

## **Canadian Forces National Report**

### **Introduction**

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

Changing Canadian demographics, especially in ethno-cultural and age aspects demands that the CF sincerely practice diversity to be seen as an employer of choice. For the Defence Team, recruiting and employing women is not only the law and the "right thing to do" but first and foremost, it is a question of long-term viability.

Overall integration of women in every occupation of the Canadian Forces, at every rank level and in every environment continued to progress in 2003. This report will outline the status to date of the integration of women into the Canadian Forces, including current representation rates, recruitment and retention issues and training concerns. The report will cover general policies affecting the employment of women and will include specific Army, Navy and Air Force program implementation and successes.

### **New Policy**

As of December 2002, the CF is subject to the *Employment Equity Act*. The purpose of the *Act* is to achieve equality in the workplace so that no person should be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability and, in the fulfillment of that goal, to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by women, Aboriginal peoples, members of visible minorities and persons with disabilities by giving effect to the principle that employment equity means more than treating persons in the same way but also requires special measures and the accommodation of differences.

The CF has had a long-standing commitment to employment equity and diversity. Diversity remains a source of strength and creativity and the CF is committed to take full advantage of the ethnic and cultural diversity of Canada's population.

The CF seeks to be an inclusive workforce, representative of Canadian society. This is viewed as a key issue for recruiting and retention. The goal is to attract the best candidate possible, regardless of gender or ethnic background, to ensure our operational effectiveness into the future.

In 2003, the CF embarked on a large-scale Employment Systems Review (ESR) project. The aim of the ESR is to identify and eliminate employment barriers that affect members of the four groups designated by the Employment Equity Act, which includes women. The CF ESR will review policies and practices – both formal and informal – that relate to the following employment systems: recruitment, selection and enrolment; training and development; career management and promotion, re-engagement and release; other working conditions, such as attitudes, culture and inclusiveness; and reasonable accommodation of designated-group members. The benefits to organizational and operational effectiveness resulting from the CF ESR range from a stronger capacity to recruit and retain women, to improved training and development

programs. The desired end-state is to increase diversity, promote inclusiveness and provide a barrier-free work environment for all CF members.

The CF has completed the Interim Dress Policy for CF female Muslim members. The policy provides guidelines to assist Commanding Officers respond to requests for dress accommodation by CF female Muslim members. The policy allows the tailoring of existing service uniforms to allow for looser-fitting, non-revealing garments. Female Muslim members joining the CF are required by their Islamic faith to dress in a simple and modest fashion. Women are required to cover their entire body with the exception of the hands and face. The hair covering to be used by CF female Muslim members is a hijab. Permission to wear this item is subject to operational and safety requirements.

The integration of women in the CF has led to the need for better and clearer policies on harassment prevention and resolution. The Army has recently created an Army Conflict Resolution site to help its members – male and female – adjust to the realities of life in combat occupations. The purpose is to provide the necessary tools and information to manage and resolve conflicts in the workplace as the Land Force is committed to preventing conflicts and harassment, and resolving such situations where they exist. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that the workplace is free of harassment and that incidents are dealt with appropriately. Also, in November 2003, a Land Force Command Order was issued. It provides additional direction regarding the application of the Conflict Management Program as it pertains to the Land Force. The Chief of the Land Staff is a strong supporter of the Conflict Management Program (CMP), which promotes healthy and effective communication through the timely use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods, which contribute to the resolution of disputes in the workplace.

### **Organization**

#### **Current Strength**

As of 30 September 2003, there are 16136 (16.3%) women serving in the CF (refer to Table I). Women total 1907 (14.0%) of the Regular Force Officers and 5513 (11.7%) of Regular Force Non-Commissioned Members (NCM). The representation rates for women rise significantly in the Reserves. There are 3167 Officers (29.4%), and 5549 NCMs (19.9%). The trend remains with women more likely to join the CF as an officer than an NCM. The concentration of women continues to be in the more traditional areas of support as well as medical and dental occupations, but there has been some progress in the less traditional occupations, with particular successes in the Naval operations and maritime engineering occupational groups. There has been some modest progress in the combat arms occupations but this continues to be the least successful in terms of integration. Female representation tends to be highest in the Air Force with approximately 21.2% of the total population. Women represent 19.8% of the Navy and 14.0% of the Army. Table II provides the complete rank distribution of Regular Force women as of 1 January 2004. Figures 1 and 2 show the latest trend for recruiting and releases from the Regular Force. Women Officers are releasing at a slower pace than their male counterparts (refer to Fig 1). Unfortunately, women NCMs are releasing at a greater rate than their male counterparts (refer to Fig 2). This is of particular concern for the Navy.

