

CANADA – NATIONAL REPORT on the Integration of Women

Introduction

The Canadian Forces (CF) is an all-volunteer military, whose members are drawn from the Canadian population it serves. As a national institution, the CF strives to reflect Canada's cultural, ethnic, gender, and bilingual makeup, as well as its regional diversity. Be male or female, regardless of race, religion, or culture, CF members are eligible to serve in a military occupations and collectively share the goal of protecting the country, its interests, and values, while at the same time contributing to international peace and security.

Evolving Canadian demographics, especially in ethno-cultural and age aspects, demand that the CF embrace diversity as a core value and be perceived as an employer of choice for Canadians. For the Defence Team, recruiting and employing women is not only the law and "right thing to do" but first and foremost, it is a question of long-term viability.

New Policy and Pending Initiatives

In December 2004, the CF completed an Employment System Review (ESR) that examined Canadian Forces' Human Resources (HR) policies and practices. The purpose of the ESR was to identify employment barriers affecting members of the four groups designated under the *Employment Equity Act* that are under-represented in the Canadian workforce. These groups are Women, Visible Minorities, Aboriginals, and Persons with Disabilities. (However, it should be noted that the CF does not recruit persons with disabilities because of the requirement for a Force, and therefore is exempt from this aspect of the *EE Act*) More than 200 recommendations contained in the ESR were considered during the development of the new Canadian Forces Employment Equity (EE) Plan, which will be issued later in 2005. The EE plan will provide the framework for measures designed to ensure that women, as well as Aboriginals and Visible Minorities, are accorded an equitable opportunity to join the CF and advance within their career. The EE Plan has three broad initiatives:

- to improve representation, by taking a more systematic approach to recruiting and addressing specific issues around propensity to join the military;
- to create a more inclusive-minded Canadian Forces, by increasing awareness through communications and training and increasing acceptance of EE and diversity within the CF; and
- to facilitate career development, by ensuring that all members are given an equal opportunity to serve without discrimination or harassment and the opportunity to serve to the best of their ability. This initiative will include a review, and where warranted, modifications to policies on promotion, leave, terms of service, pay and dress, as well as other HR initiatives.

The expected benefits resulting from these initiatives are a stronger capacity to recruit and retain women, including improved training and development programs, which will in turn lead to an overall increase in organizational and operational effectiveness.

Current Strength

As of April 2005, there are just over 16,000 women serving in the Canadian Forces, which represents 16.6% of the total military population. This can be further broken down by component.

with women making up 12.6% of the Regular Force and 20% of the Primary Reserves. Tab and III provide representation by rank for Regular Force officers and Non Commissioned Members (NCMs).

Table IV presents the representation of women across the Navy, Army and Air Force addition to the operational occupations, these numbers include the support elements, such Logistics, Medical, and others, in which there is a higher percentage of women. Finally, Tab and VI provide representation data for the various CF Military Occupations.

Representation goals for Women

The CF has an ongoing initiative to validate what is realistic in terms of representation goals for women, based on surveyed propensity to join and availability of women in the Canadian Labour Market. For example, while 20% of women may express a willingness to consider a career in the military, it is unrealistic to conclude that they are equally interested in joining occupations such as combat arms, pilot or naval technician, which continue to have low female representation rates more than 15 years after gender restrictions were lifted. In setting representation goals it would be ideal to have comparable civilian occupation workforce data; it is not always possible, given the unique nature of military duties. Therefore, we need to develop a defensible methodology for setting goals that takes into account the "military factor" and produces realistic goals. Notwithstanding, we must also examine to what extent we can influence women's "propensity to join" the CF in general and combat arms and other operational occupations in particular. For example, by eliminating unnecessary barriers within all CF occupations it may be possible to increase women's propensity to join, to choose heretofore "traditional" occupations, and to remain in the CF for a fulfilling career.

