



## **STRENGTH IN NUMBERS: DIVERSITY AS A FORCE MULTIPLIER FOR THE CAF**

**Major Patrick Wight**

### **JCSP 49**

#### **Exercise Solo Flight**

##### **Disclaimer**

Opinions expressed remain those of the author and do not represent Department of National Defence or Canadian Forces policy. This paper may not be used without written permission.

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of National Defence, 2023.

### **PCEMI n° 49**

#### **Exercice Solo Flight**

##### **Avertissement**

Les opinions exprimées n'engagent que leurs auteurs et ne reflètent aucunement des politiques du Ministère de la Défense nationale ou des Forces canadiennes. Ce papier ne peut être reproduit sans autorisation écrite.

© Sa Majesté le Roi du chef du Canada, représenté par le ministre de la Défense nationale, 2023.

CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE - COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 49 - PCEMI n° 49  
2022 - 2023

Exercise Solo Flight – Exercice Solo Flight

**STRENGTH IN NUMBERS:  
DIVERSITY AS A FORCE MULTIPLIER FOR THE CAF**

**Major Patrick Wight**

*“This paper was written by a candidate attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfilment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus contains facts and opinions which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defence. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied, except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence.”*

*« La présente étude a été rédigée par un stagiaire du Collège des Forces canadiennes pour satisfaire à l'une des exigences du cours. L'étude est un document qui se rapporte au cours et contient donc des faits et des opinions que seul l'auteur considère appropriés et convenables au sujet. Elle ne reflète pas nécessairement la politique ou l'opinion d'un organisme quelconque, y compris le gouvernement du Canada et le ministère de la Défense nationale du Canada. Il est défendu de diffuser, de citer ou de reproduire cette étude sans la permission expresse du ministère de la Défense nationale. »*

## **STRENGTH IN NUMBERS: DIVERSITY AS A FORCE MULTIPLIER FOR THE CAF**

### **THESIS STATEMENT/INTRODUCTION**

It is important that the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) be representative of the current Canadian population as well as a reflection of current Canadian ideals and values. A modern CAF should endeavor to be as close to the Canadian people it serves, with

different regions, cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds found within its ranks; bringing together a mosaic of Canadian perspectives within the armed forces. The desire to be representative of Canadian society, diverse and inclusive is not novel for the CAF. Attempts to correct the CAF trajectory regarding diversity and inclusion have had varying degrees of success. Standards for Harassment and Racism Program (SHARP)<sup>1</sup> was introduced to address sexual harassment and racism in the CAF in the late 1990's, which was followed Operation Honour, and most recently Culture Change. It is being spearheaded by Chief Professional Conduct and Culture (CPCC) to change the CAF professional culture<sup>2</sup>. For the CAF to address systemic issues within the organization requires a paradigm shift. Diversity must be prioritized at all levels of CAF leadership and decision-making, creating a culture of inclusivity and respect that values and supports individuals from all backgrounds. Diversity was identified within *Strong, Secure, and Engaged*, as a means to improve the CAF's culture and operational effectiveness<sup>3</sup>. This paper aims discuss the importance of diversity as a force multiplier for the CAF, exploring how a diverse workforce can enhance operational effectiveness across various domains. This paper is divided into six sections: Section One will explore how diversity in the CAF can be achieved through connection, leadership, and inclusive practices; Section Two will examine how diversity can impact the operational effectiveness of the CAF; Section Three will discuss how diversity affects recruitment and retention in the CAF; Section Four will focus on diversity and GBA+ in the CAF planning cycle; Section Five will discuss how diversity can be a force multiplier; and Section Six will analyze the consequences of not incorporating diversity within the CAF.

### **SECTION ONE: CONNECTION, LEADERSHIP AND ABILITY – WHAT IS DIVERSITY IN THE CAF?**

Diversity for the CAF means there is representation from all Canadians, and that each member of the CAF is able to bring their authentic self to work<sup>4</sup>. This definition reaches beyond surface level differences to include the many perspectives found throughout the different regions in Canada, the cultures of those groups, and their unique backgrounds. In order to meet Canadian National Defense requirements and maintain the CAF's ability to conduct operations and contribute to multi-national organizations like

---

<sup>1</sup> Canada, "The Path to Dignity and Respect."

<sup>2</sup> Canada, "Chief Professional Conduct and Culture."

<sup>3</sup> Canada, *Strong Secure Engaged*. Pg-23

<sup>4</sup> Canada, *Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan: 2021 - 2026*. Pg. 15

NATO; diversity will be important in order to ensure that the CAF will be representative of the Canadian population.

