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Remote Work: The CAF's Evolving Policy for the Future

Lieutenant-Colonel Bryan Blyth

JCSP 48

Exercise Solo Flight

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Remote Work: The CAF's Evolving Policy for the Future

Lieutenant-Colonel Bryan Blyth

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INTRODUCTION

Remote work (RW) is not a new concept within public or private industries, however, the uptick of such a working arrangement has been relatively minor until the COVID-19 pandemic forced its use to ensure not only compliance with public health safety measures but also continued organizational operation. The pandemic has acted as a catalyst for RW arrangements, resulting in the improvement of enabling technologies, the adoption of improved institutional processes, and the realization of significant cost savings, or, from a Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) perspective, the realization of efficiencies.

RW employees report to being able to accomplish more, successfully work independently while supporting their team/institution, and better manage their work life balance¹. Considering these positive benefits, it appears obvious to implement RW within the CAF through evolving policy, which in fact commenced with Canadian Forces Military Personnel Instruction (CF MPI) 01/22 released in March of 2022.²

The benefits aside, there remains skepticism from some private institutions and supervisors, and a reluctance to fully endorse RW that may resonate within the CAF. This may be due, in part, to the abrupt, forced nature of universal RW implementation during the pandemic. A more palatable introduction might include a methodical review, or

¹ Richard W. Monroe and James C. Haug, 'Assessment of Telework in a Federal Agency at the Operational Phase', *Public Organization Review*, 29 June 2021, 1–2, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11115-021-00538-0>.

² Chief of Military Personnel, 'Changing a Place of Duty and the Use of Postings to Enable Remote Work Options' (Canadian Armed Forces, 21 March 2022), <HTTP://CMP-CPM.MIL.CA/EN/POLICIES/CF-MIL-PERS-INSTR.PAGE>.

assessment, based on applicability (of positions) and suitability (of employees) to work remotely.³

The CAF has recently achieved a significant milestone in this area by releasing an Instr regarding RW options to its uniformed members. Ambiguity remains regarding what challenges the CAF will face in implementing RW options, and how the CAF might evolve its policy to optimally utilize RW to best serve and support its members and the institution.

This paper intends to highlight that despite operational constraints and perceived norms of military operations, a comprehensive and expanded RW analysis and policy within the CAF is required to align with political/strategic initiatives, enhance institutional and member flexibility, and bolster attractiveness (for recruiting) and competitiveness (for retention) as an employer of choice.

To realize its aim, the paper will first define RW followed by existing policies that are in place amongst our closest allies: Australia (AUS), New Zealand (NZ), the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States of America (USA). The paper will next identify some primary challenges to embracing RW within the CAF given its unique nature, subsequently discussing key opportunities available to the institution to advance RW as an effective employment arrangement. Finally, the positive consequences of fully enabling RW will be outlined prior to concluding remarks.

³ Monroe and Haug, 'Assessment of Telework in a Federal Agency at the Operational Phase', 2.

REMOTE WORK

RW, a subset of either “flexible work”⁴ or “alternative work”⁵ arrangements, is becoming more prominent in many industries. It could include forms of employee adaptability other than remote work, such as varying working hours, compressed working days, etc. Some of these other forms of flexible working arrangements (FWAs) will be discussed as part of initiatives enacted by some of Canada’s “Five Eyes” partners, specifically AUS, NZ, the UK, and the USA.

For the purposes of this paper, RW has two tiers of implementation, both of which are in locations other than the normal working environment or, more precisely, Department of National Defence (DND) and CAF buildings in the assigned geographic region of employment. The first tier of RW is aligned with the National Joint Council (NJC) travel directive where an employee works from a location other than normal⁶ as well as the newly issued CF MPI 01/22. However, CF MPI 01/22 differs from the NJC directive by having the process employee initiated. Further, the intended work location is not the employee’s residence, but rather a DND/CAF facility in another geographical location.⁷ An example of this tier of RW would be working for an organization in the National Capital Region (NCR) but doing so from the base in Edmonton, AB. This is currently an inaugural opportunity for CAF members for Active Posting Season (APS)

⁴ Australian Defence Force, ‘Flexibility in the Way You Work and Serve’, accessed 22 March 2022, <https://pay-conditions.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-09/flexibility-booklet.pdf>.

⁵ Ministry of Defence, ‘Flexible Working and You’, accessed 21 March 2022, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/955642/Flexible_Working_and_You.pdf.

⁶ ‘Frequently Asked Questions – Remote Work, Telework and Travel’, accessed 22 March 2022, <https://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/s24/s27/d806/en>.

⁷ Chief of Military Personnel, ‘Changing a Place of Duty and the Use of Postings to Enable Remote Work Options’.

2022 based on Canadian Forces General Messages (CANFORGEN) 023/22⁸ and associated CF MPI 01/22.