Recruiting

Research indicates that the propensity for Canadian women to join the military is approximately 20%. The most recent Regular Force enrolment data shows that overall enrolment percentages remain above the current in-service representation percentages for women, an indicator that Canadian Forces recruiting efforts for women continue to be successful.

The national recruiting strategy promotes the CF as an inclusive organization, depicting women as integral members of the military team. Each year, the Canadian Forces Recruiting Group participates in numerous female-focused shows and seminars, ensuring that female military members are present at all recruiting events. The informational CD "Women in the Canadian Forces" has proven to be a valuable female oriented attraction tool. It is available for download on the CF Recruiting website.

Attrition

The CF Retention Team studies attrition and retention trends, identifies potential problem areas and works with the three services to manage occupation specific attrition issues. Current analysis indicates that on a macro level, CF attrition does not vary significantly by gender, with women NCMs experiencing a slightly lower rate of attrition in comparison to men, and women officers experiencing a slightly higher attrition rate in comparison to their male officer counterparts. However, some occupations experience higher rates of attrition for women than others. An additional study in this area will be conducted over the next year.

Environmental Commands

Navy

In 2004, the Navy completed studies on why people transfer out of Naval occupation remain in the CF, as well as why others choose to remain in Naval occupations. There were significant differences based on gender. Not surprisingly, both men and women reported that their primary reason for leaving the Navy was the extended periods away from home.

To date, although a number of women have now reached the senior officer level in the Maritime Surface and Naval Engineering occupations, no woman has yet been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Commander. However, the Navy recently appointed the first female Coxswain of a major Canadian warship.

Army

In 2004, the Army conducted two studies in support of the strategic objective of shaping Army culture. The first study, *The Army Socio-cultural Survey*, mapped the core values of soldiers against those of Canadian society and examined the predominant values of different groups within Canada's Army. The second study, *The Army Culture and Climate Survey*, focused on dimensions of organizational climate, such as how soldiers feel about different aspects of their work and workplace.

Of specific relevance to gender integration, it was found that Army personnel tended "neutral to positive" on ratings of gender integration. Both men and women in the Army believe that the best candidate should be selected for a job, regardless of gender or minority status. Generally, the higher the rank, the higher level of acceptance of women, until at Chief Warrant Officer and Lieutenant-Colonel/Colonel ranks, men and women were assessed as equally capable. Corporals, the most negative rank group on most issues, including acceptance of gender integration, found the presence of women in the Army acceptable but tended to believe that their presence in combat is unacceptable. Operational combat units were the least accepting of women, rating them unacceptable in combat, and the integration process as marginally successful. Women rated gender integration more favourably than did men. Women rated their capabilities more highly than men rated them, and in fact, rated themselves as highly as the men. Women also considered the integration process to be progressing better than did men. One area in which men and women came close to agreeing was on the issue of women in combat. Neither group offered unbridled support for the concept, although women were more enthusiastic than men. Also of interest, women were found to be more open to diversity issues in general than were men, a finding that could prove useful should selection for certain positions ever be contingent upon one's potential to work effectively in a multicultural environment, for example.

Air Force

The new Air Force Climate Survey was used for the first time and preliminary results indicate that it is adding much value to the workplace and there are plans to expand its use in the coming year. The survey is used only by the Commanding Officer within his or her unit, as a reflection of the leadership and morale within the unit. It provides direct feedback and enables the CO to adjust internal leadership and unit directives and policies to improve the work environment. In addition, the Air Force is working on the development of an Air Force Campaign Plan that will initiate a culture shift away from attrition and towards a culture of retention. The objective of the plan is to provide a professional, progressive and supportive environment for Air Force men and women. Specific efforts to retain women, Aboriginals and Visible Minorities will be integrated in the overall retention plan. Of note, the Air Force achieved a milestone in

2004 when the first female Squadron Chief Warrant Officer was appointed to an Air Movement Squadron.

