initiative of lateral entries involves modifying legislation and regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defence to enable the Secretaries of the Military Departments (akin to DND/CAF L1s) to “expand lateral entry opportunities to other specialties [by applying] the constructive service credit presently available to only medical officers.”¹⁰⁶ This would enable hiring of civilians with critical skillsets (such as cyber, space, HR, scientific and technical fields) and allow them to enter service at a mid-career level to incentivize military service. Similar to the US DoD, the CAF only does this for highly specialized fields like chaplain, medical, dental and legal officers. Despite reservations of many within the DoD about having civilians enter service without having the benefit of growing up in a military culture and gaining the necessary corporate knowledge through years of service to be effective, the Secretary of Defence argues that this will

help fill certain highly technical fields struggling with the combination of low retention and high demand. Such jobs often need to be filled quickly, and the military cannot afford to wait ten or more years for a new recruit to rise in the ranks to contribute skills and expertise in needed areas.¹⁰⁷

Such a change in policy would allow greater flexibility to ensure the necessary skillsets are available to meet evolving security challenges while incentivizing military service to the civilian workforce. A balanced approach is required however to ensure that those members that join as junior members in these fields are not disadvantaged and service remains incentivized for them as well to prevent them from seeking more lucrative opportunities in the civilian sector. This leads to the next initiative that will be discussed, the changes to decision-making for lineal numbers.

¹⁰⁶ US DoD, “Fact Sheet: The Next Two Links to the Force of the Future,” in US DoD Special Reports, last accessed 5 Mar 2021, https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/2015/0315_force-of-the-future/Fact-Sheet-The-Next-Two-Links-to-the-Force-of-the-Future.pdf.

¹⁰⁷ J.G. Noll, “What the Forces ...,” last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://milspousefest.com/forces-future-initiative-military-personnel/>.

Under the initiative to permit adjustment of lineal numbers (in the CAF case, promotion caps), Secretaries of the Military Departments would be authorized to establish “policies for adjusting lineal numbers of officers selected for promotion, based upon an individual officer’s superior performance”¹⁰⁸ as part of their talent management practices. The specific proposal will provide

military leaders with the authority to make merit-based changes to lineal numbers. Lineal numbers are assigned to officers based on seniority, and since DOPMA [HR governing legislation] restricts the number of officers in each rank, officers selected for promotion must wait until a spot opens up in a higher rank before they can be officially pinned. Such regulations arbitrarily assign rank instead of allowing senior officers to promote the highest performers and place them in critical billets.¹⁰⁹

Although promotion rankings are not based on seniority within the CAF, promotion caps cause a similar challenge within the CAF due to the small force size. The current promotion system within the CAF is governed by CMP and is extremely rigid to remain transparent and fair. It removes the input of the Environmental Commands Occupational Advisors from the merit ranking process. While this ensures personnel evaluations and files are reviewed based solely on a member’s performance, it does not allow for flexibility in HR management practices to ensure the right person with the right skills is in the right job. Promotions may be capped at three Lieutenant-Colonels for a specific occupation, but the person ranked sixth on the list has the skills and experience necessary to fill a critical position. The CAF has unique ways of getting around the caps, such as the policy on Acting While So Employed, which allows a member to fill a higher ranking position without the substantive rank for that position. If a similar approach to

¹⁰⁸ US DoD, “Fact Sheet: The Next Two Links to the Force of the Future,” in US DoD Special Reports, last accessed 5 Mar 2021, https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/2015/0315_force-of-the-future/Fact-Sheet-The-Next-Two-Links-to-the-Force-of-the-Future.pdf.

¹⁰⁹ J.G. Noll, “What the Forces ...,” last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://milspousefest.com/forces-future-initiative-military-personnel/>.

the US DoD was adopted to allow Environmental Commands to have greater input into the promotion system and rank caps, this would allow for greater flexibility to meet the needs of the CAF, while still ensuring a fair and transparent system. This may address some of the retention challenges described in Chapter 2 relating to career management and progression.

The third initiative that will be discussed is the US DoD efforts to improve HR governance flexibility. Under the *Force of the Future* initiative to provide flexibility for critical career fields, legislative changes would be made to the DOPMA to permit Secretaries of Military Departments to create programs to “build the capability and capacity of military personnel in critical career fields.”¹¹⁰ These programs could include measures to support recruiting, retention, training or altered career management practices to enable leaders to “promote and manage its officers in a way that is tailored to the Service’s unique capability requirements and particular personnel needs without undermining the valuable purposes that DOPMA continues to serve.”¹¹¹ In simple and Canadian terms, it would give the LIs the ability to waive certain requirements under the *NDA*, *QR&Os*, *CBI*s and *DAOD*s relating to recruitment, promotion, relocations, etc in order to meet service requirements in stressed or growing occupations. This would provide a means of accounting for “unforeseen problems that could come up five, ten, or twenty years from now”¹¹² that are unique to the Army, Navy or Air Force without the need for CMP to conduct an entire force review to determine the impact on the remainder of the CAF. It would negate the need for legislative changes to enable deviations for one Environmental Command that are not necessarily relevant to the other Commands. This concept will be discussed in

¹¹⁰ US DoD, “Fact Sheet: The Next Two Links to the Force of the Future,” in US DoD Special Reports, last accessed 6 Mar 2021, https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/2015/0315_force-of-the-future/Fact-Sheet-The-Next-Two-Links-to-the-Force-of-the-Future.pdf.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, last accessed 6 Mar 2021.

¹¹² J.G. Noll, “What the Forces ...,” last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://milspousefest.com/forces-future-initiative-military-personnel/>.

Chapter 5 as it relates to the RCAF's unique efforts for Op GENERATION to increase the pilot occupation.

The final initiative that will be discussed is an ongoing effort for the US DoD to reform pay scales as part of the basic principles for talent management. A compensation study was launched in the first theme for the *Force of the Future* to adjust basic and specialist pay as a means of reforming “the way the military pays its troops to be more in line with the way major corporations handle compensation to attract talent.”¹¹³ The key aspect of this reform is creating the mechanisms within their current compensation and benefits legislation to permit flexibility in pay scale management for specialist occupations that are in high demand in the civilian sector, such as cyber specialists and aviation specialties. This will allow greater flexibility to adjust compensation and benefits to remain competitive with the private sector and support the efforts to improve both recruiting and retention. A similar approach is being examined as part of *The Journey* to align remuneration and benefits with recruiting and retention efforts. Given that compensation and benefits accounted for almost 10% of all retention issues in the CAF, this is definitely a focus area that deserves significant attention and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Despite the comprehensive approach taken by the Secretary of Defence towards HR reform within the US DoD, the efforts of the *Force of the Future* initiative have not been as successful or easily implemented as envisioned and challenges still exist for personnel management. Two US defense analysts, Cancian and Harrison, from the Center for Strategic and International Studies theorize this has been due to “a failure to articulate the problem and the

¹¹³ Richard Sisk, “Carter Proposes Pay and Benefits Overhaul in Future Force Plan,” in Military.com News, last accessed 6 Mar 2021, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2015/11/18/carter-proposes-pay-and-benefits-overhaul-in-future-force-plan.html>.

cost.”¹¹⁴ They note that minimal justification was provided as to how the current policies were causing some of the recruiting and retention challenges and the argument for changes to legislation lacked the quantitative data to show how the changes would improve the current talent management situation. Additionally, with a fiscal budget that is capped by the Government similar to the CAF, the HR reform efforts would amount to an additional budget requirement of \$1 Billion per year during a time when there was a push to reduce personnel costs.¹¹⁵ These lessons learned from the US DoD approach to the *Force of the Future* program will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. The US DoD are not the only allied military that have undertaken significant HR reform efforts to improve recruiting and retention in the last five to ten years. The ADF have also adopted a comprehensive approach to HR reform, but have seen greater success than the US DoD in changing legislation and policies to bring about improvements to their HR management system.

Australian Defence Force Initiatives

The Australian Defence Force has struggled with recruiting and retention in the same manner as the CAF for the past two decades.¹¹⁶ Since the release of the *ADF 2016 Defence White Paper*, they have taken a more holistic approach to HR management by transforming their force structure and associated policies, improving their compensation and benefits schemes and increasing supports for military families to better recognize the challenges of military service. As described in Table 3.2, they offer flexible employment options, improved family supports during

¹¹⁴ Mark F. Cancian and Todd Harrison, “The Force of the Future,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/force-future>.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, last accessed 5 Mar 2021, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/force-future>.