The second tier of RW is what many have become familiar with during COVID-19: working externally from DND/CAF facilities at one's residence.⁹ This is akin to virtual work from the CAF's perspective as the service member would be fully remote (technology and system dependant), reliant on home office equipment (other than issued IT computer), and physically separated from colleagues and in-person social engagements. This tier does not necessarily constitute inability to access a DND/CAF bases or facilities if or as required, but such activity would likely be limited in scope to necessity (administrative support, recall, or a change in circumstance). Finally, RW tier two is not reliant on RW tier one being activated (e.g., a RW tier two employee may be assigned to an organization in the NCR and be located in the NCR) as there are merits to both forms. RW tier one is prescribed within CF MPI 01/22, while RW tier two is not, and remains reliant on informal agreements bound by the Canadian Forces Temporary Duty Travel Instructions.¹⁰

ALLIED POLICIES

As previously mentioned, many of Canada's closest allies such as AUS, UK, USA, and NZ, with whom we have many similarities in policy, doctrine, and equipment, have FWAs, including RW, as well as Flexible Service Arrangements (FSAs). FSAs

⁸ CMP CANFORGEN 023/22, 'Active Posting Season 2022 Direction', Canadian Forces Application, CANFORGENS 2022, 24 February 2022.

⁹ National Defence, 'CDS/DM Directive on DND/CAF Reopening Strategy (Summer 2021 Posture)', 30 June 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/cds-dm-directive-on-dnd-caf-reopening-strategy.html>.

¹⁰ Chief of Military Personnel, 'Changing a Place of Duty and the Use of Postings to Enable Remote Work Options', 4-5.

differ greatly from FWAs or RW in that they change the nature of employment for the service members, impacting their work commitment, pay, pension¹¹, and even benefits associated with normal employment such as housing, clothing, and leave entitlements.¹² The nations with such arrangements each have national policy supplemented by specific military direction (or Instr) to enable access to such arrangements by uniformed defence force members as well as wider defence force public servants. Such policies typically outline 1) the rationale for the policy's development and implementation, as well as 2) a disclaimer regarding such arrangements.

The rationale for the policy's development is significantly tied to the struggle most defence forces face: recruiting and retention. These policies are part of a greater strategy to become more attractive and adaptive to the needs of those seeking employment (recruitment) or considering continued employment (retention) for various reasons, but more likely associated with changes in their personal or familial situations at different points in their career.¹³

The disclaimer is intended to codify that, despite such policy and support from the institutions chain of command (CoC), some applications for either FWAs or FSAs may not be accepted given operational necessity or staffing shortages that would impact operational output or excellence. This essentially translates to an acceptable level of risk and/or balance between individual and institutional need¹⁴, or an accepted FWA or FSA

¹¹ Ministry of Defence, 'Flexible Working and You'.

¹² Australian Defence Force, 'Flexibility in the Way You Work and Serve', 14.

¹³ Director of Human Resources Policy and Research, 'Defence Force Order 3, Part 12: Welfare and Wellbeing, Chapter 1: Flexible Working Arrangements' (New Zealand Defence Force, 7 April 2010), 4–6.

¹⁴ Australian Defence Force, 'Flexibility in the Way You Work and Serve', 16.

(to a lesser degree due to terms of service¹⁵) could be altered or suspended if operational requirements dictate.¹⁶

The next section will briefly discuss each ally's RW policy in addition to further FWAs and FSAs available to their uniformed service members, visually represented within Table 1, where a "✓" indicates it is offered and nothing indicates it is not. The purpose of highlighting additional arrangements amongst our allies is to visually outline greater and future opportunities available to the CAF beyond the extant CF MPI of RW tier one. Expansion of the Instr to include RW tier two and other forms of FWAs could simulate the first rung of the FWA/FSA ladder supporting the CAFs greater retention strategy.

Table 1 – Allied FWA and FSA Options

Ally / Policy	Flexible Work			Flexible Service		Leave Options	
	RW T1 / T2	Flex Hrs	Comp Week	Part-Time	Restr Sep	"Sabbatical"	Unpaid Lve
Australia	✓ / ✓	✓	✓	✓			
New Zealand	✓ / ✓	✓	✓				
United Kingdom	✓ / ✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
United States of America							
Canada	✓ / (informal)						

Source: Multiple Allied National Policy Documents

¹⁵ Ministry of Defence, 'Flexible Working and You', 13.

¹⁶ Ibid., 1.

Australia

AUS has FWAs, to include RW, and FSAs¹⁷ that were introduced in 2013/2014.¹⁸ RW options align with RW tier one and two described in this paper with either “home located work”¹⁹ akin to RW tier two, “alternate located work” which could be both RW tier one and tier two²⁰, or “remote overseas work” afforded primarily for those service members accompanying their dependants on an overseas post²¹ where either RW tiers pending coordination between nations would be leveraged.

FSA options change the service member’s pattern of service away from full-time.²² Through discussion with their CoC the member can select a pre-set option or a customized option that range from days worked per week through to months worked per year or a combination thereof dependent on operational tempo and the members reasons and needs.

New Zealand

NZ’s FWA policy came into effect in 2010 and is solely premised on FWAs with specific options including job sharing (a permanent position is collectively accomplished between many people on reduced hours), job splitting (results focused, outputs are delineated between multiple people), reduced hours (either generically or similar to

¹⁷ Australian Defence Force, ‘Flexibility in the Way You Work and Serve’.

¹⁸ Australian Human Rights Commission, ‘Chapter 7: Principle 4: Greater Flexibility Will Strengthen the ADF’, accessed 1 April 2022, <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/chapter-7-principle-4-greater-flexibility-will-strengthen-adf>.

¹⁹ Australian Defence Force, ‘Flexibility in the Way You Work and Serve’, 4.

²⁰ Ibid., 5.

²¹ Ibid., 6.

