



Institution First, Mission Always

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JCSP 49 DL

Exercise Solo Flight

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INSTITUTION FIRST, MISSION ALWAYS

The Canadian Armed Forces' work towards culture change has become an all-encompassing effort to align Canada's largest federal department with a values-based Canadian society. A wicked problem, the institution's transition has been mired by systemic barriers, loss of trust, and internal discontent.¹ Largely the result of a historically hypermasculine and sexualized culture, the Canadian Armed Forces' repeated inability to change trajectory has contributed to attrition and unachieved recruitment goals. As a result, the Canadian Armed Forces culture change initiatives have been embedded in all aspects of the institution, re-energizing our values and principles through the performance appraisal system, focused discussions, leadership engagement and the release of a new capstone document. *Canadian Armed Forces Ethos: Trusted to Serve*, released in 2022, is a pivotal shift for the Canadian Armed Forces. Its release was a springboard for a renewed effort towards aligning the institution with its ethos. Emphasizing character-based leadership, *Trusted to Serve* introduced a revised list of values and a new set of professional expectations. What did not change were the Ethical Principles.

The Canadian Armed Forces Ethical Principles are key tenets for all members. These guiding principles form the bedrock for an entire profession (profession of arms)² and should underpin all behaviors for Canadian Armed Forces members. This institutional bedrock is in many ways dogmatic, whether overtly through language in the Canadian Armed Forces capstone documents ("at all times", "must be applied")³ or subtly through socialization and Canadian Armed Forces culture. While the Ethical Principles themselves were founded on the Constitution Acts 1867 to 1982,⁴ a defense ethics program which emphasized ethical decision making wasn't established until 1994.⁵ Despite having been established for three decades, the first and third ethical principles continue to resonate with Canadian society. The first ethical principle, *Respect the Dignity of All Persons*, is almost purposely fit for the Canadian Armed Forces culture change and is a keystone for addressing sexual misconduct, racism and the importance of diversity. The third ethical principle, *Obey and Support Lawful Authority* reinforces trust, integrity, the chain of command, and the expectations of an armed forces within a democratic Canadian society.⁶ However, the second ethical principle, *Serve Canada Before Self*, is increasingly uncomfortable for modern Canadians. Perhaps this principle is not as timeless and universally applicable as the first and third.

The second ethical principle, *Serve Canada Before Self*, is increasingly divergent from the expectations of diverse subgroups within Canadian society in relation to family composition

¹ Louise Arbour, "Report of the Independent External Comprehensive Review of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces," Borden Ladner Gervais, Montreal: 20 May 2022

² The Department of National Defence, "Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada," *The Government of Canada*, A-PA-005-000/AP-001, 2009, 10

³ The Department of National Defence, "The Canadian Armed Forces Ethos: Trusted to Serve," *The Government of Canada*, A-PA-005-000/AP-138, 2022, 15

⁴ *Ibid.*, 16

⁵ The Department of National Defence, "Fundamentals of Canadian Defence Ethics," *The Government of Canada*, January 2002, 1

⁶ The Department of National Defence, *Ethos ...*, 21 and NA, "Human Right of Armed Forces Personnel: Standards, Good Practices and Recommendations," *Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe*, ND, Accessed 23 May 2024: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/480152>

and generational values, and risks negatively impacting the institution so long as the Canadian Armed Forces uses a traditional career-based employment model.

This paper will first introduce two significant elements of social change in Canada. Using cultural shifts in family and the importance of the individual, it will analyze how this impacts the individual over the span of their career within the Canadian Armed Forces.

ANALYTICAL APPROACH

The rejuvenation of *Trusted to Serve* came with a significant shift, a character-based leadership approach. Introduced by the Chief of Defence Staff, General W.D. Eyre, “Character has to lead, competence can follow”⁷ marks a people-based approach to the Canadian Armed Forces. *Trusted to Serve’s* updated values, professional expectations and narratives surrounding ethical principles are heavily focused on trust, integrity, and people. For this reason, Institutional Ethnography will be used to analyze the second ethical principal in relation to changing social norms.