¹¹⁶ Nicole Brangwin, Nathan Church, Steve Dyer, and David Watt, *Defending Australia: A History of Australia's Defence White Papers*, (Parliamentary Library, 2015), 37.

relocations and a comprehensive benefits package to better meet members’ “changing needs...as their personal circumstances change.”¹¹⁷

Table 3.2: Australian Defence Force Recruiting and Retention Initiatives

Focus Area	Initiative	Description
Retention	Military Superannuation Benefit Scheme	Offers a bonus for continued service beyond 15 years that is equal to the member’s annual salary at time of eligibility
	Retention Bonus	Offers a bonus to members who have completed their initial period of service up to a maximum of \$100K for a negotiated period of continued service
	Individuals Critical to Navy Capability Retention Bonus	The Navy offer bonuses to individuals to continue service in a critical role for a set period of time up to a maximum of \$50K per year
	Army – targeted rank and employment category completion bonus	Offer bonus payments to members to encourage them to complete three years service in certain Army ranks, corps and employment categories. The bonus is intended to reduce shortfalls in critical employment category structures and is equal to the member's salary for rank, pay grade and increment at the end of three years of service
Housing	Service Residence	Subsidised house or apartment that Defence provides to eligible members with dependants located in proximity to Defence bases and offices throughout Australia
	Member’s Choice Accommodation	Subsidised off-base rental properties close to base or in city centers that Defence provides to eligible members throughout Australia
	Rent Band Choice Accommodations	Approved rental properties within the local housing market where the ADF will pay contributions towards rent up to a specified cap
	Rent Allowance	Subsidizes the cost of renting in the private market and is not determined by geographical location, but rather rank, categorization and number of dependents residing with the service member
	Home Purchase Assistance Scheme	Provides members with a one-time benefit up to \$16,949 towards the purchase of a home
	Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS)	Assists members with paying off a home loan early to reduce interest payments and the benefit increases with the amount of years served

¹¹⁷ Australian Defence Force, *2016 Defence White Paper*, last accessed 1 Feb 2021, <https://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/>, 149.

Family Well-Being	National Australian Defence Force Family Health Program	All dependents receive free basic health care and are able to claim up to \$400 per year for specialty health care.
	Children Education Supports	Provides funding to hire education liaison officers and school mentors to help relocating families and children and minimize the impact of starting over in a new school
	Individual Case Management for Childcare	Provides placement assistance services to help relocating families find appropriate childcare
	Partner Employment Assistance Program (PEAP)	Provides funding towards initiatives such as professional re-registration, resume development, coaching for interviews, etc to assist dependents with the difficulties of finding employment when the member is relocated on posting or medically transitioning
Work/Life Balance	Project SUKAIN	Improves the ability of ADF members to move more freely between the Permanent ADF and Reserves to better meet their individual circumstances and best harness their skills
	Temporary Home Located Work	Can be used in a temporary or occasional arrangement, or as an ongoing arrangement for a specified time, on a part-time or full-time basis to suit individual circumstances
	Variable Working Hours	Members may vary their start and finish times and periods of absence from the workplace to suit their individual circumstances. This may be used in one-off cases or as an ongoing arrangement
	Part Time Leave Without Pay (PTLWOP)	Enables members to work a reduced number of days in any fortnightly (2 week) pay period under a job sharing arrangement.

Source: Department of Defence, *ADF Pay and Conditions Policy*, accessed 5 Feb 2021, <https://www.defence.gov.au/payandconditions/>.

Past ADF efforts to support retention have focused mostly on Compensation and Benefits, such as the implementation of retention bonuses. However, while bonuses are one way to compensate members for the hardships of military life, they often do not address the overall discontentment associated with military service. This was confirmed in a recent *Report on the Review of the Treatment of Women in the ADF*:

retention bonuses and bonuses for critical categories and occupations (such as submariners) are less likely to have a long-term positive impact on...retention

in the ADF, as they do not address structural and systemic issues...such as the need for greater flexible work, career options and locational stability.¹¹⁸

While bonuses are still offered, the ADF has changed their approach to focus more on supports that ease the burdens of relocation and promote financial and family well-being. A cornerstone of their approach is a robust subsidized housing program. Under the ADF Housing initiative, the government recognizes that “ensur[ing] Defence members and their families are suitably housed when they are posted to a new location is a key part of supporting mobility and retention within the ADF.”¹¹⁹ As such, there are numerous housing options available to serving members being relocated along with home purchase assistance benefits. These benefits are standardized such that an ADF member in Sydney choosing the same housing option as a member in Adelaide pays the same cost. These efforts are entirely aimed at promoting financial stability and allowing families to maintain a similar quality of life regardless of posting location.

The ADF has several other initiatives aimed at reducing the stressors of military life on families, including: free basic health care for dependents; education liaison officers and school mentors to ease school transitions; case manager for childcare requirements; and a Partner Employment Assistance Program (PEAP) that provides funding towards initiatives such as professional re-registration, resume development, coaching for interviews to assist spousal re-employment. The CAF is making strides in this area and will undoubtedly improve with the efforts of *The Journey*, but as noted in an *Evaluation of Military Family Support Programs and*

¹¹⁸ Department of Defence, *Report on the Review of the Treatment of Women in the ADF*, last accessed 1 Feb 2021, <https://defence.humanrights.gov.au/report-review-treatment-women-australian-defence-force>, 137.

¹¹⁹ Australian Defence Force, *2016 Defence White Paper*, last accessed 2 Feb 2021, <https://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/>, 149.

Services completed in 2013, there “are unmet needs with respect to continuity of and/or access to childcare and healthcare, as well as spousal employment/career support.”¹²⁰

One of the most recent initiatives undertaken by the ADF to promote recruiting and retention is a contemporary workforce management model that was fully realized in 2015. Understanding frequent relocations as the biggest detraction from military service, the new employment model “increase[s] the ability of ADF members to move between the Permanent ADF and Reserves to better meet their individual circumstances.”¹²¹ Put simply, the ADF created the HR processes necessary to allow members to transition easily between the different forces (Regular and Reserves) to support geographic stability, work-life balance, or career progression. Additionally, the model expanded upon several flexible working arrangements that all ADF members can apply for including temporary home located work, variable working hours or part-time leave without pay (PTLWOP) to work a reduced number of days through a job sharing arrangement.¹²² The *Report on the Review of the Treatment of Women in the ADF* have hailed these initiatives as a success towards recruiting and retention as well as increased female representation within the ADF by:

allowing greater participation in the care and nurturing of a child, or children...enabling respite from arduous periods of ADF service...fulfilling education, training or other aspirations without terminating ADF service...enabling members to meet their personal responsibilities and obligations...enabling members who are accompanying their spouse or Service-recognised interdependent partner on posting interstate or overseas to continue working instead of taking Leave Without Pay (LWOP).¹²³

¹²⁰ Department of National Defence, 1258-195 (Chief of Review Services), *Evaluation of Military Family Support Programs*, ADM(RS) Report 1258-195, (Ottawa: DND, 2013.), 15.

¹²¹ *2016 Defence White Paper...*, 149.

¹²² *Report on the Review of the Treatment of Women in the ADF...*, 227.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 442.

Key to the success of all these initiatives is that they were clearly laid out in the *2016 Defence White Paper* as part of the ADF efforts to address the recommendations of the *First Principles Review*. The Review was commissioned to examine the way the ADF was structured and organized to deliver defence services now and into the future. It recommended a complete reform of the ADF business model and “the fundamental tenet of the Review is that Defence needs to operate as One Defence, a unified and integrated organisation that is more consistently linked to its strategy and clearly led by its centre.”¹²⁴ The reform shares similarities with the approach adopted for *SSE*, in particular strategic center governance, holistic capability planning and funding, and external oversight, and could prove useful to CAF future efforts to improve its business practices.

Strategic center governance involves transforming the way ADF decisions are made for capability development and management. It leads from the center, bringing together all the separate parts of the institution, Army, Navy, Air Force, Special Forces, technology and science, information management, HR for military and civilian personnel, and provides the strategic direction to these organization to “align defence strategy, capability and resources.”¹²⁵ This is not very different from the CAF and the purpose of organizations like CFD and CProg under the VCDS or the various governance boards comprised of L1s for project management, capability development or resource allocations. However, the key difference is the focus on increasing the strategic centers role in “planning and performance monitoring to improve accountability.”¹²⁶ A five-year study of the CAF Capability Development Program by ADM(RS) concluded that while CFD has been effective in supporting the development of relevant capabilities to meet future

¹²⁴ *2016 Defence White Paper...*, 166.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 169.

security challenges, the divestment of the capability development process to the LIs has presented challenges in linking capability-based planning with national military strategies and there is improvement needed to enable joint warfighting.¹²⁷ SSE speaks to the need to develop joint capabilities such as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, command and control systems, cyber, etc, but it does not discuss the governance changes required to support this effort. These challenges with capability planning have often resulted in insufficient coordination between the enabling and integrating systems such as personnel, infrastructure, and information systems. This has made implementing and operating new capabilities within the CAF very difficult with additional follow-on projects required to address gaps in these systems. These gaps have been a significant source of dissatisfaction for CAF members often working to implement a new platform without the additional personnel or infrastructure required to properly support this effort. A new LGen position was created in early 2021 to support joint capability development and this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 along with the current CAF efforts to integrate performance measurement into the capability development and acquisition process.

The ADF has experienced similar issues with capability planning and as detailed in the *2016 Defence White Paper*, have adopted an end-to-end capability planning and funding framework.