²² Ibid., 9.

compressed hours)²³, flexible hours (working partly or entirely outside normal working hours), and finally working at a location other than the designated place of work (home or otherwise) aligning with RW tiers of this paper.²⁴ All options other than the last, RW either tier one or tier two for this paper, affect members pay and entitlements, while their terms of service, assessments, pensions overall will remain unaffected.²⁵

United States of America

The USA has a federal telework policy signed by President Barrack Obama in 2010 named the *Telework Enhancement Act* (TEA).²⁶ The TEA applies to all executives and federal employees but does include active uniformed service members and is focused upon telework (both forms of RW of this paper), performance of duties from a location authorized other than normally prescribed.²⁷

United Kingdom

The UK has a very robust flexible work policy that came into effect in 2019²⁸, which includes FWAs, or alternate work arrangements within the UK, FSAs, as well as paid and unpaid leave possibilities for additional optionality that supports their soldiers, aviators, and sailors.²⁹ The UK FWA, includes RW tier one and two, and FSA options are

²³ Royal New Zealand Navy, 'HR Entitlements Flexible Working', Navy today (Wellington, N.Z.), Mar 2021; n.252;p.34; issn: (Navy today (Wellington, N.Z.), 00:00 1300), 34, <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/45306221>.

²⁴ Director of Human Resources Policy and Research, 'DFO 3, Part 12, Chapter 1', 5.

²⁵ Ibid., 12.

²⁶ United States Government, 'Telework Enhancement Act - Telework.Gov', U.S. Office of Personnel Management, accessed 1 April 2022, <http://www.telework.gov/guidance-legislation/telework-legislation/telework-enhancement-act/>.

²⁷ United States Government, 1.

²⁸ Ministry of Defence, Tobias Ellwood, and Gavin Williamson, 'New Plans for Military Flexible Working Become Law', GOV.UK, accessed 22 March 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-plans-for-military-flexible-working-become-law>.

²⁹ Chief of Defence People, 'Joint Service Publication 750 - Centrally Determined Terms of Service, Part 1: Directive' (Ministry of Defence (UK), January 2021), 2.

similar to that of Australia, while their leave possibilities are novel and split between paid or unpaid depending on the application.

CAF RW CHALLENGES

Trust

As previously mentioned, some leaders are hesitant to support RW. Of the many reasons, the concept of trust, or more precisely a manager's lack thereof, towards their employees while working remotely is a principal reason.³⁰ Trust can be seen from two lenses: the first is based on personality and perception of both the supervisor and the employee of each's intentions and abilities that could be questioned when geographically separated and the second is linked to production (performance metrics) and whether RW negatively impacts it.

The interpersonal dynamic between supervisor and subordinate is critically important and hinges upon trust: trust about competence, intentions, organizational alignment, etc. If this is exhibited by employees (leaders at all levels) within the CAF when at their assigned place of work (on a base), on exercise, or during deployments, this level of trust shouldn't change if geographically separated. Within *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading People* the core military values are discussed as: Duty, one's feeling of dedication, initiative, and discipline; Loyalty, to one's duty and organization and based on reciprocal and mutual trust; and Integrity, one's commitment to principles, obligation to serve, and accountability for their actions.³¹ Chapter three of the same

³⁰ Courtney Brown et al., 'Trusting Telework in the Federal Government', *The Qualitative Report* 21, no. 1 (18 January 2016): 87–88.

³¹ Canada. Dept. of National Defence, 'Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading People', vol. 3 (Ottawa: Published under the auspices of the Chief of the Defence Staff by the Canadian Defence

publication discusses differing leadership styles, the prominent one sought by the CAF being transformational leadership. It is predicated on enabling and empowering subordinates, delegation, and providing clear intent (and context) in order to provide autonomy in realizing success, or in CAF lexicon, Mission Command, which is completely based on the element of trust.³² There should be no concern about trust in the CAF, given that leadership and trust is nested throughout our doctrine and culture; it is what we train and normatively espouse. If it can be leveraged during dispersed combat operations, surely it can also be accepted by leaders and leveraged in an office environment to support RW.

Whereas the private sector relies on output metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) such as sales, number of clients on board, cost savings created, etc.³³ these do not translate well into the CAF given it is not a profitable organization. Even more closely aligned metrics such as billable hours (to a client) akin to hours worked on a file within the CAF doesn't fully resonate due to its lack of exact correlation to a measurable set of data pertinent to CAF objectives. This is partly due to the nature of tasks assigned within the CAF but also the previously mentioned aspects of mission command and delegation. As Raith discusses, performance is more complex than solely outputs, as "specific knowledge" of employee's, their inputs, and factors such as delegation are important to overall firm success but difficult to track and quantify.³⁴

Academy, Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2007), 20,
https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2013/dn-nd/D2-313-3-2007-eng.pdf.

³² Canada. Dept. of National Defence, 3:36.

³³ Michael Raith, 'Specific Knowledge and Performance Measurement', *The Rand Journal of Economics* 39, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 1059.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1060–61.

Businesses, and the CAF, struggle to identify and implement ways to measure what matters, or as Raith deduces “they simply do not know very well how their employee’s actions contribute to firm performance...”³⁵ and have difficulty tangibly evaluating it. If this is truly representative of the situation, working in a designated office, a geo-dislocated office (RW tier one), or working from one’s residence (RW tier two) doesn’t change the trust dynamic either personally or production-wise as long as tasks normally expected are completed within the parameters stated when assigned. In Raith’s terms, if an employee’s actions align and support the supervisor’s objectives, which in turn progresses the institution’s, and key operational or strategic objectives have been attained, they should be evaluated on those terms rather than solely on the employee’s generic (daily or any time bound) output or the supervisor’s perception of effectiveness.³⁶ Framed another way, the form and significance of production (results) matters more than just output, and if employees accomplish this when in an office or while on RW, the trust issue is mitigated or negated and becomes the supervisor’s personal dilemma with acceptance that speaks more to their leadership style/ability than an institutional trust or productivity issue.