Institutional Ethnography, founded by Dorothy E. Smith, is largely associated with feminist origins and activists.⁸ Its focus on people’s situations and the importance of key governing text, is applicable across all social institutions.⁹ Its significance draws from Institutional Ethnographies’ ability to analyze how problems in a community can impact the individual,¹⁰ and in this case it is through a key text: *Serve Canada Before Self*.

KEY TEXT

This essay is not suggesting that the second ethical principal is obsolete; the commitment to teammates, mission, and Canadian interests are integral to loyalty and service.¹¹ There is significant symbolism behind this ethical principle; above all, creating a sense of identity for those who wear a uniform.¹² Similar to the first and second professional expectations, *Accepting Unlimited Liability and Duty*,¹³ there are situations (key positions, postings, deployments etc.) which will require members to prioritize service, sometimes over everything else. The narrative included in *Trusted to Serve* highlights the importance of work-life balance and the negative impacts of continued extreme service demands, which would suggest that current leadership believes that the lasting commitment can not always outweigh other priorities. The key text *Serve Canada Before Self* is not as flexible as the narrative.

⁷ Amanda Connolly, “Canadian Forces publishing new ethos in wake of sexual misconduct crisis: ‘Trusted to Serve’,” *Global News*, 9 February 2022, Accessed 18 May 2024: <https://globalnews.ca/news/8607543/canadian-forces-sexual-misconduct-new-ethos/>

⁸ Paul C. Luken, “Institutional Ethnography: Sociology for Today” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Institutional Ethnography*, ed. Paul C. Luken and Suzanne Vaughan (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021) 7

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., 5

¹¹ The Department of National Defence, *Ethos...*, 19

¹² The author describes this as what distinguishes a CAF member. Nancy Taber, “The Profession of Arms: Ideological Codes and Dominant Narratives of Gender in the Canadian Military,” *Atlantis*, 34.1, 2009, 31

¹³ The Department of National Defence, *Ethos...*, 33, 34

CAREER-BASED EMPLOYMENT

The Canadian Armed Forces employment model is largely career based, owing to the unique nature of military employment. Skill training and leadership development are specific to the institution and rely on a massive investment in training and development to reach a minimum occupational functional point.¹⁴ The organization also relies heavily on experienced members; well beyond the minimum threshold for trade qualification, they are the backbone of the Canadian Armed Forces' training institutions, professional development models and capability development.¹⁵ This minimum return for investment is best represented through Variable Initial Engagement which is geared towards the needs of the occupation and training requirement.¹⁶ Variable Initial Engagement can range from three to nine years and is the first commitment period upon joining, it is followed by an Indefinite Period of Service.¹⁷ Obligatory service, a policy adopted to ensure “an equitable return of service” is also used, however, it is specific to subsidized education and training.¹⁸

According to the Canadian Armed Forces Retention Strategy, the new efforts towards retention are intended to “retain our valued CAF members for the full length of their careers.”¹⁹ The Retention Strategy coupled with recruitment language, which overwhelmingly emphasize the Canadian Armed Forces as a “Career” and “Employer of Choice” suggest that the current model preferences a twenty-five-year or more commitment.²⁰ Policy and messaging aside, the Canadian Armed Forces training, development and leadership model is almost completely reliant on internal generation (promoting from within) to maintain a stable experience profile.²¹ This organizational resourcing structure completely precludes employment models that are not career-based. Consequently, discussions on the long-term sustainability of expectations associated with the ethical principle to *Serve Canada Before Self* are even more relevant.