Conclusion

In summary, the number and percentage of women in the Canadian military continue to grow, although more slowly in some occupations than others. It is recognized that there is still much work to be done in order for the current momentum to continue. Implementation of the Employment Equity Plan will enable the CF to move forward in its efforts to improve recruitment and retention for all designated groups, including women. Over the last year the CF experienced less "significant firsts" for women than in recent years. This should be viewed as a positive indicator that there are fewer significant CF positions left that have not yet been filled by women. However, the continuing challenge is to eliminate any remaining barriers, so that qualified women are able to join the Canadian Forces in the occupation of their choice, reach their fullest potential and enjoy a long and rewarding career in the Profession of Arms.

Tables and Figures (as of 01 April 2005)

Table I: Total CF Regular Force Strength (1989 – 2005)

	1989	2003	2005
WOMEN	8,641	6,992	7785
MEN	79,056	52,400	53,847
TOTAL	87,697	59,392	61,632
FEMALE REPRESENTATION	9.9%	11.7%	12.6%

Table II: Current Representation By Rank - Regular Force Officers

	GEN	COL	LCOL	MAJ	CAPT	LT	2LT	OCDT	TOTAL
Women	3	12	63	298	902	235	165	402	2080
Men	67	306	1022	2877	4942	794	795	1383	12186
Total	70	318	1085	3175	5844	1029	960	1785	14266
% Women	4.3%	3.9%	5.8%	9.4%	15.4%	22.8%	17.2%	22.5%	14.6%

Table III: Current Representation By Rank – Regular Force NCMs

	CWO	MWO	WO	SGT	MCPL	CPL	PTE	TOTAL
Women	29	101	267	715	1052	2083	1429	5706
Men	627	1682	3403	5973	7266	14009	8701	41666
Total	656	1783	3670	6688	8318	16092	10130	47372
% Women	4.4%	5.7%	7.3%	10.7%	12.6%	12.9%	14.1%	12.1%

Table IV: Current Representation By Uniform – Regular Force Officers and NCMs

	Navy	Army	Air Force
WOMEN	1377	3218	3161
MEN	10414	27933	15875
TOTAL	11418	31151	19036
FEMALE REPRESENTATION	12.1%	9.7%	16.6%

Table V: Female Regular Force Officer Representation by Military Occupation

MILITARY OCCUPATION GROUP	1989	2003	2005
General Officers	0.7%	1.4%	3.2%
Naval Operations	1.4%	10.9%	10.2%
Maritime Engineering	1.8%	9.8%	10.6%
Combat Arms	0.3%	3.8%	3.9%
Air Operations – Pilot	1.5%	3.6%	3.4%
Air Operations	7.1%	12.0%	12.4%
Aerospace Engineering	6.8%	14.7%	16.3%
Engineering	6.2%	11.8%	10.4%
Medical and Dental	41.8%	43.1%	44.4%
Chaplaincy	3.1%	12.8%	12.9%
Support	17.9%	16.6%	23.9%
Officer Cadets - Unassigned	15.4%	17.0%	21.4%
TOTAL	9.3%	12.1%	14.4%

Table VI: Female Regular Force Non-Commissioned Representation

MILITARY OCCUPATION GROUP	1989	2003	2005
Naval Operations	5.6%	9.4%	9.6%
Maintenance - Naval	0.5%	2.2%	2.8%
Combat Arms	0.4%	1.5%	1.4%
Air Operations - Transmissions	10.0%	10.5%	10.8%
Air Technicians	7.7%	8.2%	8.0%
Military Police	11.4%	10.1%	11.1%
Operations - General	14.1%	14.9%	14.1%
Communications/Electronics	0.8%	7.3%	6.8%
Medical	19.2%	36.4%	36.4%
Dental	46.8%	74.3%	77.5%
Electrical and Mechanical	2.3%	2.4%	2.3%
Military Engineers	2.2%	1.9%	2.3%
Clerical Personnel	35.5%	47.5%	50.0%
Music	12.8%	21.1%	20.4%
Logistical Support	18.7%	19.4%	20%
TOTAL	9.7%	10.7%	12%