Institutional Limitations

A second multifaceted challenge is that of institutional limitations that are both actual and perceived. The following three areas will be explored: genuine operational constraints, the perceived impact of RW options on CAF effectiveness, and RW access equity on the new CF MPI 01/22.

³⁵ Raith, 1062.

³⁶ Ibid., 1074.

The CAF is a unique profession not only due to its unlimited liability but also because many of the positions established and staffed to effectively operate and deliver on the CAF's mandate are very "hands-on" and would not be suitable for remote work. An infantry soldier cannot perform the large majority of their tasks separated from their peers, and without their enabling tactical groupings and equipment (armoured vehicle, weapons, etc.); therefore an infantry soldier, and similar such positions where access to specialized equipment, tools, weapons, etc. across all elements of the CAF may not be best employed through RW comparatively to those working administrative like functions or at a headquarters location.

A second example of an operational constraint is the potential for the necessity of member's physical presence if politically directed to take action. This must be communicated to those applying for RW via use of a disclaimer and subjective consideration, a fundamental consistency between all allied policies³⁷ and that of CF MPI 01/22³⁸, but it nonetheless would affect those on a RW and especially low density and high demand trades, such as those in IT and Medical.

For similar reasons to the above, hesitancy for RW endorsement may be related to the perceived impact it would have on the CAF effectiveness model represented in Figure 1, which has been altered to highlight potential negatively influenced areas within the model³⁹.

³⁷ Ministry of Defence, 'Flexible Working and You', 32.

³⁸ Chief of Military Personnel, 'Changing a Place of Duty and the Use of Postings to Enable Remote Work Options'.

³⁹ Canada. Dept. of National Defence, 'Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading People', 3:6.

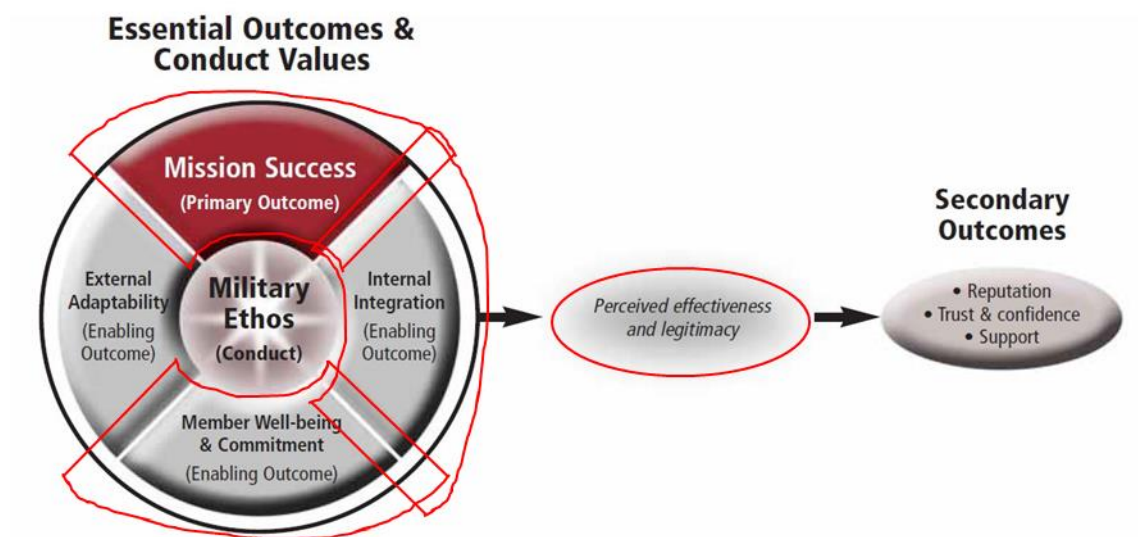


FIGURE 1 – Altered CAF Effectiveness Framework

Source: DND, Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations

Mission success has already been discussed via recall and potential inapplicability of certain positions. Internal Integration speaks to teamwork and cohesion⁴⁰ that could be adversely impacted as people are either working from home (RW tier two) or working in a location amongst another team other than their assigned one (RW tier one). Member well-being could be perceived to be negatively influenced as supervisors lose physical access and engagement with their members and therefore an internalized aspect of an effective leader is restricted⁴¹ while also limiting their ability to ascertain their member's well-being.⁴² Moving away from an individual/internal perspective, the CAF's internal perception of external reputation and legitimacy could be questioned given our profession

⁴⁰ Canada. Dept. of National Defence, 'Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations', vol. 2 (Ottawa: Published under the auspices of the Chief of the Defence Staff by the Canadian Defence Academy, Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, 2005), 20–21, https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2013/dn-nd/D2-313-2-2005-eng.pdf.

⁴¹ Canada. Dept. of National Defence, 'Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Leading People', 3:54.