A NEW FAMILY DYNAMIC

Canada has seen a rapid evolution of what we consider family. There is a significant cultural element to what a society considers family, and Canada's diverse, inclusive values have certainly influenced this.²² The nuclear family is slowly fading, being replaced by a wide variety

¹⁴ The Department of National Defence, “Canadian Armed Forces Retention Strategy,” *The Government of Canada*, 2022, 7

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Military Family Services, “A Family Guide to the Military Experience,” *The Government of Canada*, The CAF Connection 2016, 15

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ DAOD 5049-1, “Obligatory Service,” *The Government of Canada*, June 27 2017, Date Accessed 18 May 2024: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/defence-administrative-orders-directives/5000-series/5049/5049-1-obligatory-service.html>

¹⁹ Department of National Defence, *Retention...*, 4

²⁰ The Department of National Defence, “The CAF Offer – Our Value Proposition,” *The Government of Canada*, 19 December 2023, Accessed 12 April 2024: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/campaigns/the-caf-offer.html>

²¹ Ross Fetterly, “The Importance of People in Defence,” *Canadian Global Affairs Institute*, May 2018, Accessed 18 May 2024: https://www.cgai.ca/the_importance_of_people_in_defence

²² The Ontario Human Rights Commission, “The Changing Face of Canadian Families,” *Human Rights and the Family in Ontario*, Accessed 18 May 2024: <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/human-rights-and-family-ontario/changing-face-canadian-families>

of accepted familial arrangements. Canadian families increasingly consist of dual-income households, single-parent families, same-sex couples and multi-generational households.²³ In 40 years the number of families with two incomes has almost doubled.²⁴ Furthermore, in those dual income households, both income earners are increasingly working full time hours.²⁵ These statistical indicators of increasingly collaborative families are likely to continue to rise with the post-millennial generation.

From a family perspective, the Canadian Armed Forces has had to adapt significantly in the last 50 years. An organization primarily composed of single men prior to the 1980's,²⁶ its integration of families has since relied on patriarchal, nuclear families to support the service member.²⁷ This arrangement was contingent on one party sustaining the home, typically the feminized subject which further exacerbated gender inequality.²⁸ The Canadian Armed Forces has made significant efforts towards modernizing their policies and services to support a changing family composition; however, it is still largely contingent on a spouse that accepts military life as a sense of duty.²⁹ The Military Spousal Employment Initiative was set up to assist with geographic transitions, but this policy reinforces the presumption that the military spouse provides the secondary income and that spouses do not themselves have careers with geographic demands.³⁰ Furthermore, the majority of support is still wholly reliant on a spouse that is the primary caregiver for children with an underlying assumption that they are civilian.³¹ There are of course members who continue to have successful careers with alternative family dynamics (service couples, single parents, etc.); however, their family care plan is reliant on informal networks and therefore often tied to geographic areas.³²

The Canadian family dynamic also requires an increased commitment on the part of young and middle-aged adults, regardless of which immediate family dynamic they belong to. As of 2016 the average life expectancy for Canadians was 82, and current trends would suggest that this will remain steady for some time.³³ Canadians have also reached an all-time low in fertility, with 1.3 children per woman.³⁴ With fewer siblings, young and middle-aged adults are shouldering the care for aging parents without the large family network that existed in the past.

²³Ibid

²⁴ Statistics Canada, "The Rise of the dual-earner family with children," *Canadian Megatrends*, 30 May 2016, Accessed 18 May 2024: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2016005-eng.htm>

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Sanela Durson, "Family Well-Being and Military Readiness," in *The Homefront: Family Well-Being and Military Readiness* ed. Sanela Durson, Samantha Urban and Waylon H. Dean (Kingston, Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2018) 2

²⁷ Leigh Spanner, "Supporting Military Families: Challenging or Reinforcing Patriarchy?," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol 23, No 3, Summer 2023, 23

²⁸ Ibid., 23

²⁹ Ibid., 23

³⁰ Leigh Spanner, "Governing "dependents": The Canadian military family and gender, a policy analysis," *International Journal*, Vol 72 (4), 2017, 494

³¹ Ibid., 25

³² Ibid., 24

³³ Jacek A. Kopec, Pourmalek, F., Adeyinka, D.A. et Al., "Health trends in Canada 1990-2019: An analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study," *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, Volume 115, April 2024, 260, 264