Defence's capability planning will be reformed by implementing the recommendations of the First Principles Review to establish a single end-to-end capability development function within Defence. The capability planning process will be strengthened through the introduction of strong contestability to ensure that the acquisition of military capability is aligned with strategy and resources and is delivered on time and on budget. In the past, the capability investment planning process has been too heavily focused on individual military platforms such as ships, aircraft and vehicles. This has often been at the expense of funding the vital enabling and integrating systems that allow the ADF to bring capability elements together to deliver more potent and lethal

¹²⁷ Department of National Defence, *Evaluation of Defence Capability Development Program*, ADM(RS) Report 1258-3-003, 2017, 11.

joint combat effects. Enabling and integrating systems – such as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems, information and communications technology, facilities and workforce – ensure we get maximum performance from the ADF’s military platforms.¹²⁸

Similar to the long-term funding commitment identified in *SSE* for CAF capability acquisitions, this approach will enable alignment between strategy and funding allocations to ensure capabilities are acquired in a timely fashion to meet present and future security challenges. The ADF have consolidated their efforts under an *Integrated Investment Program*, that

brings together, for the first time, the major capability-related investments, including weapons systems and platforms, facilities such as military bases, information and communications technology, and workforce. This will ensure that the full cost of all major defence capability proposals are managed within one investment portfolio.¹²⁹

SSE adopted a similar approach and produced a transparent model for defence investments that is “rigorously costed, and fully funded, including not just acquisition costs, but also operating and sustainment costs of new equipment.”¹³⁰ The model includes not only the equipment costs, but also the infrastructure, information technology requirements and the funding for salary and operating costs associated with the planned growth of RegF, PRes and civilian personnel to support these new capabilities. Despite the similarities shared by the ADF and DND for their latest defence strategies, including the use of an independent advisory panel to provide expert advice on its development and external costing experts to provide third-party reviews of all costing methodologies, the implementation of the strategies is where DND and the ADF start to differ.

¹²⁸ Australian Defence Force, *2016 Defence White Paper*, last accessed 10 March 2021, <https://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/>, 31.

¹²⁹ Australian Defence Force, *2016 Defence White Paper*, last accessed 10 March 2021, <https://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/>, 31.

¹³⁰ *SSE*..., 44.

In the *2016 Defence White Paper*, the ADF specifically assigns accountability to the Secretary of the Department of Defence (equivalent of the Deputy Minister in Canada) and the Chief of the Defence Force (akin to CDS) for leading the implementation. This not overly different from the DM and CDS being responsible for overall management of *SSE* implementation, but the most notable differences are the level of direction and oversight provided by these individuals and the supporting governance structure. As part of the strategic centre methodology in the ADF, the Secretary and Chief are supported in their roles by an external Oversight Board to provide “advice on implementation and regular independent reports”¹³¹ to monitor progress. The ADF has also linked their personnel performance management system for ADF members to their roles and actions to achieve Defence goals and deliverables.¹³² Given the breadth of the initiatives in *SSE*, ranging from major acquisitions of ships, aircraft, armoured vehicles and space-based capabilities to improving the HR management system to address the recruiting and retention challenges, external advice and oversight would greatly assist in developing and monitoring implementation plans. Span of control issues are not isolated to organizations like CMP. The VCDS has the largest portfolio within the CAF, so much so, that the former position of Deputy VCDS was re-established to address some of the span of control issues associated with ensuring DND policies and strategic objectives are achieved. Under the VCDS, CFD currently performs the performance monitoring function for *SSE* implementation and provides progress updates internally that feed into the Departmental Results Report. Unfortunately, as concluded in the ADM(RS) *Evaluation of Defence Capability Development Program*, CFD also has similar span of control issues and lacks expertise in

¹³¹ *2016 Defence White Paper...*, 174.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 167.

strategic planning. The sheer number of responsibilities held by these individuals leaves very little time for reflection, analysis, and developing strategic level guidance. Mirroring the ADF's approach with an External Oversight Board would greatly assist with these span of control issues. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 along with the dispersed responsibilities amongst the L1s for strategic HR planning.

Summary

Throughout this chapter it has been shown that OGDs and allied militaries have expended significant efforts recently to reform their HR practices. Drawing on lessons learned from OGDs like the RCMP, a comprehensive plan with SMART objectives that are closely monitored and communicated transparently both internally and externally have been deemed essential to transform culture within the organization and maintain focus on reform efforts. As *Vision 150* is still a relatively new initiative, it is difficult to measure its effectiveness at transforming the HR management policies and practices of the RCMP to see if it is improving recruiting and retention, but their approach has merit and is similar to the approach of some allied militaries. The US efforts under the *Force of the Future* initiative to adopt legislation to enable flexible decision-making for HR matters, maintains centralized control of the policies and programs, while enabling the ability to adjust remuneration approaches and organizational structures to remain competitive with the private sector. The initiative also permits decentralized execution of some HR decisions to allow L1 organizations to take action to address stressed occupations or tailor their force to meet new threat areas. Adopting these types of initiatives in the CAF would enable agility in HR governance but would need to be carefully managed due to budget implications and the potential for overloading the central HR system managed by CMP. Critical to success would be a detailed and holistic HR reform plan that encompasses all required changes to the governance structure, strategic planning process, policies, programs, compensations and benefits,

with clear linkages to overall defence strategy and it must be fully costed. This approach was taken by the ADF for the implementation of their *First Principles Review* and was clearly communicated in their *2016 Defence White Paper*. DND and the CAF have come a long way since *HR Strategy 2020* and the *Canada First Defence Strategy*, but HR management has always taken a backseat to capability planning and there has been a lack of synergy between the two. “HR policies are the pegs that hold the entire institution firmly rooted in place,”¹³³ so challenging those policies when they are not working for the institution is essential to bringing about the change necessary to meet the HR requirements of today and those of tomorrow.

¹³³ Eric, Dion, “E-Soldier Two: Military Human Resources Facing Twenty First Century Challenges,” in *On Track, CDA Institute Journal* Vol 23, no. 2, (Ottawa: CDA Institute, 2018), last accessed 11 Mar 2021, <https://cdainstitute.ca/e-soldiers-two-canadian-military-human-resources-facing-21st-century-challenges/>.

CHAPTER 5 – CAN DND AND THE CAF FIX IT?

The previous chapters have shown that DND has attempted a series of reforms throughout the years to address long-standing HR challenges without much success. These efforts have presented themselves in various forms from being an integral part of defence policies to stand-alone initiatives focussed in specific areas. Despite the desire, plans and efforts to improve, DND has been incapable of following through on these reform attempts due to changing priorities ranging from evolving security threats to mandated budget reductions during financial crisis. *HR Strategy 2020* and *Canada First Defence Strategy* both contained the policy and funding to transform goals and theories into comprehensive plans to bridge capability gaps and address HR planning issues. However, unpredictable events such as the global financial crisis of 2007-2008 followed by a significant recession virtually thwarted all plans encompassed in both of these initiatives. Fast forward to 2020-2021 and the same could be true of *SSE* with the current economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. With *SSE* in its early years, regardless of the external engagement in its development, rigorous use of analytics, robust costing, and full government support, there simply may not be the funding available to support all of the initiatives. This is where governance, prioritized planning and transparent communication will have the greatest influence towards ensuring the critical initiatives in *SSE* do not succumb to the same fate as those in previous defence strategies. The focus of this chapter will be to make recommendations based on good practices adopted by OGDs and allied militaries to transform the hard work invested thus far in initiatives such as *The Journey*, *OP GENERATION*, the *DT HR Strategy* and *SSE* into an effective and enduring HR reform program that truly puts its people first.

Governance, Subject Matter Experts, and Streamlined Processes

Reviewing the current governance structure and associated challenges described in Chapter 3, it shows a disjointed and misaligned system that struggles to prioritize requirements and adapt policies to be responsive to modern-day HR needs of the L1 organizations. It is complicated by numerous governing bodies, committees and an overtasked central management agency, CMP, which lacks the expertise or manning necessary to support all the various systems, policies, and programs that make up the CAF HRM framework. As a result, past reform efforts have failed to have an enduring effect on improving recruiting, retention and diversification within the CAF. So what can be done to ensure the current initiatives under *The Journey*, OP GENERATION, the *DT HR Strategy* and *SSE* are successful? These efforts need to be led from the front, supported by subject matter experts and enabled by flexible and streamlined processes.

Governance

When considering CAF current reform efforts, the expression *making beds in a burning house* comes to mind. If the fire is not first put out by the strategic level through strong leadership and guidance to correct organizational challenges, then acquiring a variety of new capabilities that are relatively unsupportable by the current system is pointless. From an HR perspective, increasing recruiting without a plan to address the main factors influencing release is also pointless. Another expression that comes to mind when considering the CAF HR issues, is *stop the bleeding* or *stem the tide*, to prevent further damage. An example of a failed attempt by the CAF to *stem the tide* occurred recently with the DND/CAF handling of the recent accusations of sexual misconduct by the former CDS and his replacement. Operation HONOUR was created to address the sexualized culture in the CAF under the former CDS and accusations against the very man that put so much effort into correcting this cultural issue has had a destabilizing effect on serving personnel and will likely be a deterrent for future applicants. Despite the significant

impact on personnel, there has been very little communication by senior leaders within DND or the CAF as to what will be done going forward. Clearly Operation HONOUR is not working and a new approach is required to stem the tide. Unfortunately, lack of communication or guidance from the strategic leadership for non-operational issues is not uncommon. If *SSE* is examined with this in mind, the strategy for operations and capability development is quite clearly laid out, however, it “leaves some placeholders in areas where further thought and consideration will be vitally important. One of these areas is modernizing the Canadian military personnel system.”¹³⁴ The *DT HR Strategy* was intended to fill this gap and provide the way forward for DND/CAF HR reform efforts to implement the initiatives in *SSE*.