⁴² Canada. Dept. of National Defence, 'Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations', 2:20.

and ability to do so from a RW posture, despite the potential upside society may advocate regarding attractiveness, competitiveness and progressiveness.⁴³

Fairness and transparency in the application of the new CMP policy is highly subjective and based solely on the discretion of the Commanding Officer (CO).⁴⁴

Although COs should have influence on the acceptance of RW within their unit given its implications, the current policy's application is entirely reliant on one individual. This may create a situation where despite policy creation driven by global (COVID-19) and social trends (RW normalized as business practice) as an agent for change⁴⁵, an individual with positional authority could deny the application based on their personal bias/experiences and therefore generate barriers for employees seeking RW.

Challenge Summary

Regarding the first research question, despite the challenges outlined, the CAF is well positioned to support the extant, and any future expansion of, RW.

The private sector concern about interpersonal trust, albeit an important one, should be mitigated within the CAF given the importance of leadership in our doctrine and culture coupled with the consistent dynamic normatively espoused between leaders and followers.⁴⁶ As the CAF doesn't have defined and widely accepted performance metrics, this too shouldn't be a hindrance as long as expectations don't change if an employee is leveraging RW and their deliverables remain dependable and results

⁴³ Canada. Dept. of National Defence, 2:23.

⁴⁴ Chief of Military Personnel, 'Changing a Place of Duty and the Use of Postings to Enable Remote Work Options', 7.

⁴⁵ Eddy S. W. Ng and Charles W. Gossett, 'Career Choice in Canadian Public Service: An Exploration of Fit With the Millennial Generation', *Public Personnel Management* 42, no. 3 (Fall 2013): 344.

⁴⁶ Brown et al., 'Trusting Telework in the Federal Government', 97.

oriented.⁴⁷ The previous aspects are outlined as “factors to consider” for suitability of a position (and member for RW within the CMP Instr⁴⁸) and correspond to concepts of applicability for positions and suitability of personnel mentioned within the introduction.

Finally, it becomes apparent that not all positions are suited for RW but through an open institutional analysis that is appropriately communicated and used as guidance for individual consideration, it would likely be seen as fair and transparent rather than highly subjective to CAF personnel and highly innovative and resourceful to those external to the CAF.

CAF OPPORTUNITIES WITH RW

The opportunities discussed herein, though not exhaustive, will constitute a few that would reinforce RW transparency, applicability and access, and alignment of objectives amongst the “Trinity” of the military, the government, and society.⁴⁹

Internal

To increase endorsement as well as transparency, equity, and fairness for RW⁵⁰ throughout the CAF in addition to assisting COs in evaluating individual requests for RW, one opportunity available to the CAF is to conduct a holistic review of all positions within its establishment. While taxing, this would provide a clear position by the CAF (as

⁴⁷ Brown et al., 97.

⁴⁸ Chief of Military Personnel, ‘Changing a Place of Duty and the Use of Postings to Enable Remote Work Options’, 5–6.

⁴⁹ Peter D. Feaver, ‘The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz, and the Question of Civilian Control’, *Armed Forces and Society* 23, no. 2 (Winter 1996): 149–78.

⁵⁰ Canada School of Public Service, ‘Part 1: Remote Work, Defined (WFH)’, accessed 24 February 2022, <https://busrides-trajetsenbus.cspc-efpc.gc.ca/en/ep-14-en>.

the institution) on RW as a tangible work practice, and by extension, the types of positions that could be afforded RW on an individual basis by a CO.

To best socialize the entirety of the CAF on the output of such a review, the CMP positional database to which all members on the defence network have access via the “Employee Member Access Application” could be leveraged.⁵¹ The database outlines various positional and unit details for all positions as shown in Figure 2. Of importance for CAF members and specific to each position are details such as second language requirements and occupational specialty specifications; this could be augmented with an area regarding RW feasibility (suitability) of a position. If used in conjunction with the Vice Chief of Defence Staff (VCDS) Priority for staffing in unit details, this could provide a form of priority for RW positions approved by the institution, and by forecasting, could be a form of “a la carte” options of positions akin of international positions or for future family/member planning.

⁵¹ Rae Cooper and Marian Baird, ‘Bringing the “Right to Request” Flexible Working Arrangements to Life: From Policies to Practices’, *Employee Relations* 37, no. 5 (2015): 574, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/ER-07-2014-0085>.

Position Number:	00452550
Position Title:	J6 IMO
Position Rank:	LCdr/Maj
Occupation:	Information Management Officer, BLMC (SIGS)
Opening In:	Vacant

Chain of Command
LCol Dicks, Leslie Ann Allison (CELE (AIR)) Title: J6

Position Description
This description was provided by an incumbent. DGMC or CMP is not responsible for its validity.
This description needs to be updated and verified by the supervisor.

[Show subordinate positions](#) (Beta)

Language Requirement				
<table> <tr> <th>English</th> <th>French</th> </tr> <tr> <td>R W O</td> <td>R W O</td> </tr> </table>	English	French	R W O	R W O
English	French			
R W O	R W O			

OSS Qualification Requirement		
<table> <tr> <th>OSS Quals Codes (OSS Description)</th> </tr> <tr> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	OSS Quals Codes (OSS Description)	N/A
OSS Quals Codes (OSS Description)		
N/A		

Unit Details
Location: OTTAWA, ON Unit Name: DGIMO (UIC: 6579) Unit Language: Bilingual Unit VCDS Priority A - For Additional Information VCDS Priority Help