³⁴ Claudine Provencher and Nora Galbraith, "Fertility in Canada, 1921 to 2022," *Statistics Canada*, The Government of Canada, 31 January 2024, Accessed 20 May 2024: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/91f0015m/91f0015m2024001-eng.htm>

These commitments are reinforced by a historically strong bond between parents and their children; parents are now closer than ever with their young adult children.³⁵

The Canadian Armed Forces has adjusted their understanding of family to include aging parents.³⁶ However, the mechanism of support for serving members is largely reliant on situations that are “urgent and exceptional.”³⁷ Arrangements to accommodate longer-term care and situations which do not meet the urgent threshold are left to the member, chain of command and supervisors to best navigate, understanding that the institution comes first. There is a formal Compassionate Status to formally support an ‘exceptional circumstance,’ however, this involves career restrictions and is contingent on the situation resolving itself within two to three years.³⁸ If the situation requiring Compassionate Status is not resolved successfully within three years, the policy outcome is likely a compulsory release.³⁹

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF

Just like previous generations, Generation Z has in many ways forced the collective change of a North American society. The reliance on technology aside, its emphasis on the individual has moved yardsticks in terms of diversity and gender.⁴⁰ The importance of individualism has not only helped advance movements on social inequalities but has also resulted in an increasing awareness and vocality around mental health.⁴¹ Literature is increasingly advocating for individuals to put themselves first as a form of self-care.⁴² This focus on the individual has also directly resulted in awareness around work-life balance.⁴³ Organizations that do not address work-life balance are facing retention, productivity and performance issues; indicators show that work life conflict and employee turnover are directly linked.⁴⁴ It is clear that the new generation is placing greater emphasis on individual aspirations.⁴⁵ Tradition, authority and duty, which deeply resonated with a previous generation, however, are less popular with Boomers and virtually unappealing with current generations.⁴⁶

³⁵ Karen L. Fingerman, “Millennials and Their Parents: Implications of the New Young Adulthood for Midlife Adults,” *Innovation in Aging*, 2017, Vol 1, No. 3. 2

³⁶ Leigh Spanner, *Supporting...*, 27

³⁷ The Canadian Armed Forces, “Canadian Forces Leave Policy Manual,” *The Government of Canada*, A-PP-005-LVE/AG-001, 13 January 2009, 71

³⁸ The Office of the National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Ombudsman, “Compassionate status (with or without a Compassionate Posting) and Contingency cost moves for personal reasons,” *The Government of Canada*, 02 December 2022, Accessed 22 May 2024: <https://www.canada.ca/en/ombudsman-national-defence-forces/education-information/caf-members/career/compassionate-status.html#six>

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Jean M. Twenge, “Generations,” *Atria Books*, New York, 25 April 2023, 483, 489, 490

⁴¹ Ibid., 546

⁴² Leigh Stringer, “Ten Bad Habits that Should Be Banned from the Workplace Forever,” *The Journal of Medical Practice Management: MPM*, Vol 32, Iss4, Jan/Feb 2017, 288 and Lauren Parsons, “Overcoming the Overwhelming,” *Teachers Matter*, 2018, Iss 39, 56

⁴³ N.A. “Towards Effective Talent Management and Employer Branding: The Importance of Employee Perception of Work-Life Balance,” *Development and Learning in Organizations* 36, no. 1 (2022), 47

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Donna Winslow, “Canadian Society and It’s Army,” *Canadian Military Journal*, Winter 2003-2004, 21

⁴⁶ Ibid.