The CAFs goal to increase its representation to better represent the Canadian population is important for the CAF for two reasons. The first, representation builds deeper connections with Canadian society and the CAF. Having a deeper connection between the CAF and Canadian society helps to develop trust in the organization and establishes credibility and helps promote support for the organization when it conducts operations at home and abroad. The second is that through representation and the establishment of deeper connections with Canadian society, the CAF can improve recruitment and retention. While recruitment and retention will be discussed later in this paper, the important factor for the CAF in pursuit of its diversity goals is that being representative of Canadian society will help attract other diverse people who can provide multiple perspectives, expanding the thinking within the CAF. This will help to ensure that ideas presented will be seen as credible. The CAF's credibility as a military force is crucial for gaining the respect of its allies and for creating opportunities to engage with the world and advance CAF initiatives by collaborating on common security challenges.

Leadership also plays a significant part in incorporating diversity within the CAF. Strategic, Operational, and Tactical leaders all have a responsibility to incorporate diversity and inclusive practices within the CAF, to bring together teams and draw on the experience and skills when addressing military situations. Leaders have a direct affect at every level within the CAF regardless of if the occupation is operational or administrative. As stated in *The Canadian Armed Forces Ethos – Trusted to Serve*: “Leaders have an enduring responsibility to establish an inclusive climate where individual rights are respected and where the strengths of our diverse members are valued, and, whenever possible, incorporated into decision-making<sup>5</sup>.” Diversity will help the CAF solve defense problems and administer the soldiers, sailors, and aviators modern operations, and will be crucial to the overall operational effectiveness of the CAF. Leaders will be responsible to foster environments where decisions made by the Chain of Command can be respectfully challenged, as well as informed, by subject matter experts to help develop inclusive doctrine and practices and reduce institutional blind spots.

Diversity in the CAF encompasses a broad range of physical and cognitive abilities, perspectives, and experiences and a deliberate effort to achieve gender equity and representation<sup>6</sup>. The only caveat concerning military service that should be noted for this discussion about diversity in the CAF is how the organization practices exclusion. All CAF personnel must meet the minimum physical fitness requirements and standard better known within the CAF as Universality of Service (UoS) needed to qualify to perform military service. Ability requirements do restrict individuals from joining the CAF if they are unable to meet UoS from CAF service from entering the military. Addressing the CAF legacy challenges that fall under the diversity umbrella can not be solved with a singular one-size-fits-all program. It requires an iterative approach that is adaptive to modern society. Some of these endeavours will be hoisted on by CPCC; as the center of

---

<sup>5</sup> Canada, *Canadian Armed Forces Ethos*. Pg. 47

<sup>6</sup> Canada, “Fostering an Inclusive and Diverse Workplace.”

excellence for professional conduct<sup>7</sup>, others will need to rely on analytical tools found within methodologies like Gender-Based Analysis (GBA+)<sup>8</sup>. These tools are essential in addressing emerging concerns about underrepresented groups who may be unintentionally marginalized.

## **SECTION TWO: HOW DOES DIVERSITY IMPACT THE CAF?**

CAF operational effectiveness is measured by the military's ability to conduct various missions successfully. Regardless of the type of mission, the CAF needs to manage its resources appropriately and ensure personnel safety during operations and that risk has been appropriately minimized. Operational effectiveness brings legitimacy to the CAF and builds support from the public and international allies. Diversity is essential to maintaining the operational effectiveness of the CAF. By incorporating internal experiences, skills, and diverse perspectives, the CAF can adapt military planning to tailor operations accordingly. This approach enables measured military responses to defence problems, enhancing the CAF's ability to address various challenges effectively. Moreover, diversity also contributes to the organizational capability of the CAF by making it more resilient and dynamic. When organizations prioritize diversity, they become more resilient over time and are able to survive periods of instability. Diverse Organizations become more capable due to the increased integration of different viewpoints and experiences, and they are dynamic with the ability to move quickly in response to changes and trends; for the CAF, these themes translate into the organizational capability to conduct missions, personnel performance, and operational effectiveness<sup>9</sup>.

It is important to recognize that diversity is not only crucial for the operational effectiveness of the CAF, but it also plays an essential role in the relationship between the CAF and its employees. As noted in *Beyond d&i: Leading diversity with purpose and inclusiveness*, businesses that developed meaningful diversity strategies which created inclusive workplaces were not only more profitable they were “better positioned to anticipate employee needs and respond with policies that helped navigate significant change, extend flexibility, mental health assistance, and adapting their sponsorship and personal development processes<sup>10</sup>.” As new members enter the CAF, this will be important if the organization wants to retain members for longer than initial engagements. The CAF will need to be cognizant and monitor changes in the composition of current and future workforces and gradually shift and adapt the internal workplace culture to meet the needs of all CAF members. This is essential in building inclusive work environments because in order to bring together a wide array of people who are different generationally as well as culturally, monitoring the professional culture<sup>11</sup> is as important as monitoring the security environment for threats.