The *DT HR Strategy* proposes to improve the current HR system by focussing on increased HR governance by a Defence Team Human Resources Committee (DT HRC) and four sub-committees: DT HR Workforce Design, DT HR Capacity, DT HR Representative and Inclusive, and DT HR Health and Wellness. This strategy adopts a concept similar to the ADF, with strategic center HR governance. However, while these committees have their place in providing guidance and direction for HR reform efforts, they differ from the approach taken by the ADF in that planning and decision-making still resides with the other DND/CAF governing bodies and organizations. The committees’ role appears to be one of developing processes and synchronizing efforts to support FMSD and DTEP, vice providing leadership and direction to steer a holistic HR reform effort. Instead other organizations, such as CFD, are carrying out the strategic HR planning function and provide guidance to the LIs, who in turn submit resource demands through the BP process to feed into the DTEP. The *Evaluation of Defence Capability Development Program* found that the organization within CFD supporting strategic HR planning

¹³⁴ Lindsay, Rodman, “Modernizing the Military Personnel System: Lessons from the Force of the Future,” (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 1.

has “been manned in the past by individuals on short-term postings with no particular expertise in human resources matters.”¹³⁵ It further provides that “a strategic-level concept from which the service elements can obtain guidance and direction is lacking. The community of practice provides limited institutionalized interconnectivity, interoperability and capacity.”¹³⁶

Unfortunately, this is not uncommon in the CAF given frequent posting cycles and the breadth of tasks that most organizations must perform. Additionally, governing bodies often operate in a pull vice a push mode. What this means is that on a set schedule, governing bodies pull information from central agencies such as CFD or CProg for decision, vice the governing body creating, communicating strategies and pushing out priorities to the central agencies or L1s for action. It is further complicated within DND and the CAF by the composition of the governing bodies for capability planning and resource allocations, which are made up of the various L1s, each with their own sets of priorities. The DM and VCDS are often co-chairs to de-conflict competing priorities amongst the L1s, but as explained earlier, their span of control is excessive and leaves little time for these bodies to discuss strategy and provide guidance. Furthermore, submissions to TB for major capital project approvals or to the GIC for legislation or policy changes are often done on an as-they-are-ready basis, vice on priority linkages to defence strategy. This makes it extremely challenging to synchronize efforts between various aspects of an initiative. While a project may receive TB approval to proceed, the human resources associated with supporting that project, may have not yet been approved through the DTEP and BP process. Change is afoot however with the DM and CDS playing a more active role in SSE implementation by dictating what projects and initiatives they want to see brought forward to the

¹³⁵ Department of National Defence, *Evaluation of Defence Capability Development Program*, ADM(RS) Report 1258-3-003, 2017, 27.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, A-2/4.

various governance boards based on the funding plans articulated in *SSE* and the *DND Investment Plan*.

So what else could be done to address some of these governance challenges? Clear priorities, commitment to continuous improvement, accountability and transparency are essential to good governance. While the *DT HR Strategy* is a good start towards committing to reforming HR management by creating a standardized strategic HR planning process and an accountability framework, the approach is similar to failed efforts of the past as it does not empower these bodies to make the decisions needed to bring about change. Furthermore, the committees are comprised of L1s or senior executives within the L1s often with extensive responsibilities within their own organizations, making it difficult to dedicate the time and focussed-effort to reform current HR policies and practices. Complicating this issue is the other HR reform initiatives such as *The Journey* and Op GENERATION that are running parallel with these efforts under the governance of CMP. Remembering the recent ADF approach, HR reform efforts need to be led from the center with clarity of purpose through strategic direction setting in the form of realistic short, medium and long-term priorities along with the budget to see them through to completion. Much like Annex B of *SSE* for capability acquisitions, HR reform initiatives require that level of planning, commitment and transparency. Accountability for providing direction and oversight must be at the highest of levels. The approach taken by the CAF with the creation of a new LGen position with a small staff to act as advisor to CDS to prioritize strategic level capability development issues over service specific issues could, if also applied to CAF HR issues, provide the appropriate level of oversight and accountability needed to bring about lasting change. This position could not only provide the direction and oversight for HR reform efforts, but also assist with the span of control issues of CMP and CFD as previously discussed. In an ideal scenario,

following the ADF approach, the advisor and his team would set priorities, make decisions on force structure, legislative/policy change requirements to support retention, recruiting and diversity efforts, and prioritize TB and GIC submissions based on defence strategy. This would ensure the resources required to see these efforts through to completion are available when needed. This would enable leading from the front, to put out the fires to enable the DT HRC and sub-committees to continue making the beds through the day-to-day governance of action plans and performance monitoring. Similar to the ADF, these individuals could be supported by an external panel of HR experts to recommend best practices and assist with performance monitoring until the DND/CAF is able to develop their own military HR specialists.

Subject Matter Experts

While DND has two LI organizations dedicated to HR management, there is a significant difference between CMP and ADM(HR-Civ). ADM(HR-Civ) is filled with Public Servants within the HRM classification group. They possess specialized education in human resources management, public and business administration, labour relations, organization development and social sciences to name a few. These HR specialist provide strategic advice on organizational management and human resources management, including the “planning, development, delivery or management of human resources services to the Public Service.”¹³⁷ Within the CAF, no such military occupation exists with this level of HR education or specialization. Logistics officers from the three services receive some HR management and administration training, and there exists an NCM occupation for Human Resources Administration for clerical duties, but they lack the education and experience of a specialized occupation to be able to provide strategic advice on

¹³⁷ Government of Canada, Human Resources Management Occupation Group webpage, last accessed 16 Mar 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/collective-agreements/occupational-groups/human-resources-management.html#occ-om>.

key HR challenges facing the CAF. CMP has a blend of military personnel and public servants throughout the organization to support military HR management, but the highest levels of the organization are predominately made up of military personnel with limited HR training. Similarly, CFD's strategic HR planning cell is comprised of military personnel without the necessary skills to forecast future HR requirements or address long-standing organizational management issues. The ADM(RS) Evaluations of CMP and CFD both note a training and skills deficit in these organizations for HR planning and management. In regards to CMP, a recommendation was made for improved succession planning and the organization would "greatly benefit from having individuals who have previously served in the organization fill senior policy and program positions. These individuals would become fully effective more quickly and would likely be familiar with complex policy issues."¹³⁸ This approach would capitalize on corporate knowledge, but it does not address the training gap and lack of specialized HR training necessary for strategic HR management.

Based on lessons learned from the ADF and US DoD, there are two proposed ways of filling this gap in expertise, seeking external advice and/or establishing an HR specialty trade and enrolling experienced, trained HR personnel through a concept similar to the US DoD lateral entry program. When one considers the cultural challenges the CAF is currently facing and its history of being unable to bring about change, perhaps seeking external advice and oversight for HR reform efforts makes the most sense from a short- and medium-term perspective. As eluded to previously, the strategic level of the CAF has been unable to put out the fire or address the HR issues due to conflicting priorities, excessive span of control issues, complicated governance and a military culture of putting the mission first before its people. An independent and external

¹³⁸ *Evaluation of the Governance of Chief of Military Personnel...*, 19.

advisory panel of HR experts examining all facets of HRM, including force structure planning, recruiting, retention, policies, CBIs, family supports, governance, etc and all ongoing initiatives like *The Journey*, Op GENERATION, the *DT HR Strategy* and *SSE*, along with previous evaluations and audits, would assist with truly defining the problem, categorizing and prioritizing change requirements and developing a well-researched, comprehensive action plan to reform CAF HRM. The ADF utilized this concept to continue the efforts of the *2016 Defence White Paper* and developed the *2020 Force Structure Plan* and *Lead The Way: Defence Transformation Strategy* to work as *One Defence* through consistent collaboration, review and realignment of strategy, capabilities and resources. The plan and strategy were developed through cyclical review and consultation with external advisors on strategic policy, capabilities and corporate planning in order to “benefit from the guidance, scrutiny and legitimacy afforded by a suitably empowered and independent external body.”¹³⁹ They were part of the ADF’s ongoing commitment to continuous improvement to become a more capable and agile force able to respond more effectively to strategic challenges. It is this consistency over time approach by the ADF for reform and the continued use of external advisory bodies that is allowing them to see progress in the adaption of their policies and governance structure to

provide an integrated, enterprise approach to recruitment, career and talent management; workforce mobility; education and professionalisation; transition and re-engagement; and partnerships with other Government departments ...supported by Defence White Paper People Initiatives valued at \$384.3 million over the decade to financial year 2024–25, along with initiatives to implement a more contemporary Australian Defence Force (ADF) employment model and remuneration framework.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Lead The Way: Defence Transformation Strategy*, last accessed 16 Mar 2021, <https://www1.defence.gov.au/strategy-policy/transformation>, 178.

¹⁴⁰ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Annual Report 19-20*, last accessed 18 Mar 2021, <https://www.defence.gov.au/annualreports/19-20/>, 98.

A review of the Australian Department of Defence Annual Report for 2019-20 shows positive progress on all the initiatives identified in the *2016 Defence White Paper* including cultural reform efforts to improve organizational climate, implementation of an informed force structure planning process that enables strategic workforce management, improvements in retention and recruiting through streamlined processes, better talent management practices, and increased supports and services for families.¹⁴¹ Therefore, it is recommended that a similar approach of external advice and oversight for the development, implementing and monitoring of one comprehensive plan to reform CAF HR management is undertaken and initiatives be embedded in the DND *Departmental Plan* and the *Departmental Results Framework*. This will ensure these efforts remain focussed and consistent over time. There is however some difficulties with this approach and centre on the CAF's historical reluctance to wholeheartedly accept and implement external advice. As an institution with a strong culture naturally brings strong opinions on what needs to change and how to go about doing it. There will need to be a collaborative and balanced approach to decision-making that ensures CAF leadership engagement throughout all phases of plan development and opinions are considered and respected. Once the reform efforts gain momentum and CAF HRM is on its way to developing a more agile governance structure, HR system and HR policies, the CAF will need to consider how to transition away from external oversight and develop the internal HR expertise to ensure long-term support to sustain changes and grow as the security environment and workforce evolve over time.