The Canadian Armed Force's ability to adapt to changing social trends is less than responsive, owing to a largely conservative system that is deeply rooted in tradition and history.⁴⁷ The institution goes through great lengths to achieve a collectivist military socialization in order to achieve its desired identity.⁴⁸ Recent efforts towards aligning Canadian Armed Forces dress regulations towards a gender-neutral policy that allows for more individuality⁴⁹ has since received pushback due to "the undermining of unit cohesion and deterioration of operational effectiveness."⁵⁰ The Canadian Armed Forces focus on shared identity, unit cohesion and professional expectations in an effort to produce the warrior identity also infers that anything outside that identity does not fit.⁵¹ This naturally translates to what Brown and Okros describe as "'mirrors' and 'chameleons',"⁵² as subordinates emulate behavior in order to best demonstrate idealized leadership. This directly reinforces conformity and the status quo, detracting from individuality.⁵³

Work-life balance in the Canadian Armed Forces is also a significant point of contention. Updated initiatives (and narrative within *Trusted to Serve*) are providing significant weight behind work-life balance.⁵⁴ Despite the institution's commitment, the data suggests that for Canadian Armed Forces personnel, no matter what, career comes first.⁵⁵ This work prioritization is also exacerbated by its constant anxiety, unlike other industries which may experience transient work-life conflicts.⁵⁶ Surveys have also indicated that supervisors are the key enablers for work-life balance in the Canadian Armed Forces, with most respondents indicating that supervisors provided greater support than the institution.⁵⁷ This is a clear indication that the Canadian Armed Forces has failed to make systemic changes to reorder structures and processes in support of the work-life balance narrative. It is possible to argue that a people and values-based approach to ethos aligns well with expectations that leaders at lower organizational levels strive to support their subordinates' family needs within their means and authorities. However,

⁴⁷ Vanessa Brown and Alan Okros, "Shifting the Spotlight: Institutional and Structural Contributors to Unprofessional Conduct in the Military," in *Team Diversity and Inclusion in Defence and Security: International Perspectives*, Barbara T. Waruszynski, Yantsislav Yanakiev, Daniel P. McDonald, Springer Publishing, 28 February 2022, 2

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 2, 4

⁴⁹ Stephen J. Thorne, "Canadian military breaks with tradition, changes dress codes," *The Legion Magazine*, 12 July 2022, Accessed 20 May 2024: <https://legionmagazine.com/canadian-military-breaks-with-tradition-changes-dress-codes/>

⁵⁰ Lorne Gunter, "GUNTER: The problem with the Canadian Armed Force's new dress code," *The Toronto Sun*, 09 July 2022, Accessed 20 May 2024: <https://torontosun.com/opinion/columnists/gunter-the-problem-with-the-canadian-armed-forces-new-dress-code>

⁵¹ Vanessa Brown, *Shifting...*, 10

⁵² *Ibid.*, 8

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 5

⁵⁴ The Department of National Defence, *Ethos...*, 19, 60, 61 and The Department of National Defence, "The CAF Offer – my Work/Life," *The Government of Canada*, April 03 2023, Accessed 21 May 2024: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/campaigns/caf-offer/work-life-balance-for-military-members.html>

⁵⁵ Stéfanie von Hlatky and Bibi Imre-Millei, "Entrenched Heteronormativity: Gender and Work-Life balance in the Military," *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol 22, No. 4, Fall 2022, 20

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 20

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 18

this is a devolution of responsibility. It moreover exposes a lack of institutional commitment to change and an entrenchment of *Serve Canada Before Self*.

Having established that Canadian Armed Forces members experience constant work-life conflict, it is relevant to assess how this conflict impacts health and retention. According to Statistics Canada Health Reporting “Compared to the general Canadian population, military members exhibit a higher prevalence of depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder.”⁵⁸ Exacerbating this is an even higher rate of Major Depressive Episodes from those members returning from deployment.⁵⁹ The Mental Health Continuum, introduced by the Canadian Armed Forces, is showing promising results; however, members are still at a higher risk of exposure to both traumatic events as well as life stresses.⁶⁰ The Mental Health Continuum, a concept developed by the Canadian Armed Forces, reflects the range of an individual’s mental health across a continuum.⁶¹ Designed to bypass diagnostic labels, this tool is intended for self-reflection and self-monitoring.⁶² Represented visually by four colour blocks (green, yellow, orange red), as an individual shifts to the right (red), recognizing signs along with individual response mechanisms are recommended.⁶³ As an individual shifts from yellow to orange, the model prescribes higher levels of personal limits and self-care, focusing on themselves to support a transition back to the green.⁶⁴ Staff Sergeant Jerald Green, United States Air Force, has proposed a conflict between the concept of “Service before Self” and mental health.⁶⁵ Maintaining the proscriptive hierarchy between an institution and individual will create a conflict when that person needs to prioritize themselves to support mental health.⁶⁶