---

<sup>7</sup> Canada, “Chief Professional Conduct and Culture.”

<sup>8</sup> Canada, “Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus).”

<sup>9</sup> Formanek, Overdrive, and Overdrive ebook, *Beyond D&i: Leading Diversity with Purpose and Inclusiveness*.

<sup>10</sup> Formanek, Overdrive, and Overdrive ebook. Pg. 25

<sup>11</sup> Canada, “Chief Professional Conduct and Culture.”

As noted above, CAF leaders are also responsible for facilitating inclusive workspaces within the CAF. 'Cultural Competence' was coined by Terry L. Cross as a way to describe healthcare professionals ability to interact with people of various cultures in a medical environment<sup>12</sup>. Cultural competence in a military/CAF setting is where a member rationalizes their cultural background within the CAF and "considers where and how they are situated within the military in relation to social power, privilege, disparity, and equality<sup>13</sup>." By reflecting on these issues, CAF leaders and members can collectively analyze outdated traditions within the CAF and make significant changes where previously insensitive practices exist. Removing barriers will help create more diverse and inclusive workplaces in the CAF that will unite teams, enhancing operational effectiveness. Establish cultural competence awareness within the CAF through standardized familiarization at the beginning of military careers and continued throughout a member's career. This will lead to a more effective and culturally aware military, better equipped to address the complex challenges of modern military operations. The value that cultural competence offers the CAF is not limited to the member. However, it contributes to the institution's ability to be aware of the diversity within the area of operations (AO) where CAF missions will occur. Obtaining and practicing greater cultural understanding within military AOs would contribute to better linkages between operational planning and execution, reducing unintended consequences during CAF operations. Understanding local customs, norms, languages, and perspectives may not be enough to be successful in isolation; however, cultural competence can help the CAF develop awareness as an institution, so it is best positioned to solve defence problems with measured military responses leading to more successful outcomes.

Improving the CAF's cultural competency will enhance its capacity to train and nurture leaders who possess cultural awareness and can create and foster inclusive workplaces and environments. Ultimately, this will positively impact the CAF's operational efficiency. However, fostering diverse workplaces is not sufficient; in *Managing Diversity in the Military: the value of Inclusion in a Culture of Uniformity*, its references that culturally competent leaders have five key traits "fairness, standards, feedback courage, transformative awareness<sup>14</sup>" that work to promote Inclusion and diversity but maintain the need for militaries to remain operationally effective. Culturally competent leaders and the CAF must maintain military standards when they are critical to operations. "Adherence to standards means that the standard is set; those who can meet it, meet it, and those who do not, do not."<sup>15</sup> Maintaining standards that are critical to ensure the safety and security of CAF members throughout training and while conducting operations is important for the CAF to be operationally effective. Deviating from scientifically backed standards to have culturally diverse organizations is unwise. It is essential to recognize that marginalizing individuals based on a stereotype related to gender, age, race, Etc. when applying a standard is also unwise and discriminatory behaviour. Discrimination based on subjective attributes harms the organization's operational effectiveness and opposes the ideology and necessity of diversity in the

---

<sup>12</sup> "Cultural Competence in Healthcare."

<sup>13</sup> Brown and Okros, "Unlearning 'Stranger Danger.'"

<sup>14</sup> McDonald et al., *Managing Diversity in the Military: The Value of Inclusion in a Culture of Uniformity*. Pg.103

<sup>15</sup> McDonald et al. pg. 104

CAF<sup>16</sup>. Developing leaders within the CAF promote professionalism through the maintenance and adherence of standards, in conjunction with transparent and fair decision making as well as the practice of transformational leadership styles, will further develop cultural awareness that permeates all levels of the organization and speaks to the modern CAF Ethos, as well as increases the CAF legitimacy as an armed force with peer nations and as a profession within Canada<sup>17,18</sup>. This sentiment is echoed within the Canadian Armed Forces ETHOS: Trusted to Serve doctrine, which states that "CAF leaders instill the ethos in others, they establish and maintain a professional culture, they protect the reputation of the CAF, and they face and resolve problems lawfully and ethically<sup>19</sup>"; by upholding CAF standards while being culturally aware and diverse, leaders can foster a more inclusive, productive, and operationally effective team.