Growing HR expertise within the CAF will be necessary for continuous improvement of policies, support programs and services for member's and families as their needs and the needs of the CAF change. The CAF has historically had challenges with implementing change

¹⁴¹ Australian Government Department of Defence, *Annual Report 19-20*, last accessed 18 Mar 2021, <https://www.defence.gov.au/annualreports/19-20/>, 52-58.

initiatives over the long-term and most large-scale efforts come about after external audits and evaluations. This is often due to a failure to properly internally regulate by monitoring programs and policies as well as organizational climate to effectively take action before situations deteriorate. Having personnel with the skills and expertise to perform this regulating function will be essential to transforming the CAF approach to HRM. So how can the CAF grow its HR expertise? There are several possible options to provide a long-term solution to CAF HRM, one of which is the establishment of a specialty occupation for military HR. A 2018 article by defence analyst, Eric Dion, theorized that

the re-establishment of Personnel Administration (or HR) Officers has gone unnoticed but would be the first step in changing systemic processes, streamlining recruitment, reinforcing retention, and ensuring LEAN personnel management. This would allow more holistic management throughout Canada's military HR.¹⁴²

Similar to the Health Care Administrative Officer occupation, the CAF had Personnel Administration Officers to manage HR planning and the services and supports for military personnel. However, this trade has long since been abolished with some of the duties migrating into various other officer occupations, such as logistics and personnel selection. Re-establishing this specialty occupation would signify the importance of military HRM to the success of DND and allow for the various functions performed by CMP and CFD to be carried out by personnel with the requisite skills to ensure they are completed properly. Unfortunately, new occupations are not created quickly and require time to develop the expertise necessary to understand organizational challenges and what is required to correct long-standing issues. By adopting a program similar to the US DoD lateral entry initiative, the CAF could recruit and enroll highly

¹⁴² Eric Dion, "E-Soldier Two..." last accessed 18 Mar 2021, <https://cdainstitute.ca/e-soldiers-two-canadian-military-human-resources-facing-21st-century-challenges/>.

trained HR specialists into essential mid- and possibly senior-level personnel administration or HR officer positions throughout the different L1s to provide a short-term solution to bring in HR expertise for military personnel management. While some would argue that they would lack the military expertise to be able to fully grasp the challenges and reform requirements, it could conversely be argued that bringing in civilians without a military culture may be just what the institution needs to affect true change and not “inhibit nor restrict innovative possibilities.”¹⁴³ This would allow for two streams to address the lack of HR expertise, lateral entry and the traditional path through enrollment as a junior officer and natural career progression. Regardless of whether this expertise is sought through a new occupation or external advice, it will be necessary for the CAF to recognize it is an area of weakness and take measures to address it. Most large private sector corporations have HR leaders that are professionally certified managing their extensive HR portfolios. The CAF does not. Knowledgeable and certified HR specialists will be essential to developing, implementing and maintaining an integrated HR strategy and plan to properly shape the workforce, HR systems and policies that are needed in DND and the CAF now and into the future.

Streamlined Policies and Processes

One of the biggest challenges that will be faced by HR specialists trying to reform HR policies and practices is the governance framework in place for changes to organizational structures, compensation and benefits and talent management. As discussed in Chapter 3, internal governance is hampered by span of control issues within CMP and asynchronous approaches to HR planning during the BP process by the different L1s. Much has been done to

¹⁴³ Eric Dion, “E-Soldier Two:...,” last accessed 18 Mar 2021, <https://cdainstitute.ca/e-soldiers-two-canadian-military-human-resources-facing-21st-century-challenges/>.

address the internal governance for HR planning with the new FMSSD and DTEP processes, however, the *DT HR Strategy* does not address how the governance of HR systems, policies and processes will be adapted to address the recruiting, retention, diversification and career management issues discussed in Chapter 2. The external governance of compensation and benefits as well as the HR regulatory framework by TB/GIC proves difficult to navigate and requires excessive justification for legislative changes due to the considerable budget implications. “Essentially, almost half of Canada’s annual military spending goes directly or indirectly toward its people. However, most examinations of Canada’s defence policy focus on large capability projects.”¹⁴⁴ It is because of this fact, that HR reform will be challenged to tailor its policies to the needs of its personnel. Including HR initiatives within the policy and funding framework of *SSE* for items such as tax exemption for deployed CAF personnel and additional funding for salary increases was progress towards streamlining approvals, however, if the other HR initiatives are not addressed in a similar fashion they will be subject to the lengthy TB approval process. What is needed is a streamlined process for HR initiatives that require timely action and will have the greatest strategic impact on personnel, such as the previously discussed example of PLD. If the health and well-being of members and their families is being immediately impacted by an outdated policy, then a framework needs to exist to streamline policy changes along with approval of new budget demands to address these issues as soon as possible. Referring to the proposals under the US DoD *Force of the Future* initiatives, they targeted the existing regulatory framework to create flexibility to adapt compensation and benefits schemes, promotion systems, organizational structures, etc to permit decisions to made

¹⁴⁴ Eric Dion, “E-Soldier Two:...,” last accessed 18 Mar 2021, <https://cdainstitute.ca/e-soldiers-two-canadian-military-human-resources-facing-21st-century-challenges/>.

and implemented within the Department of Defence. Once DND/CAF has developed a comprehensive plan for its HRM reform, it must work closely with TB to identify the legislative changes required to enable their efforts. This was done by the ADF as part of their updates to the *2016 Defence White Paper* in which they embedded their HR reform initiatives, which approved adjustments to HR policies, processes, compensations, etc. A recent article by several US defence consultant on talent management in military organizations provides that

ministries must carefully analyze the suite of potential policy reforms, prioritize them based on their strategic impact, and phase them in through deliberate implementation. Large-scale change will come only through a structured process that generates early successes to build organizational momentum and generate buy-in from force leaders. To that end, each measure should have a set of KPIs and key milestones during the implementation process so that leaders can accurately gauge progress over time.¹⁴⁵

Therefore, before the CAF is able to streamline HR policies and processes, it must first develop a comprehensive plan with prioritized and phased initiatives (similar to both the US DoD and ADF approaches) and frequent consultation with the regulating bodies. Fetterly provides that consistent engagement with TB during plan development will be necessary for successful implementation.

The impact that military personnel policies can have as a critical enabler in supporting the achievement of defence objectives is not sufficiently appreciated. The Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) needs to be closely engaged with the department in staffing changes to personnel policies through the Treasury Board. For example, this could include retention bonuses. The TBS may need to increase its staff capacity in order to prepare for an increased number of defence Treasury Board submissions driven by SSE in the coming fiscal years.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Peter Geluk, M. Schlueter, T. Thomas and S. Erkens, "Fixing the Talent Gap in Armed Forces Worldwide," Boston Consulting Groups Insights, 2020, last accessed 18 Mar 21, <https://www.bcg.com/en-ca/publications/2020/fixing-talent-gap-armed-forces-worldwide>.

¹⁴⁶ Ross Fetterly, "The Importance of People in Defence," (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 3.

As part of the engagement process for plan development, increased authorities for the DM, CDS and VCDS and associated amendments to the *NDA*, *QR&Os* and *CBI*s should be explored to enable prompt decision-making for minor changes. Similar to the authorities granted to DND for internal approval of minor capital projects under \$5 Million, a cap could be established for minor changes to force structure or compensation and benefits so as to enable small corrections to policies in a timely manner. This would support more efficient planning of policy updates and hopefully correct current challenges faced by CMP with “poorly tested policies and out-of-date orders and regulations.”¹⁴⁷ As planning policy updates has been a historically challenging task for CMP, to truly reform CAF HRM, one comprehensive, coordinated and monitored plan is required.

One Comprehensive, Coordinated, and Monitored Plan

The CAF has been very good at developing strategies to address organizational deficiencies, but it has often struggled to translate those strategies into useful plans to meet objectives. *SSE* attempts to synchronize strategy with resources through a detailed plan and long-term budget commitment for capability acquisitions as well as a vision for HRM improvements. However, it leaves one wondering about the strategy, plan and budget for CAF HRM reform. As concluded by defence analyst Eric Dion,

Almost half of Canada’s annual military spending goes directly or indirectly toward its people. However, most examinations of Canada’s defence policy focus on large capability projects...the specialized nature of today’s workforce also requires HR practices tailored to individual needs. This approach is in stark contrast to the CAF’s current industrial relations management of its people.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Department of National Defence, *Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services) Report 1258-219: Evaluation of the Governance of Chief of Military Personnel* (Ottawa: DND, 2016), vi.

¹⁴⁸ Eric Dion, “E-Soldier Two:...,” last accessed 19 Mar 2021, <https://cdainstitute.ca/e-soldiers-two-canadian-military-human-resources-facing-21st-century-challenges/>.

The *DT HR Strategy* put in place a governance structure intended to mitigate risks that challenge HRM to achieve the strategy's envisioned end state of a sustainable, diverse, respectful and supported optimized workforce enabled by synchronized planning and management. Despite having a clear vision, the strategy was developed in 2018 without a plan on how to go about achieving the desired end state.

Strategic planning is rational analysis. It takes “what is” and develops ideas of “what should be” along with plans for “how to get there.” With a realistic organizational strategy focused on what the future should look like, strategic planning provides the “road map” for fulfilling the future.¹⁴⁹

A RAND corporation study theorized that in order for strategic planning to meet readiness and operational requirements, it must ensure alignment between the manpower, resources and personnel systems.