## **Environmental**

### **Navy**

Currently, the attrition of women from hard sea occupations remains greater than that of males. However, the navy remains committed to increasing the numbers of females recruited. This year, the Maritime Officer Selection Test was evaluated and it was found that using the test for the selection of future naval officers did not have an adverse impact on women. The Navy has completed the first part of a personnel study entitled "Why They Leave", which looks at why sailors leave from the Canadian Forces, in an effort to pinpoint lifestyle and quality of life trends in the attrition of personnel and to identify strategies to stem the flow of trained sailors. Part 2 of the study, which is now looking at why sailors leave the Navy and pursue other non sea-going occupations within the Canadian Forces, is underway and is anticipated to be completed by the summer of 2004.

The navy has been conducting exit interviews, surveys and focus groups in order to understand why people are leaving. Of special note, ships are no longer designated single or mixed gender. All ships have women embarked and they accounted for 10% of all ship's companies deployed in the war against terrorism.

### **Air Force**

Since the mid 1980s, the Air Force (AF) has opened its doors to Canadian women. Today we have seen many 'firsts' i.e. first female fighter pilot, first female Snowbird pilot, first female Search and Rescue Technicians, as well as, our first female Squadron Commander to name a few. While there is still work to be done in this area, there has been a shift in strategy from an 'individual-based' approach to a broader, organizational focus to ensure that the AF culture provides an open and barrier-free institution.

One of the key organization-wide developments, in terms of women, has been the development of a measure of organizational climate. The AF has recently developed a unique measure of organizational climate, which will serve as a diagnostic tool for the senior leadership to monitor the 'pulse' of their respective organizations. In particular, the questionnaire will include indicators of a 'supportive work environment', including support to and effective management of diverse work teams, in particular women.

A second and very important aspect in the AF culture today is the formulation of a retention strategy. While this strategy focuses on retention of Air personnel as a collective, the research that provides the direction for the retention initiatives systematically addresses all issues in terms of gender. This 'gender-lens' approach to retention initiatives ensures that any unique circumstances related to both men and women are continually considered. Additionally, the AF continues to concentrate on validating various selection protocols and training procedures in the non-traditional AF occupations to determine adverse impact on the representation rates of women.

In conjunction with the legislation for gender equity, the AF has established a pan-Air Force organizational structure to promote diversity and a barrier free work place. Positions at the headquarters' level, accompanied by established positions at all Wings across the Air environment, ensure policy and programs related to gender remain a high priority throughout the organization. This

structure has provided avenues for women to obtain support in ventures such as the Canadian Women In Aviation (CWIA) Association.

### **Army**

Women have been deployed to many different areas outside Canada during the last year – Bosnia, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and other locations. Women are an integral part of the groups being deployed on these missions, as the Canadian Army does not differentiate between genders when choosing personnel.

In 2002, the Army began a three-year Army Culture Project that aims to define the current Army culture and the culture issues that need to be addressed as part of Army transformation. Between September and October 2003, a specially designed culture and climate survey was mailed to 3 900 Regular Force and 3 400 Reserve Force personnel belonging to the Army. The data is in the process of being compiled and analysed.

The Army has completed the second year of its Three-Year Employment Equity Plan (2002-2005). There are two full-time Employment Equity Officers at Lancaster Force Command, and an Employment Equity Officer at each of the four Area Headquarters. Currently, female officers fill three of the six positions.

### **Recruiting**

Current research indicates that the propensity of women to join the military remains approximately 20%. The most recent Regular Force enrolment data shows that 23% of officer enrolments and 14% of NCM enrolments are female. These enrolment percentages are above the current in-service representation, and are seen as a positive sign that our recruiting efforts are successful. The CF will continue to face difficulty in attracting and recruiting women into the forces. A longitudinal tracking survey conducted during the year indicates that the female propensity to enroll is half that of the male population (4% of young females would consider enrolling vice 8% of young males), and many of the employment drivers that women rate highly are not associated by them with the CF.

