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AIM

1. This service paper will explore the topic raised by Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC) J1, Gender Advisor (GENAD), and Director General (DG) Readiness regarding barriers to deployment.¹ They ask: "What are the challenges that women within the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) face 'getting out the door' that men do not?"² In particular, this paper will examine how family status and a propensity towards service in support trades may present obstacles to deployment that women are more likely to face than their male counterparts. Areas for further Gender-Based Analysis (GBA+) will be identified to increase deployment opportunities for women. This paper does not focus on the effect on any particular element or component. Increased gender-balancing on operational deployments is a force multiplier for the CAF at the tactical through strategic levels. It, therefore, increases the capability and capacity of all components to exert national power on behalf of Canada.

INTRODUCTION

2. Women in the CAF have traditionally been under-represented compared to Canadian society. Women currently make up 15.3% of the CAF, compared with 50.3% percent of the Canadian population.³ Strong Secure and Engaged (SSE) clearly articulates that the CAF must "reflect the diversity of the country we defend. **We need a military that looks like Canada** [emphasis from the original text]." ⁴ Recruiting and retaining women within the CAF play a critical role in delivering a military that better represents the population it serves. However, even when women are recruited into and trained within the military, they may face additional challenges. These challenges can range from casual sexism and microaggressions to sexual assault; these issues are severe and subject to significant culture change efforts currently underway. This paper will focus on the structural aspects of female CAF demographics and the possible impacts to deployments; however, it acknowledges that ensuring the CAF is a safe and welcoming workplace for all genders is of significant importance and decidedly complex.

3. The CAF's commitment to gender equity reflects the generally agreed-upon importance of incorporating gender perspectives in the context of global security. In 2000, the United Nations (UN) passed Security Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, which formally recognized the importance of women in peace and security issues. UNSCR 1325 "affirms that peace and security efforts are more sustainable when women are equal partners in the prevention of violent conflict, the delivery of relief and recovery efforts

¹ JCSP Research Topic List, 2021/2022, JCSP Research Topic List, last accessed 21 January, 2022, Page 27.

² JCSP Research Topic List, Page 27.

³ Canada. Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. Ottawa: DND Canada, 2017. Page 20.

⁴ Canada. Statistics Canada. Time Use, Total Burden and Unpaid Work. Time Use: Total work burden, unpaid work, and leisure (statcan.gc.ca). Last accessed 21 January 2022.

and in the forging of lasting peace."⁵ The resolution also urges UN member states to increase the representation of women at all levels of decision-making. The Canadian government supports this resolution through its stated Feminist Foreign Policy⁶ and its National Action Plans on Women Peace and Security.⁷ CAF strategic doctrine reflects these governmental policies, as shown in SSE, "the CAF is committed to attracting, recruiting and retaining more women in the Canadian Armed Forces across all ranks and promoting women into senior leadership positions."⁸ Based on the UN and Canadian Government policies, it is clear that incorporating gender perspectives at all levels of decision is a priority, as doing so produces better security outcomes.

4. Despite the academic and social consensus that acknowledges that gender diversity produces improved outcomes in security settings, progress in gender balancing may sometimes appear frustratingly slow. While many factors may contribute to this lack of progress, the CAF has repeatedly stated its commitment to increasing women's representation across their ranks. Recent initiatives have made changes to support this end. These initiatives include strategic, institutional-level mandates, such as the mandatory implementation of gender perspectives (GBA+) in all CAF matters. The CAF also aims to have women comprise 25% of the force by 2026.⁹ Recent changes in dress regulations, the employment of Gender Advisors (GENADs), and Gender Focal Points (GFPs) across CAF formations and operational headquarters indicate some progress. However, many personnel management and administrative policies remain un-evaluated through a GBA+ lens. This area may offer possible areas for improvement if the CAF wishes to deploy more women on operations.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

7. A common barrier to deployments for women in the Canadian military is family care. As members of Canadian society, CAF women face similar societal trends that other Canadian women experience. According to Statistics Canada, Canadian women spend more hours per week caring for dependent children than men, particularly when the dependent children are young (under five).¹⁰ Additionally, Canadian women spend more time on unpaid domestic chores. Statistics Canada goes further to comment that since the 1980s, the most dominant family form in Canada has become dual-earner income, in that both members of married or common-law couples work. When taken together, these trends mean that many working Canadian mothers perform a 'second shift,' in that they

⁵ United Nations, Security Council, *UNSCR 1325*, adopted 31 October 2000. Resolution 1325 (unscr.com) last accessed 21 January 2022.