When considering the significance of diversity within the CAF, it's common to concentrate on how it can boost cultural competence and maintain operational standards. Nevertheless, assessing effectiveness through a contemporary societal perspective of credibility is equally imperative. Military organizations prioritizing credibility distinguish themselves as dependable and trustworthy, in contrast to those disregarding these principles. The CAF must prioritize trustworthiness among its members, the Canadian public, and allies to be considered credible. In "Revisiting Organizational Credibility and Organizational Reputation – A Situational Crisis Communication Approach," credibility is demonstrated by the organization's honesty, believability, goodwill, and concern for its stakeholders<sup>20</sup>. The stakeholders of the CAF are not only Canadians but also allies and populations affected by the CAF's operations when working internationally to support National Defence objectives. To effectively tackle security challenges on a global scale and collaborate with allies and organizations like NATO, stakeholders, partners and allies must view the CAF as a credible and operationally effective force. Success requires the incorporation of multiple perspectives and collaboration among all participants. Diverse armed forces are better equipped to work together and solve problems jointly. The CAF must be perceived as trustworthy, lawful, and legitimate by embracing diversity as a positive factor. This perception will help garner public and international support when the CAF undertakes missions.<sup>21</sup>

### **SECTION THREE: DIVERSITY AND RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

The CAF has been making a concerted effort to confront two longstanding issues: the recruitment of candidates from diverse backgrounds and retaining them beyond initial engagements for lifelong careers in the armed forces. Diversity plays a crucial role in expanding the pool of potential recruits. As Canada's population becomes more diverse through immigration, promoting diversity and inclusion is crucial to ensure that the CAF reflects the values and demographics of Canadians. The CAF must move away from

---

<sup>16</sup> McDonald et al.

<sup>17</sup> McDonald et al. Pg.103

<sup>18</sup> Canada, *Canadian Armed Forces Ethos*.

<sup>19</sup> Canada. Pg. 51

<sup>20</sup> Jamal and Bakar, "Revisiting Organizational Credibility and Organizational Reputation – A Situational Crisis Communication Approach." pg. 3

<sup>21</sup> Jamal and Bakar.

traditional recruiting methods in order to draw in candidates from diverse backgrounds. To improve its culture, align with diversity directives from the government and defence, and become an attractive employer for all Canadians, the organization needs to increase representation of individuals who do not identify as the typical Canadian soldier who was often represented by an English speaking Caucasian male.

Recruitment of new CAF members is important because it continues to build a cadre of forces which can be trained and available to conduct missions on behalf of the Government of Canada. New members are necessary to replace attriting forces, and as a volunteer force, recruitment is the only way Canadian citizens can join. Historically, the Canadian population that has comprised the majority of the CAF has not come from diverse backgrounds, which is problematic for the modern-day CAF as it strives to be reflective of Canadian society, which has seen a demographical shift to a more diverse population and is no longer dominated by the typical soldier listed above<sup>22</sup>. As Christian Leuprecht describes in his article *Strengthening the Canadian Armed Forces through Diversity and Inclusion: Demographic Imperatives for Diversity and Inclusion*, there is a business case to ensure that CAF recruiting is diverse, expansive, and wide-ranging in an attempt to draw in from across the entire Canadian population<sup>23</sup>. Leuprecht states, "the proportion of racialized minorities among the recruitment cohort is growing; and on the other hand, so is their representation among the socio-economic strata from which the armed forces tend to recruit<sup>24</sup>." Striving to recruit a diverse force is twofold for the CAF. As Leuprecht states in his article *Demographic Imperatives for Diversity and Inclusion*, the Canadian population the CAF has historically recruited from has changed to a more diverse society<sup>25</sup>. The CAF must prioritize diversity and inclusivity in its recruitment efforts by actively seeking to reflect the diverse makeup of Canadian society. The CAF can effectively contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society by ensuring that its personnel accurately represent the Canadian population. The CAF must prioritize inclusivity in its recruitment efforts by actively seeking to reflect the diverse makeup of Canadian society. The CAF can effectively contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society by ensuring its personnel accurately represent the Canadian population. Enhancing workforce diversity and promoting inclusivity within the CAF is crucial in encouraging Canadians who have been underrepresented in the past to join the Canadian military. Committing to becoming a diverse institution and creating a welcoming work environment where individuals from diverse backgrounds are accepted and valued will build stronger ties between them and the CAF. This will result in better alignment between the organization's values and their own, promoting a stronger sense of belonging within the CAF which will increase operational effectiveness and retention.

Retention of CAF members from diverse backgrounds is another concern for the CAF, as many members who identify with an underrepresented group struggle to stay in long after initial engagements. When these CAF members depart the organization early, they take their experience and specialized training with them as they leave, directly affecting the ability to conduct the mission and straining operational effectiveness<sup>26</sup>.