ANALYSIS

A key differentiator between Institutional Ethnography and other methods of social analysis is the focus on perspective. Institutional Ethnography is strengthened by the inclusion of lived or individual experiences.⁶⁷ Contextualizing the conflict between a transforming generation of Canadians and the second ethical principle also benefits from this approach.

⁵⁸ Rachel A. Plouffe, Aihua Liu, J. Don Richardson and Anthony Nazarov, “Validation of the mental health continuum: Short form among Canadian Armed Forces personnel,” *Statistics Canada Health Reports*, The Government of Canada, 18 May 2022, Accessed 21 May 2024: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2022005/article/00001-eng.htm>

⁵⁹ Murray W. Enns, Natalie Mota, Tracie O. Afifi Et Al., “Course and Predictors of Major Depressive Disorder in the Canadian Armed Forces Members and Veterans Mental Health Follow-up Survey,” *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, Volume 66, Issue 11, November 2021, 977

⁶⁰ Rachel A. Plouffe, *Validation...*, Accessed 21 May 2024: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2022005/article/00001-eng.htm>

⁶¹ Shu-Ping Chen, Wen-Pin Chang and Heather Stuart, “Self-reflection and screening mental health on Canadian campuses: validation of the mental health continuum model,” *BMC Psychology*, 2020, 8:76, 2

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Jerald Green, “Service or Self?,” *Joint Base Andrews News*, 10 May 2022, Accessed 20 May 2024: <https://www.jba.af.mil/News/Article/3025881/service-or-self/>

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Janet Rankin, “Conducting Analysis in Institutional Ethnography: Analytical Work Prior to Commencing Data Collection,” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, Vol 16, (2017), 3

More than 50 percent of Regular Force members are in a relationship and 47 percent have dependents.⁶⁸ While limited data exists around the number of members with parents in long-term care, or requiring support from their adult children, Canadian demographics would suggest that this number is on the rise. 70 percent of middle-aged Canadian adults have at least one living parent and of those, 33 percent require assistance.⁶⁹ Canadian Armed Forces exit surveys indicate that the primary reason for voluntary release is the difficulty of balancing family and institutional demands.⁷⁰ The data tells us that a significant number of Canadian military personnel have already experienced a conflict between family obligations and the institution. These conflicts are expected to become even more prevalent based on the societal changes outlined in “A New Family Dynamic” above.

At the individual level, Canadian society is shifting towards a self-conscious, focus on clear delineations between work and life. The Canadian Armed Forces has recognized this; the introduction of the *Total Health and Wellness Strategy* includes work-life balance as a key effort.⁷¹ This emphasis on ‘self’ is not only a significant generational shift, but reflective of a mature society that is realizing how dependent professional productivity and throughput is on a content workforce. Work-life balance is also listed as a key driver in Canadian Armed Forces releases in a 2016 report.⁷² This trend is supported through a recent Government of Canada survey which indicates work-life conflict is four times more likely to result in early departure and absenteeism from the workplace.⁷³ This survey also links work-life conflict with higher rates of mental health disorders and medical visits.⁷⁴