FIGURE 2 – Snapshot of a Position within CMP Positional Database

Source: DND, Employee Member Access Application

A second opportunity despite CF MPI 01/22 having had a Gender Based Analysis plus (GBA Plus) lens applied [confirmed through informal means] is an evergreen application of GBA Plus to the policy. GBA Plus is also outlined as one of nine factors for “suitability of a position for remote work”, however, is not included as a factor for

“suitability of a member for remote work” or how RW tier two is highly valuable.⁵² This is interesting as major component of GBA Plus is people. This is important as the CAF has the ability to expand upon the extant RW policy related to members serving in an existing position with changing circumstances. RW access must not be considered as binary, either on RW tier one or not or if expanded, on RW tier two or not, RW should be utilized as a sliding scale (or even hybrid application) that creates mutual benefit without restriction (posting). The best examples being Maternity and Paternity Leave (MATA/PATA) as well as a means to circumvent or terminate Imposed Restriction (IR). Currently not included within the policy, but when considering various lens’ within GBA Plus, using RW tier two as a tool for those entering or exiting such leave or posting posture would provide mutual benefit.

For MATA/PATA on the individual side, RW tier two provides a means for mothers and fathers to ease back into work with flexibility, professional and personal balance, which would greatly increase a member’s positive affective well-being (PAWB), that Anderson et al. outline are associated with increased enthusiasm [towards the organization and job], alertness, and happiness [personal/familial wellness but also job satisfaction].⁵³ From an institutional perspective, although not guaranteed to reduce maternity/paternity leave, it may accomplish it as it provides a mechanism to return

⁵² Chief of Military Personnel, ‘Changing a Place of Duty and the Use of Postings to Enable Remote Work Options’, 5–6.

⁵³ Amanda J. Anderson, Seth A. Kaplan, and Ronald P. Vega, ‘The Impact of Telework on Emotional Experience: When, and for Whom, Does Telework Improve Daily Affective Well-Being?’, *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 24, no. 6 (2 November 2015): 883–84, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2014.966086>.

members to work sooner, negating PY implications, reduces impact at the unit level, and strengthens the positive bond between the CAF and the member.

For those serving or considering serving on IR, leveraging the ability to work remotely via either tier one or tier two would produce similar results as they would remain with their families but from an institutional perspective provide even more benefits given the cost savings and administrative efficiencies realized. Although more complex and nuanced in nature, GBA Plus could also be used to identify how best RW, or other forms of FWAs, could be used to enhance and evolve how members interact or utilize the Transition Centres for periods of rehabilitation or transition.

If considering RW enhancements (inclusion of tier 2) from a generic perspective, potentially removing the dependence on a posting⁵⁴ would greatly boost the inclusivity of the Instr and the benefits received by RW tier 2 in extant literature regarding individual benefits and PAWB. Specifically, the ability for members to apply for RW after a posting has been completed, when on IR and separated from their families, or even posted within the same geographic area (i.e., working at Carling Campus compared to StarTop) could be investigated. By enabling this, it would mitigate negative affective well-being (NWAB) of members typically associated with time and costs for transportation, familial implications, and distractions in general.⁵⁵

Finally, although not an opportunity that produces tangible output, enhancing RW options could nest and bolster multiple internal initiatives undertaken within the CAF.

⁵⁴ Chief of Military Personnel, 'Changing a Place of Duty and the Use of Postings to Enable Remote Work Options', 4.

⁵⁵ Anderson, Kaplan, and Vega, 'The Impact of Telework on Emotional Experience', 884.

The first being the Canadian Army's (CA) Modernization Strategy (CAMS)⁵⁶, specifically Force 2025 and its readiness tiers as well as the significant effort of digitization and digitalization (changing or process given technological advancement). The second as the CAF's Force Mixed Structure Design addressing concurrency challenges and readiness (RW could assist with "reconstitution" and retention⁵⁷). Finally the CAF's "The Journey" socialized to provide complete flexibility during the tenure of a member's career as part of stage 2 and the core values of "employment model", "Military Families" and "Health and Wellness"⁵⁸, which also nest with Canada's Defence Policy *Strong Secure Engaged* Chapter one "Well-supported, diverse, resilient people and families".⁵⁹

External

Externally to the CAF but remaining within the Department of National Defence (DND), the current Instr better fosters parity of services and policy between uniformed and un-uniformed members of DND and the CAF while bolstering the cohesion sought with the "one team philosophy" espoused by government as well as discussed within the CAMS.⁶⁰

At the political level, both tiers of RW create alignment with, and opportunity for, resource savings and realization of objectives. The Government of Canada has a roadmap

⁵⁶ Canadian Army, *Advancing with Purpose: The Canadian Army Modernization Strategy*, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYXLoNHah5k>.

⁵⁷ Dr P Dobias et al., 'Modeling Future Force Demand: Force Mix Structure Design', 2019, 8.

⁵⁸ Chief of Military Personnel, 'The JOURNEY (Pamphlet)', accessed 1 March 2022, http://cmp-cpm.mil.ca/en/support/the_journey.page.

⁵⁹ 'Strong Secure Engaged : Canada's Defence Policy: National Defence - DesLibris', accessed 21 January 2022, <https://www-deslibris-ca.cfc.idm.oclc.org/ID/10090905>.