The recruiting strategy continues to promote the CF as an inclusive organization depicting women as integral members of the military team. The Canadian Forces Recruiting Group participated in numerous female focused shows and seminars, ensuring that there were female military members at all recruiting events. The new informational CD titled "Women in the Canadian Forces" proved to be a valuable female oriented attraction tool.

### **Training**

After a two-year study, the validation of the present CF EXPRES Test - the standard physical fitness test used by all non-Army units - has been completed. The test, which has been in use for the past ten years, was evaluated to ensure that the methodology used in its development was still valid in light of the advances in the science on which it was based. While the study found that the test was still valid as a measurement of overall fitness, differing gender and age performance requirements had led to widespread misunderstandings about the test and the perception of a double standard. The study recommended modifications to the testing procedures to eliminate this confusion including the possible expansion of the present test factors to ensure that the test remains a valid measurement of overall fitness.

The new CF EXPRES Test (MPFS 2000) was expected to undergo a three-year trial programme commencing in 2003 however the trial was postponed pending further review. The new test is based on the 5 common tasks approved by the Environmental Chiefs of Staff. The new EXPRES Test is designed to eliminate the perceived bias between the male and female standards.

A new Army fitness manual was issued in the summer of 2003 that is designed on task-based physical fitness testing. The Army Fitness standard once fully developed will have four tasks. Currently, the Land Force Command Physical Fitness Standard includes; Weight Load March and the Casualty Evacuation. In the future, the tasks of Ammunition Box Lift and Trench (Maximal) Dig will be added. These physical fitness requirements reflect the tasks encountered in operations and combat and the same tasks are required to be completed by both men and women.

#### **Special Interest**

The year 2003 witnessed several "first" for the navy. The Chief of the Maritime Staff appointed the first women Commanding Officer of a Canadian warship.

The second Command appointment has a female diving officer as the first Commanding Officer of the Experimental Diving Unit in Toronto. In the summer of 2003, the first woman to become Executive Officer of a Maritime Coastal Defence Vessel was announced.

Two female sailors graduated from a gruelling 11-month course to become the first female clearance divers in the 49-year history of the Fleet Diving Unit. In July 2003, two other sailors became Canada's first women non-commissioned submariners and were assigned to HMCS CORNERBROOK.

The Canadian Army continues to make progress in Combat Arms integration. There is a female commanding a Regular Force Field Artillery Battery, and another Regular Force female is Deputy Commanding Officer of a Field Engineer Regiment. Women continue to be integrated into all sectors of the Canadian Army and the CF.

The CF is an all-volunteer non-unionized force. Under the Canadian *Employment Equity Act*, the CF has a legal obligation to consult with our designated group members. The Defence Women's Advisory Organization (DWAO) is a joint civilian/military organization. Its members are volunteers who represent all sectors of the organization, including all ranks, elements and components. The DWAO is the mechanism whereby the organization informally consults with its female membership. The DWAO mandate is to identify 'policy and practice' concerns for women, both military and civilian, and raise them to the attention of senior management and leadership. In 2003, efforts continued to promote the establishment of regional groups across the department and to improve communication capabilities between these groups and individual members.

The DWAO has been working with Status of Women Canada to investigate the feasibility of incorporating Gender Based Analysis training into the daily activities of the CF, in particular policy development and writing. Gender Based Analysis is similar to the 'Gender Mainstreaming' currently being conducted in Europe. The DWAO have sponsored two pilot courses and the feedback has been positive. Another course will be conducted in 2004.

The CF has been very active in its support to International Women's Day, which is celebrated on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March every year. In fact, the CF was the focus of th

year's event in our largest and most ethnically diverse city, Toronto. Three senior women officers attend and presented at the ceremony, as representatives of women in non-traditional roles from all three environments.

#### **Conclusion**

This report outlined the status of the integration of women into the Canadian Forces and covered general policies affecting the employment of women, including specific Army, Navy and Air Force program implementation and successes. Gender Integration in the CF is progressing well in all three services. The number and percentage of women in the military continues to grow, but it is recognized that there is still more work to be done in order for the current momentum to continue. Change takes time and is measured in slow, steady progress at all levels of the organization. The CF ESR recommendations will provide valuable insight and enable the CF to concentrate its efforts to improve recruitment and retention for all designated groups, including women. Diversity and gender integration is a question of leadership and not a simple matter of embracing a social cause. It means the active inclusion of all CF members, men or women, as equitable contributors to mission accomplishment. Equally important is the positive effect that active inclusion can have on cohesion and morale, and therefore operational effectiveness. For the CF, the bottom-line is the active inclusion of all CF members as a function of leadership.