The manpower system, determines the needs of various organizations for military persons who have different characteristics. The resources system determines how many of those individuals will be paid for and pays for them. The personnel system enters, manages, develops, and exits personnel. Alignment occurs when organization and system information is shared in a manner that facilitates mission accomplishment.¹⁵⁰

At present, no action plans have been produced from the efforts of the *DT HR Strategy* and it is unclear how the efforts of *The Journey* or Op GENERATION fit into this strategy. A plan that synchronizes the reform requirements in the manpower, resources and personnel systems and aligns them with capability-based planning process will be essential to meet emerging requirements. The efforts of FMSD and DTEP touch all three of these systems and are progressing to address the strategic workforce planning requirements for the future force.

¹⁴⁹ Dennis M. Daley, “Strategic Human Resource Management,” in *Public Personnel Management: Current Concerns, Future Challenges* by Norma M. Riccucci, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 121.

¹⁵⁰ Harry J. Thie, R.J. Yardley, M.C. Harrell, and K. Brancato, “Alignment of Department of Defense Manpower, Resources, and Personnel Systems,” (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007), last accessed 19 Mar 21, https://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR419.html.

However, there still exists a disconnect between the HR policies to attract, train, support and manage personnel. The issues identified in Chapter 2 and the initiatives contained in *SSE* to address them require a comprehensive and coordinated plan if they are to be successfully implemented. Defence analyst, Lindsay Rodman provides that “for any personnel reform to work, in the United States or Canada, a solid budget plan into the outyears is absolutely essential...the more explicitly budget commitments in the outyears can be made now, the greater chance of enduring military personnel modernization.”¹⁵¹ Unfortunately fixing operational issues often take priority over fixing HR issues and there are differing viewpoints on the true cause of CAF HR challenges. It is often argued that the CAF retention rate is steadily better than those of our allies, so emphasis should be placed more on recruiting efforts than retention. However, they are intertwined and as shown in Chapter 2, the reasons people have for leaving the CAF are often the same as those that people have for not joining.

The US DoD, ADF, and the CAF have all recognized that the “stresses of military service ...are heavy and well known and it is one of the top reasons people transition out of the military.”¹⁵² Frequent relocations, family impacts, unclear and rigid policies on compensations and benefits, under resourced programs causing high work tempo, and a sexualized, potentially racist, culture simply make the CAF less appealing than the private sector. This is not unknown to the institution and various strategies and programs have put in place over the years to attempt rectify these issues. Unfortunately, these efforts lacked rigorous analysis to identify the root cause, were often managed independently, without synergy, and have resulted in failed attempts

¹⁵¹ Lindsay Rodman, “Modernizing the Military Personnel System: Lessons from the Force of the Future.” (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 4.

¹⁵² US DoD, “Fact Sheet: The Next Two Links to the Force of the Future,” in US DoD Special Reports, last accessed 19 Mar 2021, https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/2015/0315_force-of-the-future/Fact-Sheet-The-Next-Two-Links-to-the-Force-of-the-Future.pdf.

to improve CAF HRM. It is imperative that DND take a similar approach to CAF HRM reform as it has taken to capability acquisitions as of late. The lessons learned from the US DoD initiatives about analysis and costing will be essential to this effort as will the phased approach to ensure the initiatives that will have the greatest impact on improving recruiting and retention are given priority for implementation. The ADF comprehensive approach to address housing, compensation and benefits, family supports, and flexible career management practices to improve work/life balance demonstrate a good example of a long-term approach to improve the HRM business model. The RCMP's *Vision 150* provides an example of a holistic plan with SMART objectives and transparent communication. Combining all of these best practices into an approach for the CAF will be a difficult task, but an essential one.

Since mission effectiveness is achieved by the dedication and expertise of the members operating and supporting a capability and not by the capability or platform itself, it is imperative that CMP work closely with the L1 Commanders and TB to develop a strategic plan to review and update several HR policies and practices to place members' needs at the forefront. Given the current housing and financial situation in Canada as result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is recommended that they start with addressing military housing and relocation benefits. These programs and benefits should be examined with a similar lens as the ADF towards promoting financial stability. An OAG report released in 2016 on the Canadian Forces Housing Agency (CFHA) found that the CAF "did not have adequate plans that defined the work, time, and resources needed to modernize the military housing portfolio and meet the current and future needs."¹⁵³ Adequate amounts of subsidized housing as well as rental allowances that are

¹⁵³ Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *2015 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada Report 5 - Canadian Armed Forces Housing*, para 5.39, last accessed 22 Mar 2021:, https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_201602_05_e_41062.html#hd3b.

responsive to market fluctuations (unlike the CAF's current PLD policy that was discussed in Chapter 3) and home ownership assistance should be a high priority focus area to reduce the financial stressors of relocation and incentivize military service.¹⁵⁴

Carrying on with the theme of impacts of repetitive moves on members and their families' well-being, the requirement of frequent relocations to support operational requirements or career progression should be examined. The adaptive career path efforts under *The Journey* should be expanded to include consideration of the ADF work/life balance efforts including job sharing and variable working hours. As part of the policy considerations, a CAF-wide review should be completed with L1 input to determine exactly which positions in each organization could support flexible work arrangements. Additionally, considerations should be given to current career progression requirements and occupational structures to support members who prefer geographic stability for family or financial reasons over career progression. This could include multiple streams within an occupation or streamlined processes for transitioning between the RegF and PRes, such as those put in place under Project SUKAIN in the ADF. Defence analyst, Lindsay Rodman, provides that "job assignments can also be made relatively arbitrarily. In this day and age, military service may not need to be as inconvenient and sacrifice-oriented as it was in the past."¹⁵⁵ However, there are always service requirements that necessitate relocation and while *The Journey's Seamless Canada* initiative will make transitions less disruptive, recognition of this sacrifice could be in the form of additional compensations for continued service.

¹⁵⁴ As a reminder to the reader, the current PLD policy for the CAF has fixed compensation rates for geographical locations across Canada that have not been updated since 2008. The current rates are not reflective of market value and can be found in CBI 205.45 and accessed at <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/compensation-benefits-instructions/chapter-205-allowances-for-officers-and-non-commissioned-members.html>.

¹⁵⁵ Lindsay Rodman, "Modernizing the Military Personnel System: Lessons from the Force of the Future," (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2018), 3.

Retention and signing bonuses, while they have not been completely effective on their own, when coupled with other efforts to promote financial stability and family well-being, may incentivize continued service. However, they will still likely not be enough to retain top talent in specialized fields, such as pilot, cyber operators, engineers, etc that are often sought after in the private sector. Paxton Mayer, a Canadian defence analyst, provides that

private corporations are able to provide higher salaries and better benefits than the CAF can for technical and specialized positions. More funding is necessary to best compete with private corporations, but as the CAF's budget is not expected to include meaningful increases, this will remain a consistent problem for recruitment.¹⁵⁶

The Journey initiatives includes a review of pay scales to improve the CAF's ability to attract and retain skilled personnel, as does the RCAF's extension of Op GENERATION known as Op EXPERIENCE and Op TALENT. In 2019, the RCAF began both of these initiatives to focus on improving the quality of life and quality of service for members and their families as well as implement the actions necessary to increase the number of pilots to meet current demands and SSE growth requirements. As part of these efforts, the RCAF is working with CMP to explore a modern compensation and benefit model based on skill sets vice only rank progression.¹⁵⁷ This is similar to the approach by the ADF and US DoD, but these allies have also included legislative and policy changes to permit increased flexibilities in HR policy application for the various L1 Commanders to allow them to offer tailor-made compensations or adaptive career paths for specific trades or rank levels in high demand. Some flexibility does exist within the current CAF system and can be seen within the RCAF with the adjustment of internal policies to allow Pres

¹⁵⁶ Paxton Mayer, "What's in a Soldier? How to Rebrand the Canadian Armed Forces," (Calgary: Canadian Global Affairs Institute, 2020), 3.

¹⁵⁷ Department of National Defence, "Royal Canadian Air Force Quality of Life – Quality of Service," last accessed 22 Mar 2021, <http://www.rcaf-arc.forces.gc.ca/en/services/benefits-military/quality-life-quality-service.page#initiative16>.

pilots to continue to serve while working in the commercial sector by permitting them to “live where they like and commute to operational Wings in Cold Lake, Bagotville and Trenton for three to five days at a time.”¹⁵⁸ However, such adaptations will require close coordination internally to ensure budget requirements are properly captured and justified. They will also need close coordination with TB to streamline the approval processes for any permanent changes to *CBI*s. A recent update brief on Op TALENT and Op EXPERIENCE discussed the results of numerous quality of life/service initiatives such as the one discussed above, but still identified the top four internal factors for RCAF retention challenges as role overload, work-life balance, geographical instability and outdated compensation and benefits models.¹⁵⁹ It further explained how these internal factors undermined families’ needs for balance between security, stability and prosperity and that it is necessary to take action to provide supports to make the CAF more appealing than the private sector. A better family support package to address all the challenges of military service is one way of accomplishing this.