⁶⁰ Canadian Army, *Advancing with Purpose*.

called “Blueprint 2020”⁶¹ or “Beyond 2020”⁶² with the purpose of “providing greater flexibility in where and how employees works so they can be as productive as possible in delivering programs and services to Canadians”.⁶³ It was developed and focused upon “...the following seven dimensions: flexible, digital, efficient, green, inclusive, collaborative, and healthy.”⁶⁴ It is founded upon the concept of an “Activity Based Workplace” that does not have a set workplace assigned for each employee but rather “focuses on the employee and provides freedom to decide themselves: how to work, where to work, which tools to use and with whom to collaborate to get the work done.”⁶⁵ RW, especially tier two, fully aligns with the Government’s (a critical stakeholder within the Trinity) vision and purpose of future employment.

Opportunity Summary

Related to the second research question, prospects are abundant for the CAF in evolving RW as a tool that could both support its people and serve to advance itself. Through identifying and socializing specific, and general types of positions favourable for RW tier one and expansion to tier two will showcase leadership and organizational endorsement, establish precedent and guidelines for COs, and support many initiatives both internal and external to the CAF including some of Canada’s global aspirations. Continued investment in GBA Plus and collaboration amongst CAF and policy agents

⁶¹ Public Services and Procurement Canada Government of Canada, ‘GCworkplace: A Modern Workplace for the New Public Service – How the Federal Government Manages Property – Federal Properties and Buildings – About Government – Canada.Ca’, 8 May 2018, <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/biens-property/mt-wp/mt-wp-eng.html>.

⁶² Service, ‘Part 1’.

⁶³ Government of Canada, ‘GCworkplace’.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Public Services and Procurement Canada Government of Canada, ‘Activity Based Workplace – How the Federal Government Manages Property – Federal Properties and Buildings – About Government – Canada.Ca’, 9 May 2018, <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/biens-property/mt-wp/mtaa-abw-eng.html>.

could identify the full scope that RW could be institutionalized and create the conditions for enriched market and societal attractiveness of the CAF.

CONSEQUENCES OF RW IN THE CAF

The positive impacts resulting from RW, as currently written, but certainly if expanded in the future, help both the principle stakeholders within the dynamic: the member (and by extension their family) and the institution.

For the serving member, all three aspects of importance in life will be improved: their professional life, their private life, and their individual health.⁶⁶ RW options provide yet another means made available to members by the institution to better balance and reconcile the competing demands upon them. Figure 3 illustrates such demands⁶⁷ and will be used as an anchoring point for some specific consequences/areas.

⁶⁶ Canada and Department of National Defence, *Defence Team Total Health and Wellness Strategy*, 2022, 8, <http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.redirect?app=damspub&id=ba9c6974-263b-461e-9b57-65c9897c7bc6>.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.



FIGURE 3 – Dimensions of Health

Source: DND, Total Health and Wellness Strategy, 18

The workplace dimension via RW tier one remains relatively unchanged as members would likely move offices but remain at the same facility/base. However, with RW tier two, the impact may be significant depending on the familial demand and setup, but is probably enhanced other than any limitations associated with personal technologies. Though out of scope for detailed consideration, if one feels unsafe in the workplace based on past experiences related to current events, RW tier one may assist, but RW tier two would provide a tangible means for respite, adaptation, or re-acclimatization, akin to Anderson et al.’s concept of “social connectedness” only internal to the organization, that supports not only PAWB but also trust.⁶⁸

The personal life dimension may be significant bolstered as many of the reasons for seeking RW is based on personal life factors, therefore having the increased

⁶⁸ Anderson, Kaplan, and Vega, ‘The Impact of Telework on Emotional Experience’, 886.

autonomy to serve the CAF while supporting/spending more time with family and reducing cost and time demands related to interruptions, commuting, and other traditional requirements are highly desirable.⁶⁹

The individual health benefits may be influenced by personal discipline as well as owned equipment (at least physically related). Conceivably, spiritual wellness could be bolstered as there are no space or time limitations on when a member needs or wishes to practice. Mentally, the benefits gained from the other dimensions coupled with increasing PAWB while diminishing NAWB⁷⁰ in addition to the possibility of members developing new processes, means, or identifying technologies to accomplish their tasks or create efficiencies through initiative and innovation⁷¹ would in turn improve overall wellness and tangible results to the organization.

From the organizational perspective, three constructive consequences could occur: Improved recruitment and retention, cost savings for facilities and movement of personnel, and finally alignment with the political and global focus on climate change.

The CAF is currently facing a staffing crisis with approximately 10,000 positions unfilled⁷², and based on the auditor general's 2016 report on recruiting and retention the

⁶⁹ Susanti Saragih et al., 'Benefits and Challenges of Telework During The Covid-19 Pandemic', *INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF BUSINESS STUDIES* 14, no. 2 (3 January 2022): 130–33.

⁷⁰ Anderson, Kaplan, and Vega, 'The Impact of Telework on Emotional Experience', 892.

⁷¹ David V. Gioe, Joseph M. Hatfield, and Mark Stout, 'Can United States Intelligence Community Analysts Telework?', *Intelligence and National Security* 35, no. 6 (18 September 2020): 885–901, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2020.1767389>.

⁷² The Canadian Press, 'Military Dealing with More than 10,000 Unfilled Positions amid Growing Pressures', *National Post*, 18 January 2022, <https://nationalpost.com/pmn/news-pmn/canada-news-pmn/military-dealing-with-more-than-10000-unfilled-positions-amid-growing-pressures>.

gap continues to grow rather than shrink or stabilize.⁷³ Exacerbated by the phenomenon of “the great resignation” where junior to mid-career employees are resigning⁷⁴, correlating directly with the CA issue of its “hollow centre” in addition to the current housing market, makes it very difficult to afford a residence, or from the CAF’s perspective, less enticing or acceptant by members to be forced to move. RW is a significant pressure release to such issues.