---

<sup>22</sup> Edgar et al., *Strengthening the Canadian Armed Forces through Diversity and Inclusion*.

<sup>23</sup> Edgar et al.

<sup>24</sup> Edgar et al. Pg. 33

<sup>25</sup> Edgar et al.

<sup>26</sup> Edgar et al.



Improving diversity and inclusion practices is vital to changing CAF conditions and increasing retention. As noted above, many CAF members of underrepresented groups leave the armed forces because they feel their experience and opinions are undervalued, or practices within the workplace force them to conform beyond what is expected to establish positive unit cohesion<sup>27</sup>. As Christian Leuprecht describes in his article in *Canadian Defence Policy in Theory and Practice: The Demographics of Force Generation: Recruitment, Attrition and Retention of Citizen Soldiers*, “retention of current trained members thus becomes all the more important, especially in stressed occupations; so, ensuring that all members feel treated equitably by the organization...is critical<sup>28</sup>.” The diversity and inclusion practices noted within this paper will help address some retention issues; however, to be effective, those practices must be paired with recruiting and retention strategies that bring in Canadian citizens who are representative of the diversity within Canada to strengthen bonds between new and existing CAF members.

In order to achieve a truly diverse and inclusive environment within the CAF, leaders at all levels must adopt culturally competent and transformational leadership practices. Failure to do so will result in the organization struggling to navigate the challenges of working with a diverse workforce and failing to treat every member with the respect they deserve. The *Canadian Armed Forces Retention Strategy* expands on this narrative, identifying that in order to be diverse, “the CAF must adapt to the evolving needs of current members, and proactively prepare for the emerging or changing needs of prospective recruits, with a more comprehensive approach to retention in order to best sustain CAF capabilities<sup>29</sup>.” Establishing a diverse environment is essential in guaranteeing that every CAF member is fully engaged in their military service, regardless of their background. This approach inspires all members to remain with the CAF and pursue long careers within the organization.

#### **SECTION FOUR: ADVANCING DIVERSITY WITHIN THE PLANNING CYCLE**

This paper's discussion until this section has focused on the importance of the CAF becoming a more diverse organization through various means. This paper has underscored CAF leaders' pivotal role in promoting inclusivity among all CAF members by utilizing cultural competence to explain why diversity is critical to operational effectiveness. It has also emphasized how the CAF benefits from diversity, such as building trust and attracting a more diverse group of individuals to join, which can enhance the organization's overall effectiveness.

The CAF has tried to advance diversity and inclusion since SHARP training in 1990. In 2015, the Government of Canada (GoC) renewed its efforts to the United Nations through the Canada National Action Plan “to the effective implementation of all of these resolutions as part of a broader commitment to the protection of civilians,

---

<sup>27</sup> Edgar et al.

<sup>28</sup> Juneau, Lagassé, and Vucetic, “The Demographics of Force Generation: Recruitment, Attrition and Retention of Citizen Soldiers.”

<sup>29</sup> Canada, *Canadian Armed Forces Retention Strategy*. Page 13

particularly children, in armed conflict.<sup>30</sup> As part of the renewed government engagement, the Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) provided direction and guidance to the CAF on how the organization would adopt the resolution. The CDS issued the *Directive for Integrating United Nations Security Council (UNSCR) 1325<sup>31</sup> and Related Resolutions into CAF Planning and Operations* in January 2016, highlighting the implementation of Gender-Based Analysis (GBA+) as a method to identify and address systemic inequalities in policies, programs, and initiatives, thereby aiding in achieving more equitable outcomes<sup>32</sup>. To promote diversity and inclusivity initiatives within the CAF, GBA+ can be utilized to identify internal biases or areas where policies or operations may disproportionately affect underrepresented groups. Understanding what GBA+ is and what it can offer is essential in utilizing it effectively. Acknowledging the importance of diversity and how it would be essential for operational effectiveness was an inflection point in adopting diversity practices. The CDS directive significantly advanced the resolutions within UNSR 1325 and provided the CAF with a methodology in GBA+ that planners should consider when they plan CAF operations or when creating policy<sup>33</sup>.