⁶ Canada. Global Affairs Canada. Women, peace and security (international.gc.ca) Women Peace and Security GOC Website (GAC). Last modified 18 January 2022.

⁷ Canada. Global Affairs Canada. Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (international.gc.ca). Last modified 10 June 2020.

⁸ Canada. Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. Ottawa: DND Canada, 2017. Page 21.

⁹ Canada. Department of National Defence. *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. Ottawa: DND Canada, 2017. Page 104.

¹⁰ Canada. Statistics Canada. Time Use, Total Burden and Unpaid Work. Time Use: Total work burden, unpaid work, and leisure (statcan.gc.ca). Last accessed 21 January= 2022.

hold jobs to contribute to the family income and complete the majority of the household tasks and child-rearing.

8. The societal inequity of women in the Canadian context is relevant to examining barriers to women deploying within the CAF. Based on 2016 statistics (the most recent available to the author when preparing this service paper), men and women in the CAF have children at close to the same rate: 53.3% of women have children compared to 50.6% of men.¹¹ Additionally, 57.7% of serving women in the CAF are married or in a common-law relationship, close to the same rate of 59% of serving men. Where the difference is striking is that 37% of CAF women are part of a Married Service Couple (MSC), compared to 6% of men.¹² When considering these statistics, it becomes clear that men and women in the CAF marry and have children at very close to the same rates. However, female service members are significantly more likely to face competing military careers and operational tempo challenges with a military spouse than their male counterparts. For MSCs, de-conflicting postings, career courses, duty rotations, and deployments add a layer of additional complexity to an already challenging and demanding career. While the statistical implications regarding retention and progression impact for MSCs are not presently available, it is clear from the existing data that women are disproportionately represented as members of Married Service Couples. It follows that given the demands of military careers, MSC women may (though certainly not always) face additional challenges to deploying, particularly if they have dependent children at home. MSC men may also face challenges deploying; however, the statistical makeup of this population is drastically less than women in this category.

9. Given the possible inequity between male and female parents deploying, dependent and family care is an area of policy that could benefit from review with an increased focus on GBA+ considerations. DAOD 5044-1, Families, opens with the following:

The CAF is a professional institution that requires its members to place service to country and needs of the CAF ahead of personal considerations. CAF Members must remain mobile and deployable to meet the exigencies of the CAF and to enhance training and experience. This may create profound disruption for the families of CAF members.¹³

While the DOAD later states that the CAF acknowledges the stresses associated with military life faced by families and that it will take measures to reduce negative impacts to military families, there is a clear message that family preparedness is a personal and individual member's responsibility. While this delineation may have once been an appropriate approach if the CAF wishes to be an employer of choice – particularly for

¹¹ T. Maurice, Department of National Defence, “List of RegF pers as of 31 Dec 2016-Rank_Environment_Marital Status_number of Dependents,” Ad Hoc Report Ticket Number 11292, 13 April 2017, Page 19.

¹² T. Maurice, Page 19.

¹³ Canada. Department of National Defence. Defence Administrative Orders and Directives. DAOD 5044-1, Families - Canada.ca. Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002.

working Canadian mothers – a more flexible approach that understands members have competing demands between their professional and personal lives may be beneficial.

10. The financial assistance provided to deploying members, Family Care Assistance (FCA) is another policy that could benefit from a GBA+ review. Presently, this benefit offers limited financial support (\$75/day from a commercial institution, \$35/day from a private provider) to deploying members with dependents.¹⁴ These amounts are only available under the current policy to single parents or MSCs who are both unavailable to care for dependent children due to service-related reasons. There is no acknowledgment that civilian partners/spouses who have professional commitments that would preclude them from caring for their children (e.g., shift workers). Further, there is no mechanism to consider the number of dependent children involved. A complete GBA+ analysis of these policies is beyond the scope of this service paper, as current and disaggregated data would be required, though improvements are certainly conceivable. Given the potential for increasing deployability for women, updating administrative and financial policies that support flexible family care arrangements is recommended to reduce barriers to deployment faced by women in the CAF.