Although RW options will not entirely address all issues, it would significantly assist in recruitment given its progressive nature, strengthened attractiveness and competitiveness as an employer, and the institution’s posture towards supporting its people, critical factors considered amongst the younger generation when considering careers and employers.⁷⁵ From a retention lens, providing the autonomy and inherent trust associated with RW between employer and employee, augmented by personal life (family and financial) and individual health (mental) benefits previously discussed⁷⁶ within the current social and economy environment may curb much frustration, concern, and consideration for retirement or release from the CAF.⁷⁷ Although not possible on an enduring basis, RW provides windows of flexibility and support when those members and their families may need it most, and that may provide enough incentive, over time and normal posting/progression within a career, to remain with the CAF.

⁷³ Office of the Auditor General of Canada Government of Canada, ‘Report 5—Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment and Retention—National Defence’, 29 November 2016, 5, https://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_201611_05_e_41834.html.

⁷⁴ Ian Cook, ‘Who Is Driving the Great Resignation?’, *Harvard Business Review*, 15 September 2021, <https://hbr.org/2021/09/who-is-driving-the-great-resignation>.

⁷⁵ Ng and Gossett, ‘Career Choice in Canadian Public Service’.

⁷⁶ Monroe and Haug, ‘Assessment of Telework in a Federal Agency at the Operational Phase’, 11–12.

⁷⁷ Lynda Manser, ‘STATE OF MILITARY FAMILIES IN CANADA’, n.d., 40–51.

A 2018 report on the *State of Military Families in Canada* outlined that in the 2014 auditor general report, on average, roughly 15,000 postings occur annually with 60 percent requiring a geographical relocation and approximately 50 percent of total postings dictating an interprovincial move totalling an approximate supporting cost of \$229 million.⁷⁸ Given the previous discussion that not all positions are conducive for RW, the full amount mentioned couldn't be saved but certainly a reasonable percentage of those geographical relocations such as 20 to 40% equating to between \$46 and \$92 million dollars annually would be reasonable. Those funds could be re-invested into projects and initiatives that fulfill objectives of our defence plan earlier while also directly contributing to our percentage of GDP to “active” defence (not administration).

Finally, RW supports national and international goals related to reducing the impact on climate change⁷⁹ via reduced carbon emissions for transport on a daily basis, less heating and cooling costs at an industrial level, emissions from postings (transport trailer for furniture, shipment of additional vehicles, and family travel), etc. The current Canadian government seeks to be a leader in the global Climate Change agenda, it has stated as much in various international organizations as well as in its defence policy⁸⁰. If truly seeking such status and a progressive position, expanded RW options and use within the CAF can assist in conveying such urgency and priority.

⁷⁸ Manser, 30.

⁷⁹ Monroe and Haug, ‘Assessment of Telework in a Federal Agency at the Operational Phase’, 2.

⁸⁰ National Defence, ‘Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada’s Defence Policy’, navigation page - audience page, 31 May 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/canada-defence-policy.html>.

CONCLUSION

As RW continues to grow in prominence within the business world, the CAF has produced and delivered direction that positions itself as a contender amongst organizations supporting such employment flexibility.

This paper has outlined allied policy, which surely informed the CAF's development of the recent CF MPI, as often occurs in other domains and how to sustain RW based on the experiences and tenure of those policies. Also showcased was how, despite the challenges presented to the CAF regarding implementing RW, the CAF has the means to mitigate or negate many, while simultaneously able to consider which, when, and how to exploit the vast array of opportunities available to them. Some opportunities that could refine the current Instr as well as support and nest within ongoing initiatives both internal and external the CAF was discussed. Though not exhaustive, they provide lens' on how RW could evolve as well as serve as a catalyst for further investigation of other opportunities with specialists in domains of behaviour analysis, GBA Plus, performance and metrics, and more. Finally, the positive consequences that could be realized from RW within the CAF was described, additional research should seek to establish KPIs to verify if actual consequences align with those mentioned, and just as important, if results illustrate negative consequences to assist the CAF in assessing the overall return on investment of RW.

Notwithstanding the significant capabilities available for use by the CAF, people are what enables it; therefore, the right number of people with the right skillsets are critical to the CAF's effectiveness. SSE emphasized this by identifying people as "at the

core of everything the Canadian Armed Forces does to deliver on its mandate.”⁸¹ The CAF is currently vulnerable given the increasing gap between required and actual numbers. The introduction, and continued expansion, of RW may help in correcting this issue through increased attractiveness to those “right” people currently employed within the CAF and those same people the CAF seeks to have as part of the team.

To realize SSE’s goal of “delivering on our commitment to our people and their families is a sacred obligation and requires a comprehensive suite of initiatives...of how we recruit, lead, train and care for [our members] as well as those who support them”⁸² the CAF has demonstrated that it can change, albeit slowly, as Canada and Canadians change.⁸³

COVID-19 forced an inaugural business case and an exceptional research and development cycle that led to the CAF implementing RW. The CAF must harness those lessons and remain on a trajectory that seizes opportunities to be progressive, inclusive, and transparent as well as create mutual benefit amongst its stakeholders (the Trinity).

⁸¹ Defence, 19.

⁸² Ibid., 19.

⁸³ Ibid., 20.

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