Integrating GBA+ into all CAF processes is necessary to help increase diversity and inclusion by identifying individuals who may be inadvertently disadvantaged by an internal defence policy when the CAF addresses national and international security challenges. As stated in the CDS directive on integrating UNCR 1325: “gender perspectives must be incorporated into the planning and execution of military operations, and nations have a responsibility to protect populations at risk during armed conflicts<sup>34</sup>”. The CDS directive advanced the intentions of the GoC of implementing the resolutions in UNSR 1325 within the CAF. The directive made certain that the CAF would utilize GBA+ in decision making, making a conscious effort to consider intersectional factors to improve the delivery of CAF administration and military operations<sup>35</sup>. As a methodology, GBA+ is applied similarly to the CAF Operational Planning Process (OPP)<sup>36</sup>; while both methods share a common starting point of problem identification, they serve different purposes and have different analytical areas of focus. It is important to note that GBA+ is not intended to provide solutions to problems but to provide recommendations during the planning process to ensure that GBA+ factors (i.e. intersectionality, marginalized groups, etc.) have been applied in order to understand “who is impacted by the issue being addressed by the initiative; identifying how the initiative could be tailored to meet diverse needs of the people most impacted; and anticipating and mitigating any barriers to accessing or benefitting from the initiative<sup>37</sup>.”

---

<sup>30</sup> Canada, “CDS Directive for Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions into CAF Planning and Operations.” Pg. 8

<sup>31</sup> United Nations Security Council, “Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) [Women, Peace and Security].”

<sup>32</sup> Canada, “Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus).”

<sup>33</sup> United Nations Security Council, “Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) [Women, Peace and Security].”

<sup>34</sup> Canada, “CDS Directive for Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions into CAF Planning and Operations.” Para 2

<sup>35</sup> Canada, “Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus).”

<sup>36</sup> Canada, “The Operational Planning Process.”

<sup>37</sup> Government of Canada, “Introduction to GBA Plus.”

It is important to note that implementing GBA+ within the CAF has been uneven since the issuance of the CDS Directive. Not all levels of the CAF have fully integrated GBA+ when planning and operations<sup>38</sup>. For GBA+ to effectively promote diversity and inclusion in the CAF, the organization must prioritize educating its institutional leaders - including both Officers and NCOs - so that they can serve as advocates for diversity and successfully carry out the GBA+ process. By doing so, CAF leaders can ensure GBA+ becomes a standard practice within operations and when developing policy and procedures. This includes promoting effective communication of best practices, implementing lessons learned, and ensuring that the GBA+ process is continually reviewed and refined iteratively. Encouraging CAF leaders and members to recognize the significance of GBA+ will undoubtedly motivate the organization to adopt more effective strategies that promote diversity and inclusion, which will be crucial for improving CAF's operational effectiveness.

## **SECTION FIVE: DIVERSITY AS A FORCE MULTIPLIER FOR THE CAF**

When looking at diversity through a lens of military capability, three discussion points regarding diversity as a force multiplier for the CAF follow the themes presented within this paper. The first way to discuss diversity as a force multiplier is through Employment Equity in the CAF and how implementing the CAF Employment Equity Plan<sup>39</sup> will help ensure that underrepresented groups have greater representation and equal opportunities in the CAF. The second is discussing how diversity will improve unit cohesion within the CAF. Lastly, we will discuss how increased diversity will improve CAF's operational effectiveness through problem-solving and decision-making.

The CAF Employment Equity (EE) Plan helps the CAF meet its legislated and desired diversity requirements by setting EE targets within sub-categories of CAF employment. As discussed above, there is an inherent need to represent modern Canadian society, to increase the representation of diverse people to include different points of view within military planning and ensure that individuals from diverse backgrounds have careers in the CAF. Implementing an internal EE strategy alongside GBA+ processes will assist the CAF in bringing in Canadians from diverse backgrounds by reaching into existing applicant pools and seeking out motivated individuals who identify with an underrepresented group. This will not only address the need for the CAF to be representative of Canadian society, a theme presented earlier in this paper, but the EE plan will also ensure these individuals receive equal opportunities throughout their careers<sup>40</sup>. EE enables diversity to function as a force multiplier by establishing metrics to guide the CAF in recruiting diverse individuals, bringing their perspectives to the CAF and that these individuals have the same access to opportunities, advancement, and contribution to the organization<sup>41</sup>.

---

<sup>38</sup> Johnstone and Momani, "Organizational Change in Canadian Public Institutions: The Implementations of GBA+ in DND/CAF."

<sup>39</sup> Canada, *Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan: 2021 - 2026*.

<sup>40</sup> Canada.

<sup>41</sup> Canada.