From an Institutional Ethnography perspective, key text is utilized by the institution to normalize and influence the lives of the individuals.⁷⁵ While many of the societal trends presented so far align well with the first ethical principle, they are increasingly divergent from the second. This is especially true when considered over a 25 to 30 year career. Many of the potential conflicts between the key text *Serve Canada Before Self* could be mitigated or even accepted, over a limited employment model. However, many of the societal pressures presented will increasingly develop throughout adulthood, and it is likely that a significant number of the Canadian Armed Forces will be increasingly conflicted with this principle. Maintaining *Serve Canada Before Self* as a key, ideological text will continue to force the normalization of individual behavior which conflicts with evolving Canadian societal norms. The resulting impact to the individual is a conflict between an established societal priority and that of the institution. This ultimately leads to release, impacting retention. Additionally, releases due to family obligations such as dependents and parental support are more likely to occur to tenured members, impacting the institution’s ability to maintain a stable experience profile. From a recruiting

⁶⁸ Leigh Spanner, *Supporting...*, 27

⁶⁹ Comfort Life, “Caregiving statistics,” *Canada’s guide to retirement living and care*,” N.D. Accessed 21 May 2024: <https://www.comfortlife.ca/retirement-communities/caregiving-statistics>.

⁷⁰ Stéfanie von Hlatky, *Entrenched...*, 18

⁷¹ Department of National Defence, *Retention...*, 49

⁷² Stéfanie von Hlatky, *Entrenched...*, 18

⁷³ Chris Higgins, Linda Duxbury and Sean Lyons, “Reducing Work-Life Conflict: What Works? What Doesn’t?” *The Government of Canada, Occupational Health and Safety*, January 2008, Accessed 22 May 2024:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/environmental-workplace-health/reports-publications/occupational-health-safety/reducing-work-life-conflict-what-works-what-doesn.html#a12>, 14

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Nancy Taber, *The Profession...*, 30 and Janet Rankin, *Conducting...*, 4

perspective, incorporating the needs of the individual and their aspirations must be considered; the traditional image and demands are already dissuading prospective Canadians.⁷⁶ This will increasingly create a conflict with the views and aspirations of younger generations.

One may, however, argue that the ethical principle, *Serve Canada Before Self* does enable operational effectiveness. Through the expression of a unique Canadian Armed Forces organizational identity and a warrior mindset that are fundamental to mission success in higher intensity operations. However, such higher intensity scenarios occur sporadically and infrequently when compared to the constant and pervasive pressure that results from a misalignment with Canadian values and expectations. Canadian Armed Forces members find themselves squeezed between a society that increasingly focuses on the individual and their needs and an institution that remains structurally immobile in the face of an evolving society. Only changing its key text, and therefore the second ethical principle, will enable the Canadian Armed Forces to truly integrate the new family dynamic and importance of self that are very real aspects of serving members' and potential recruits' lives.

CONCLUSION

The social trends amongst Canadians are increasingly in support of the individual. The newest generation is expected to break down barriers around gender, race and religion, barriers which have disadvantaged countless people (especially in the Canadian Armed Forces). This emphasis on the individual will also be a foundation block for the generation expected to embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion.⁷⁷ Any institution that is unable to adequately support the individual and their needs (family included) is likely to struggle. The Canadian Armed Forces has placed significant emphasis on rebranding. The implementation of a rejuvenated Ethos, the launch of the CAF Offer, the update of military dress regulations and countless other initiatives all point to an organization that is trying to change in order to support the individual. However, the Canadian Armed Forces is still creating unnecessary conflict by unequivocally placing the institution first through key text, while creating flexible initiatives and policy. This is because the institution is ultimately making these changes for the betterment of the institution, not the individual. The Canadian Armed Forces needs to decide: does it continue to leave ideological text which unintentionally disadvantages the individual or does the institution accept that Canadian culture will challenge the status quo. In order to truly embrace the first ethical principle, we may need to change the second.

⁷⁶ Donna Winslow, *Canadian...*, 21

⁷⁷ Krista Henry, "Generation Z make real social impact through diversity and talent," University of Waterloo, 02 November 2021, Accessed 21 May 2024: <https://uwaterloo.ca/hire/news/gen-z-make-real-social-impact-through-diversity-and-talent>

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