11. An additional factor that may impact a woman's ability to deploy that men do not face is the availability of positions for deployment. Although women can serve in all trades within the CAF, 50% of women serve in six (predominantly support) occupations: Resource Management Support Clerks (now split between Financial Service Administrator and Human Resource Administrator), Supply Technicians, Logistics Officer, Medical Technician, Nursing Officer, and Cooks.¹⁵ While deployable task forces typically include elements of support trades, these positions often represent a small fraction of the total positions of the task force. Therefore, with most CAF women centralized in six support trades, operational deployment opportunities are structurally less-available to them.

12. Although the proportion and breakdown will vary by mission and task force, the personnel breakdown of a Canadian Patrol Frigate (CPF) – a typical deployed unit for overseas Naval deployments – provides an illustrative example of this split. The Logistics Department and the Medical staff of a CPF represent approximately 15% of the total task force personnel. Until women see meaningful increases in non-support occupations, the overall force makeup of women in the military will result in fewer deployment opportunities available for women. Although potentially not supportable for all missions and situations, consideration could be given to split or share deployed duties. For instance, asynchronous rotations of support staff permit more exposure to deployed operations for individual members and may also reduce time away from home. Further analysis and mission requirements would need to be considered in situations such as this.

¹⁴ Canada. Compensation and Benefit Instructions. 209.335. Chapter 209 - Transportation and Travelling Expenses - effective 2021-04-01 - Canada.ca. Last accessed on 21 January 2022.

¹⁵ Canada. Department of National Defence. Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis. Lynne Serré, Regular Force Release Reasons by Gender : Analysis by age, rank, occupation authority and marital status. Presented to DHRD. September 2016.

However, increased flexibility concerning Task Force Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) management could potentially offer a higher likelihood of women deploying if employed successfully. A longer-term objective to mitigating this issue is the continued efforts into recruiting and training women into non-traditional roles (e.g. outside support trades) within the military. It is acknowledged that this integration and increase in female representation requires a much longer timeframe to obtain meaningful results. Trade-specific targets for gender integration are a possible option to improving these outcomes in the longer term and could be considered as the CAF pursues the goal of one in four CAF members being a woman.

13. A final consideration regarding a women's ability to deploy compared to her male counterpart is the impact that this will have on her longer-term career progression. Typically, deployment positions are reserved for high performers, and succession management and promotion boards reward deployed experience highly. This is not to say that deployments equate to progression and promotion; instead, an inability to deploy is assessed as likely to slow down one's ability to develop and advance in rank and seniority compared to those who deploy frequently. Thus, if the CAF truly wants to increase female representation at senior levels, reducing or mitigating challenges to deploy for women is a realistic objective to pursue.

CONCLUSION

15. This service paper does not imply that women are unable or unwilling to deploy. Nor does it seek to address challenges in recruiting and retaining women within the CAF. Rather, it aims to examine the societal and systemic trends that may present barriers to CAF women – particularly those who have children – who wish to deploy. As they are more likely to be part of a MSC and more likely to contribute a higher share of the childcare domestic duties, CAF women face unique barriers to deployment compared to their male counterparts. Current administrative and financial policies were likely designed around single-earner families and do not account for Canadian military families' changing structure and evolving needs. These factors may aggregate into tendencies for women to deploy less often.

16. The gender integration challenges facing the CAF are both a problem and an opportunity. As a male-dominated profession, the Canadian military faces similar challenges to other societal institutions in Canada and militaries worldwide. In some aspects, the CAF is a leader in gender integration, and therein lies a real opportunity for Canada to be at the forefront of gender mainstreaming efforts. As the CAF is currently facing an acute personnel shortage, making the military an employer of choice for Canadian women ensures the CAF can leverage the talents and capacity of the entire population – not just a select half.

RECOMMENDATIONS

14. In conjunction with other gender balancing and gender mainstreaming efforts – particularly those targeted at recruiting and retention – policy review and GBA+ analysis should include an examination of barriers to deployment and advancement for women within the military. In particular, **a detailed GBA+ analysis should be conducted on DAOD 5044 and Family Care Assistance financial policy.** Additionally, **efforts to recruit women into all occupations should be continued.** Though the CAF has set a target for the female composition of the CAF writ large, **individual service and trades objectives for gender integration should be considered.**

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