Diversity is a critical factor in increasing the CAFs ability to operate in multi-domain settings. EE ensures that Canadians from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to join the CAF as valued members, despite the similarities or differences between each person. Unit cohesion is imperative to operational effectiveness; without it teamwork is impossible, trust between members is non-existent, and respect and dignity is eroded between colleagues and the CAF image becomes subjected to public scrutiny<sup>42</sup>. Unit cohesion is necessary to being an effective military, as stated in *The Canadian Armed Forces Ethos – Trusted to Serve* “mutual trust between military members creates the cohesion necessary for teams to succeed in the face of adversity<sup>43</sup>” promoting inclusion and respect for diverse perspectives and backgrounds can enhance unit cohesion making the CAF more operationally effective by breaking down stereotypes and creating environments where teams openly communicate, individuals are heard, and their skills and experience is respected. In turn, this will increase the membership's professionalism, by way of increased cultural competence; allowing the CAF to conduct operations in support of national defense objectives within Canada and on the world stage.

Lastly, this section will discuss how diversity plays a crucial role in problem-solving and decision-making. The CAF operates in various settings domestically and internationally; members conduct a variety of roles that span from administrative functions to battlefield operations. As part of those duties, problem-solving and decision-making are two key activities that CAF members do every day. While these activities may seem routine, ensuring the effectiveness of the military depends on how well CAF members conduct these processes. *The Canadian Armed Forces Ethos – Trusted to Serve* highlights the importance of informed problem-solving and decision-making, stating that “Embracing diversity produces stronger teams with leaders capable of making better-informed decisions and with team members contributing their unique knowledge, skills, experience and perspectives to the team.”<sup>44</sup> In order to achieve success in their endeavours, it is imperative for the leaders of the CAF to tap into the diverse skill sets and extensive experience of all team members. Even those without formal decision-making power can contribute significantly to the planning process and ultimately take pride in the positive outcomes that result from their collective efforts. In short, a collaborative approach that values every member's input is vital to achieving individual and organizational success.

## **SECTION SIX: THE IMPACT OF LACK OF DIVERSITY ON THE CAF: CHALLENGES AND IMPROVEMENTS**

As discussed in this paper, having a diverse organization has numerous benefits, from recruiting and retention to bringing various skills, experiences and perspectives to the CAF, so they can be used to enhance the CAF's operational effectiveness. As a reflection of Canadian society, the CAF is considered an institution that embodies Canadian values and norms. While efforts have been made within the CAF to adopt more

---

<sup>42</sup> Canada, *Canadian Armed Forces Ethos*. Pg. 13

<sup>43</sup> Canada. Pg. 9

<sup>44</sup> Canada. Pg. 34

inclusive practices in recent years, the organization has suffered from low points where diversity was not a priority.

Misconduct within the CAF had culminated in government action to review and report on CAF culture. To inform the GoC and CAF senior leadership of the significant shortfalls within the CAF's culture, the government requested a review from Justice Marie Deschamps in 2015 titled *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, which evaluated the sexualized culture in the CAF. It identified where changes needed to be made to correct the internal culture shortfalls<sup>45</sup>. Failure to address many of the issues within the Deschamps report led to a second review by the Honourable Louise Arbour, titled *Independent External Comprehensive Review*<sup>46</sup>, which criticized the CAF for shortfalls in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) which required the CAF take immediate action to correct the workplace culture.

Failure to embrace diversity and promote inclusivity has significantly impacted the CAF in the past, which has impacted trust in the chain of command and morale, placed the CAF at odds with Canadian society, and impacted operational effectiveness. The progressive approach to changing the CAF culture has been significant moving forward, but only recently; should the CAF regress DEI initiatives like GBA+ and the CAF EE program, it would jeopardize the organization by making it less operationally effective and disconnected from Canadian society<sup>47</sup>. Ensuring that diversity practices remain in place is crucial to remain a relevant, credible organization that reflects Canadian society and can effectively carry out its mandate while fostering a culture of respect and inclusivity.

## CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, this paper has explored the impact of Diversity in the CAF and provided evidence that Diversity can be a force multiplier to promote operational effectiveness. In order to be seen as a credible organization, the CAF needs to attract people who are reflective of modern Canadian society. Creating a stronger bond between Canadian society and the CAF requires prioritizing DEI initiatives to appeal to a more comprehensive range of potential Canadians who may see the CAF as an employer of choice. The CAF must continue to improve its DEI practices through education and leadership to prevent repeating the mistakes made by neglecting these initiatives. In order to achieve this, cultural competence will be a crucial factor for CAF members to adopt as a skill to rationalize their background and evaluate legacy CAF procedures that may need to shift to be more inclusive. GBA+ and CAF EE programs are crucial for recognizing underrepresented communities and addressing disparities that CAF operations, policy or procedures may unintentionally cause. By recognizing the value of Diversity as a force multiplier, the CAF can improve unit cohesion. This will lead to a more skilled and

---

<sup>45</sup> Canada, "External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces."