**Table I: Current Representation of Female Regular Force, Reserve Force and Total CF (Officers and Non-Commissioned Members)**

<b>COMPONENT</b>	<b>TOTAL # OF MEMBERS</b>	<b>TOTAL # OF WOMEN</b>	<b>TOTAL % OF WOMEN</b>
<b>Regular Force</b>			
<b>Officers</b>	13576	1907	14.0
<b>NCMs</b>	46970	5513	11.7
<b>TOTAL REGULAR FORCE</b>	60546	7420	<b>12.3%</b>
<b>Reserve Force</b>			
<b>Officers</b>	10754	3167	29.4
<b>NCMs</b>	27856	5549	19.9
<b>TOTAL RESERVE FORCE</b>	38610	8716	<b>22.6%</b>
<b>Total CF</b>			
<b>Officers</b>	24330	7420	12.3%
<b>NCMs</b>	74826	8716	22.6%
<b>TOTAL CF</b>	99156	16136	<b>16.3%</b>

As of 30 September 2003

NAVY					ARMY	
RANK	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	%	FEMALE	MALE
GEN			0			0
LGEN		4	4	0.0		3
MGEN		8	8	0.0		9
BGEN		8	8	0.0		18
COL	5	63	68	7.4	3	129
LCOL	13	211	224	5.8	11	420
MAJ	43	586	629	6.8	89	1173
CAPT	181	820	1001	18.1	287	1816
LT	46	173	219	21.0	89	329
2LT	41	140	181	22.7	82	378
OCDT	99	202	137	72.3	130	598
<b>TOTAL OFFICER</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>2215</b>	<b>2643</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>4873</b>
CWO	3	140	143	2.1	9	272
MWO	15	479	494	3.0	29	686
WO	28	825	853	3.3	75	1682
SGT	90	1312	1402	6.4	229	2981
MCPL	144	1289	1433	10.0	391	3735
CPL	335	2131	2466	13.6	944	8377
PTE	302	1659	1961	15.4	702	5520
<b>TOTAL NCM</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>7835</b>	<b>8752</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>2379</b>	<b>23253</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1345</b>	<b>10050</b>	<b>11395</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>3070</b>	<b>28126</b>

Table II - Distribution Of Total Regular Force, As of 1 January 2004 (Based On DEU)

Figure 1

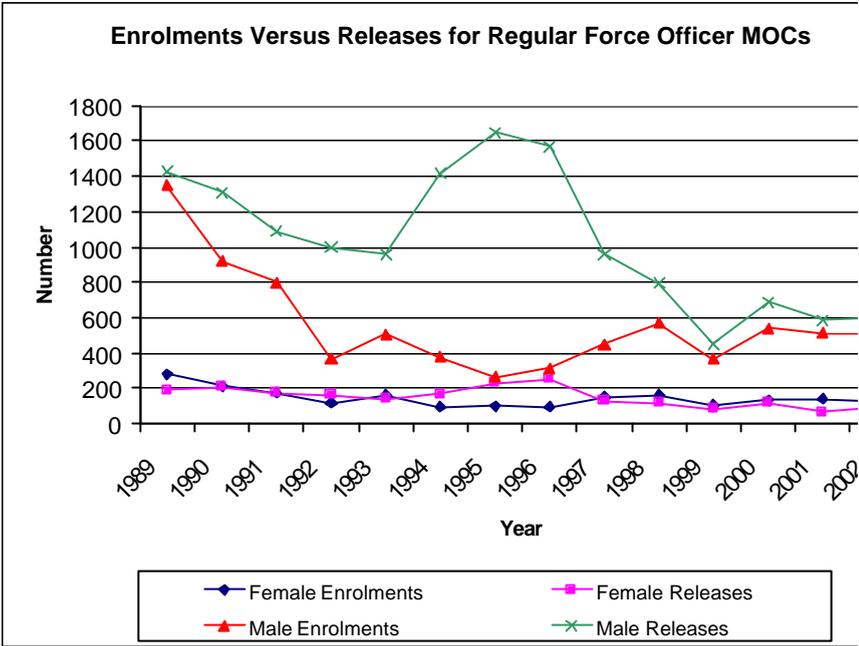


Figure 2