A comprehensive family support package must also be developed to ensure members and their families receive the necessary services to address the stressors of military life, such as spousal unemployment and home life disruptions from frequent relocations, deployments and high operational tempo. Expansion of some the initiatives underway, such as “The Military Family Doctor Network” concept that was launched in 2020 as part of *The Journey’s Seamless Canada* initiative to areas where there are known support deficiencies, such as childcare services, would ensure the same benefits and services are available to families regardless of geographical location. Increasing supports and benefits for family health care, school

¹⁵⁸ Chris Thatcher, “RCAF reports personnel ‘plateau,’” in *Skies Magazine*, last accessed 23 Mar 2021, <https://skiesmag.com/news/rcmf-reports-personnel-plateau/>.

¹⁵⁹ Brigadier-General Iain Huddleston and Brigadier-General Mark Goulden, “Op TALENT and Op EXPERIENCE Info Brief,” (Ottawa: DG Air Rdns DND, 2021).

reintegration for children, spousal employment training or re-certification similar to the ADF could also be incorporated into a comprehensive family benefits package so as to improve financial stability and family well-being.

Countless recommendations could be made to address the dissatisfiers associated with military service, but if the efforts are not coordinated, any changes that result from strategies, reviews and recommendations will simply overwhelm the current HRM system. Therefore, to truly modernize CAF HRM, the series of legislative changes, *CBI* amendments, career management policy updates, family support program expansions, and HR management planning procedural changes must be aligned with defence strategy. They must be captured, costed and communicated as one comprehensive HR plan funded over a set period of time similar to the capability acquisitions outlined in *SSE*. The RCAF's Op TALENT and Op EXPERIENCE plans have taken a phased approach with targeted short-term objectives and holistic long-term activities to stabilize, recover and grow RCAF capacities to the desired end-state. External support requirements from CMP and other L1 organizations are tracked, communicated and as such understood to have longer timelines due to the level of coordination required. A similar approach should be taken for CAF HRM reform where short-term objectives that can be executed internally be given top priority to support stabilization efforts, such as formalizing flexible work arrangements, adaptive career paths, and improving family supports. Initiatives requiring external engagement with governing bodies like TB and GIC for amendments to legislation to improve governance and increased budget for changes to *CBIs* for bonuses, pay scale adjustments, lateral entries, etc will require greater analysis, time and coordination. These efforts should also be developed with SMART objectives, but phased later as part of the growth of the current CAF HR system to support strategic HRM. Consistent communication internally

and externally with TB and experts during the review of strategies, development and execution of a comprehensive plan, similar to the RCMP's *Vision 150* and the ADF's approach for the recent *Lead The Way: Defence Transformation Strategy*, will be essential for CAF HRM reform.

Communication

A review of scholarly articles identifies consistent and transparent communication as one of the most important aspects of strategic HRM. Charles Greer, a HRM scholar, further provides that a misalignment or poor communication between an organizations' overall strategies and the human resources management practices in place will invariably lead to an organization that is not structured properly for the future, result in poor performance and retention challenges.

When senior managers formulate and implement strategies, their values and philosophies are communicated to members of the organization through human resource policies and practices. For example, senior managers who are committed to the preservation of the organization's human resources can manage the stress associated with major strategic events, through such measures as dealing with rumors and providing accurate information, so that misinformation does not have such a debilitating impact on employees. How employees are treated following significant strategic events...is a reflection of these values and communicates whether the organization views employees from an investment perspective.¹⁶⁰

Over the past several decades, senior leadership within DND/CAF have struggled with communicating change initiatives and after major strategic events to mitigate the impact on personnel and ensure continued commitment from all levels within the department. This has been evident as of late with the limited internal communications following the recent allegations of sexual misconduct against the former CDS and his replacement. Although there have been a few communiques from the Acting CDS, Op HONOUR was recently shut down with little information provided on the allegations and where the CAF will go next to address this

¹⁶⁰ Charles R. Greer, *Strategic Human Resources Management, Custom Edition for University of Phoenix*, (Boston, MA: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2021), 6.

significant cultural issue. Additionally, with current financial crisis facing most Canadians during the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been incomplete announcements from CAF senior leadership on how HR policies/practices will be adapted to support service members facing relocation and potential financial hardships as a result. This pattern is unfortunately consistent across most strategic level communications within the CAF. Despite the significant efforts to improve CAF capabilities and management of DND/CAF human resources through *SSE*, *The Journey*, Op GENERATION and the *Defence Team HR Strategy*, there has been very little follow-on communication on the progress of the initiatives, what changes will be implemented to improve the structure, policies, and practices in place and when these changes can be expected to occur. Defence analyst, Eric Dion, confirms these challenges and notes that

for the last twelve years, the CAF has attempted to transform and diversify without much success. Changes to structure, systems and strategy have had little impact on military culture because they were not managed in synergy...CDS Op Orders for People, Careers, Diversity, Unit climate are required to further shape CAF culture and foster a new dynamic.¹⁶¹

DND and the CAF have made progress in leveraging new technologies to improve communication such as using *Facebook* to communicate operational successes and with the introduction of the Canadian Forces software application. This application provides open-source access to CANFORGENS, policies, standards and orders, *CBI*s, and other military HR policies/programs such as professional development, housing, and health supports. However, when it comes to tackling emerging issues in a timely manner, there does not appear to be a consistent means of communication in place. Additionally, when trying to understand how transformation initiatives like *The Journey* or defence innovations and new acquisitions announced in *SSE* are progressing, there is very little information available both on the internet

¹⁶¹ Eric Dion, "E-Soldier Two..." last accessed 29 Mar 2021, <https://cdainstitute.ca/e-soldiers-two-canadian-military-human-resources-facing-21st-century-challenges/>.

and through the DWAN. As mentioned earlier, for a member of the CAF to understand where the CAF is in its reform efforts, they would need to consult the annual DND/CAF Department Results Report and information is still scarce. This poor internal communication is not limited to only new initiatives, but rather to most changes in policies and strategies. The ADM(RS) audit of *CBI*s concluded that “although communications on policy changes exist, the absence of a comprehensive communication strategy has led to various tools being utilized...leading to inconsistent messages and misapplication of the policies and regulations.”¹⁶² As result, there are numerous grievances and a general feeling of discontentment with the management practices of senior leadership within the CAF.¹⁶³ The approach taken by the RCMP for *Vision 150* to communicate all HR initiatives under one comprehensive plan and maintain an open-source status tracker to allow anyone, service member or potential recruit, to understand the steps being taken to address long-standing HR issues would serve as good starting point to show the commitment of DND/CAF senior leadership to HR reform efforts. Ensuring that CAF members and the public understand that the senior leadership is actively working to change and improve how members and their families are cared for can only be accomplished through transparent and consistent updates on initiatives. If most CAF members have no idea what *The Journey* is trying to accomplish, it is certain that a civilian considering joining will not understand how the CAF is trying to better itself to become a more supportive employer. To be truly effective, “any organizational strategy should include mission, vision, goals and objectives related to the HRM field, and a very important point is that all those need to be communicated, and very well

¹⁶² Department of National Defence, *Audit of Military Compensation and Benefits*, Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services) Report 7050-69 (ADM(RS)), 2015, iv.

¹⁶³ Several Facebook page feeds from service personnel show mockery towards senior leadership and their inability to manage strategic level issues. Garbage Sweep is one of the most followed by CAF members and regularly critiques CAF senior leadership decision-making and poor communications.

understood.”¹⁶⁴ The information must not only be communicated internally, but also externally so as to present an institution postured and committed to change. The CAF must show what it is doing to address its cultural issues, from sexual misconduct to diversification and what initiatives are underway to reduce the stressors of military service for a range of applicants with unique backgrounds and career goals. To do this, the CAF must

communicate the constant risks of conflict that Canadians face (demonstrating the usefulness of, and need for, the CAF), it must ensure more Canadians know about the CAF and its operations, and it must modify the CAF brand in a way that increases recruitment and addresses all these goals. It should position itself as a diverse employer that provides a welcoming, accepting, and empowering environment. More specifically, the CAF should show itself to provide excellent career progression and organizational culture for all its members, regardless of whether the member is female, a visible minority, Indigenous, part of the LGBTQ+ community, or part of any other vulnerable group. The CAF should also show that it offers meaningful work that provides superb job security, a fair salary, and great benefits packages.¹⁶⁵

A communication strategy as part of an HR reform plan will be necessary to educate CAF members and the public about these efforts, to incentivize continued service and motivate the public to join. However, external communication is not only about the information presented to the public. It will also be important to ensure that the governing bodies responsible for approving HR policies and associated funding are engaged throughout the planning process and kept abreast of progress and performance throughout the implementation.

In the same manner as the ADF when developing *Lead The Way: Defence Transformation Strategy* and *2020 Force Structure Plan*, DND must ensure early and consistent engagement with TBS to support the timely development and approval of a plan for CAF HR

¹⁶⁴ Catalin Constantin Samoila, "Personnel Planning: A Comparative Outlook," in *Journal of Defense Resources Management* 6, no. 2, (2015), 57-74, last accessed 29 Mar 2021, <https://search-proquest-com.cfc.idm.oclc.org/docview/1759179294?accountid=9867>.