<sup>46</sup> Canada, "Report of the Independent External Comprehensive Review."

<sup>47</sup> Edgar et al., *Strengthening the Canadian Armed Forces through Diversity and Inclusion*.

professional group of CAF members capable of effectively responding to operational challenges.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brown, Vanessa, and Alan Okros. "Unlearning 'Stranger Danger': Developing Cultural Competence in Canadian Military Professionals Through Collective Learning and Self-Reflection." In *Warriors or Peacekeepers? Building Military Cultural Competence*, edited by Kjetil Enstad and Paula Holmes-Eber, 75–96. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36766-4\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36766-4_6).
- Canada, Department of National Defence. *Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan: 2021 - 2026*. Ottawa: National Defence = Défense nationale, n.d. Accessed April 26, 2023.
- . *Canadian Armed Forces ETHOS: Trusted to Serve*. Ottawa: National Defence = Défense nationale, 2022. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/canadian-armed-forces-ethos-trusted-to-serve.html>.
- . *Canadian Armed Forces Retention Strategy*. Ottawa: National Defence = Défense nationale, 2022.
- . "CDS Directive for Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Related Resolutions into CAF Planning and Operations." Education and awareness, February 12, 2016. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/conduct/cds-directive-unscr-1325.html>.
- . "Chief Professional Conduct and Culture," April 29, 2021. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/organizational-structure/chief-professional-conduct-culture.html>.
- . "External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces." Education and awareness, April 30, 2015. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/sexual-misbehaviour/external-review-2015.html>.
- . "Fostering an Inclusive and Diverse Workplace," March 6, 2019. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/women-in-the-forces/fostering-inclusive-diverse-workplace.html>.
- . "Report of the Independent External Comprehensive Review." Navigation page, June 10, 2022. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/report-of-the-independent-external-comprehensive-review.html>.
- . *Strong Secure Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*. Ottawa, ON, CA: National Defence, 2017.
- . "The Operational Planning Process," October 6, 2021. <https://www.canada.ca/en/army/services/line-sight/articles/2021/10/the-operational-planning-process.html>.

- . “The Path to Dignity and Respect,” October 28, 2020.  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/the-path-to-dignity-and-respect.html>.
- Canada, Women and Gender Equality. “Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus),” March 31, 2021. <https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus.html>.
- “Cultural Competence in Healthcare.” In *Wikipedia*, March 27, 2023.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cultural\\_competence\\_in\\_healthcare&oldid=1146894543](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cultural_competence_in_healthcare&oldid=1146894543).
- Edgar, Alistair D., Rupinder Mangat, Bessma Momani, Inc OverDrive, and OverDrive ebook. *Strengthening the Canadian Armed Forces through Diversity and Inclusion*. Book, Whole. Toronto; Buffalo; University of Toronto Press, 2019.
- Formanek, Kay, Inc Overdrive, and Overdrive ebook. *Beyond D&I: Leading Diversity with Purpose and Inclusiveness*. Book, Whole. Cham: Springer International Publishing AG, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-75336-8>.
- Government of Canada. “Introduction to GBA Plus.” Government of Canada. Introduction to GBA Plus, March 31, 2021. [https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/gbaplus-course-cours-acplus/eng/mod03/mod03\\_02\\_01.html](https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/gbaplus-course-cours-acplus/eng/mod03/mod03_02_01.html).
- Jamal, Jamilah, and Hassan Abu Bakar. “Revisiting Organizational Credibility and Organizational Reputation – A Situational Crisis Communication Approach.” In *SHS Web of Conferences*, Vol. 33. Les Ulis, France: EDP Sciences, 2017.  
<https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20173300083>.
- Johnstone, Rachael, and Bessma Momani. “Organizational Change in Canadian Public Institutions: The Implementations of GBA+ in DND/CAF.” *Canadian Public Administration* 62, no. 3 (2019): 500–519. <https://doi.org/10.1111/capa.12338>.
- Juneau, Thomas, Philippe Lagassé, and Srdjan Vucetic. “The Demographics of Force Generation: Recruitment, Attrition and Retention of Citizen Soldiers.” In *Canadian Defence Policy in Theory and Practice*, 179–200. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing AG, 2019. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26403-1\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26403-1_11).
- McDonald, Daniel P., Kizzy M. Parks, EBSCOhost (Online service), and EBSCO ebook. *Managing Diversity in the Military: The Value of Inclusion in a Culture of Uniformity*. Book, Whole. London; New York; Routledge, 2012.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203606926>.
- United Nations Security Council. “Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) [Women, Peace and Security].” UNSC Resolution, October 31, 200AD.  
<https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f4672e.html>.