¹⁶⁵ Lee Berthiaume, "Military Must Nearly Double Annual Female Recruitment to Reach Target: Study," CTV News, January 22, 2020, last accessed 29 Mar 2021, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/military-must-nearly-double-annual-female-recruitment-to-reach-target-study-1.4778063>.

reform. Given the extensive policy changes that will be required as part of this effort, ranging from updating compensation and benefits schemes to amending authorities in legislation to allow for agile decision-making, it will be imperative to engage TBS to avoid the same pitfalls as the US DoD with the *Force of the Future* change initiatives. The CAF will need to properly “articulate the problem and the cost”¹⁶⁶ for any reform efforts to be successful. The problems and risks of HR reform in the CAF are well understood and documented in the *DT HR Strategy*, however, each suggested change will need the supporting data to demonstrate the true nature of the issue, modeling to show how the proposed changes will bring about the desired end state and rigorous costing. To accomplish this, frequent consults with TBS and external expert advisors will be required to ensure these efforts remained aligned with GoC defence policy. As mentioned earlier, subject matter experts in HR management should assist in guiding this process and provide recommendations for plan sequencing and an internal communication strategy. It was also identified in a previous section that TBS may require additional analysts to collaborate with the CAF throughout this transformation process and increase their capacity for processing TB/GIC submissions for changes to the *NDA*, *CBI*s, and other policy instruments. Simply providing updates through the annual Departmental Results Report will not be sufficient performance measurement for the magnitude of changes required to transform CAF HRM into an agile system centered on supporting its people. SMART objectives should be developed with TBS along with the reporting metrics required to gauge progress. As was done when the RCMP developed *Vision 150*, close coordination with TBS and other stakeholders through a concentrated, time-bound effort should be undertaken to produce a plan and monitoring system that will increase accountability, motivate and keep efforts consistent over time.

¹⁶⁶ Mark F. Cancian and Todd Harrison, “The Force of the Future,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, last accessed 29 Mar 2021, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/force-future>.

Summary

To summarize the number of recommendations made in this chapter and previous chapters is not an easily done, but they all center around one common theme, dedication to resolving CAF HR problems. For any CAF HRM reform efforts to be successful, the senior leadership within DND need to place these efforts at the top of the priority list, provide strategic direction and dedicate the time and resources necessary to truly transform the outdated systems, policies and practices in place. This will involve enabling a governance framework with a senior level leader dedicated to reforming CAF HRM, without additional responsibilities. They must be tasked to develop, communicate and monitor a comprehensive action plan, and be supported by HR experts throughout the process. To ensure a continuous improvement approach to CAF HRM, internal HR expertise will need to be developed. Holistic reviews and analysis of current issues will be required to support the development of a phased approach to focus DND efforts on the initiatives that are of the most importance to CAF members, such as housing and compensation and benefits to support financial stability and alternative work arrangements to provide geographical stability and improve family well-being. Close coordination with TBS will be required throughout plan development and execution to enable expanded departmental authorities, streamlined processes and expeditious approvals of legislation, policy and budget changes. Finally, a comprehensive communication strategy that highlights progress on all initiatives to both serving members and the public will demonstrate the CAF's commitment to putting its people first and be essential to recruiting and retention efforts now and into the future.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSION

The intent of this paper was to highlight the challenges the CAF has experienced with human resources management, explain why the complex governance of this system has consistently prevented the CAF from reaching its recruiting, retention and diversity targets and recommend some improvements based on best practices of similar organizations. It has been demonstrated that with the number of studies, audits and reports on this topic, that the dissatisfiers of military service are well-known and understood by the CAF and can be summarized as a lack of financial stability, disruptions to family life from frequent relocations, insufficient control over one's career path and excessive work tempo. These dissatisfiers have led to early release before completion of terms of service or prior to mandatory retirement age, but they have also served as deterrents for future recruits. When these military stressors are coupled with misleading marketing campaigns that have failed to highlight how the benefits of military service might outweigh the hardships as well as the media portrayal of CAF cultural challenges, a career in the CAF is simply unappealing to most of Canadian society. Despite past efforts to improve in these areas through reform of the HRM system and improved recruiting and public affairs campaigns, a comprehensive strategy and plan has never been able to be implemented. Federal budget cuts, increases in operational tempo and a shift in GoC personnel management approaches have created conflicting priorities for the CAF. Efforts such as the *HR Strategy 2020* and other quality of life initiatives have been forfeited due to the requirement of CAF leadership to shift their focus to other higher priority areas. *SSE* showed a renewed commitment to improving HRM as did the follow-on initiatives of *The Journey*, *Op GENERATION* and the *DT HR Strategy*. Initiatives like the *FMSD* and *DTEP* as part of the *DT HR Strategy* will assist in improving CAF HR planning and force a more collaborative and synchronized approach amongst the L1s. *Seamless Canada* under *The Journey* once fully

implemented will reduce some, but not all of the stressors of frequent relocations. OP GENERATION is making strides towards streamlining enrollment and training of stressed occupations, but still has many challenges relating to retaining personnel within these occupations that have not yet been addressed. Unfortunately, these efforts continue to run in parallel and are not part of a unified strategy and plan to transform CAF HRM into a responsive system that meets the needs of today's CAF while posturing to support future needs. The complex internal and external governance structures including a rigid regulatory framework and excessive span of control of key HR organizations, like CMP, will continue to be roadblocks to transitioning the CAF HRM system from a "Mission First/People Always"¹⁶⁷ to a "People First" mentality. This transformation will be needed to retain and attract the current and future generations of the workforce. The efforts of OGDs, such as the RCMP and allied militaries like the US DoD and ADF, to adopt holistic approaches to create agile HR systems have been met with varying levels of success, but they provide useful strategies and lessons learned to serve as a starting point for developing a comprehensive plan for CAF HRM reform.

Through the *Vision 150* initiative, the RCMP has created a wide-ranging strategy to address its HR challenges based on close coordination with external experts and governing bodies over a dedicated timeframe. They adopted a collaborative approach to identify key areas for improvement and develop a plan that included the use of SMART objectives with robust performance monitoring to track progress, which was openly communicated to its members and the public on the RCMP's main homepage. The focussed effort and transparent communication demonstrate a leadership team dedicated to the betterment and transformation of the culture, policies and practices in place for HRM. The efforts of the US DoD under the *Force of the*

¹⁶⁷ *Defence Team Human Resources Strategy...*, 6.

Future initiative share similarities with the RCMP's communication strategy, key stakeholder engagement and time-bound objectives. The US DoD have focussed some effort on transforming HRM culture, but they have concentrated more on putting in place legislation that enables flexible decision-making on HR policies and practices. They have worked to create an agile HR system that can more readily react to changes in the security environment and labour market without the need for significant policy reform. Unfortunately, with budget cuts and personnel changeover within the DoD, this hard work has fallen lower on their priority list and has not been implemented as quickly or easily as envisioned. The ADF seems to have found the right approach to HR transformation with its *First Principles Review* creating the momentum necessary for change, and maintaining that momentum by embedding these initiatives in the Australian Government's defence policies as priorities for continuous improvement and synchronization of efforts. The ADF has taken a multi-prong iterative approach to their HR reform plan, with changes in governance structures, policies, planning, compensation and benefits and supports all having clear linkages to overall defence strategy and being fully costed in their defence budget. When looking for similarities between these organizations' HRM reforms, they not only made HR transformation a top priority, but they dedicated the leadership, time and money to take a desired end state and develop it into a strategy and plan that was realistic and achievable.

For the CAF to be successful at transforming its HRM system, more horsepower is needed at the senior level to generate the momentum necessary for change. CMP, the VCDS, or senior leaders within these organizations who are in the thick of trying to manage the program and its day-to-day issues simply do not have the capacity to take on such a substantial problem. Rather, a separate entity, such as the new strategic advisor to the CDS, enabled by a team of

internal and external HR experts, will have the degree of separation necessary to bring together all the different reports, audits, strategies and initiatives, to develop an accurate picture of the state of HRM in the CAF. Once all the information is assessed, it will allow the team to better understand the true nature, scope and scale of each of the individual issues across the various HRM systems to address the influencing factors that are causing the situation to worsen. This front end work will need to include the increased use of analytics to assist in framing these issues and provide justifications for changes in legislation, regulations, and policies and/or increases in the defence budget. Early engagement with TB will be important to promote a collaborative approach to plan development and to ensure that they are postured to support an increase in TB submissions that may result from CAF HRM reform efforts. As part of plan development, there must be a strategy to ensure plan longevity, such that it does not fall victim to budget cuts or shifts in operational priorities akin to previous HR transformation attempts. Aligning the plan with defence policy and embedding the initiatives within defence policy revisions to ensure consistency over time will be vital. To avoid overwhelming the internal and external governance systems, the plan must be phased, with early focus on streamlined approvals for policy changes such as enabling internal decision-making on force structures, minor adjustments to *CBI*s, and support programs. Affordable housing or financial assistance for home ownership, spousal employment supports and flexible work arrangements need to be focus areas in the short-term to show leadership commitment to addressing emerging issues, such as the current housing crisis in Canada resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Developing internal HR expertise should also be an early focus with the creation of a new CAF HR Occupation generated through a lateral entry program in the short-term and the traditional stream in the long-term. This internal HR expertise will provide the internal regulating function necessary for strategic HR planning and

management. The cyclic monitoring and updates to recruiting campaigns, *CBI*s, family supports and career management practices by these specialists will ensure the needs, values and beliefs of different generations and minority groups within the workforce are given the appropriate attention and consideration they deserve. Transparent and consistent internal and external communication will be vital to improve recruiting, retention and diversification of the CAF by showing a senior leadership team and Government devoted to change with a long-term plan to improve the HRM system by placing and keeping member's needs at the top of the priority list. In an organization where its members' agree to pay the ultimate price in the service of its country, showing the same level of commitment to supporting them and their families in this endeavour with a "People First" plan seems only fitting.

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