

Canadian Forces 2009 National Report To the Committee for Women in NATO Forces (CWINF)

Introduction

The Canadian Forces (CF) is an all-volunteer military whose members are drawn directly 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. The CF endeavours to reach out to a broader base of Canadians and to encourage greater diversity within the Forces. Membership in the CF is open to all interested and qualified Canadian citizens regardless of gender, race, culture or religion. All CF members are eligible to serve in all military occupations subject to suitability and requirements and there are no formal restrictions on the employment of women. The CF population is increasingly diverse, however all members share the same goal of protecting the country, its interests and values, while contributing to international peace and security.

Legislative Framework

The Canadian Employment Equity Act provides the legislative framework under which gender integration is implemented in the CF. The CF establishes representation goals for each military occupation based on the availability of women (and other Designated Group Members) in the Canadian Labour Market. The 2006 CF Employment Equity Plan (CF EE Plan) indicates an overall goal of 19.5% women in the CF and expresses the commitment to adopting proactive measures that will make the CF inclusive for men and women of all cultures, on the way to building the diverse CF of tomorrow. Progress towards achieving these goals is subject to external review by the Canadian Human Rights Commission and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, a department of the Government of Canada. The Plan enumerates specific employment equity and diversity tasks and identifies activities in support of those tasks as well as their expected outcomes. The CF's commitment to EE and diversity is not just a legal or moral matter, but a question of successfully adapting to Canada's changing demographics and sustaining the operational effectiveness of the CF into the future.

Policies and Initiatives Concerning Implementation of Gender Mainstreaming

In keeping with its core values of freedom, democracy, Human Rights and the rule of law, Canada is committed to the effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. Canada's efforts to implement Resolutions 1325 and 1820 are linked to the overall promotion and protection of equality and Human Rights for women and girls within the framework of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and its obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other international human rights instruments. Canada ensures that equality and Human Rights for women and girls are integrated into its domestic and international policies and programs. A number of Canada's federal government departments

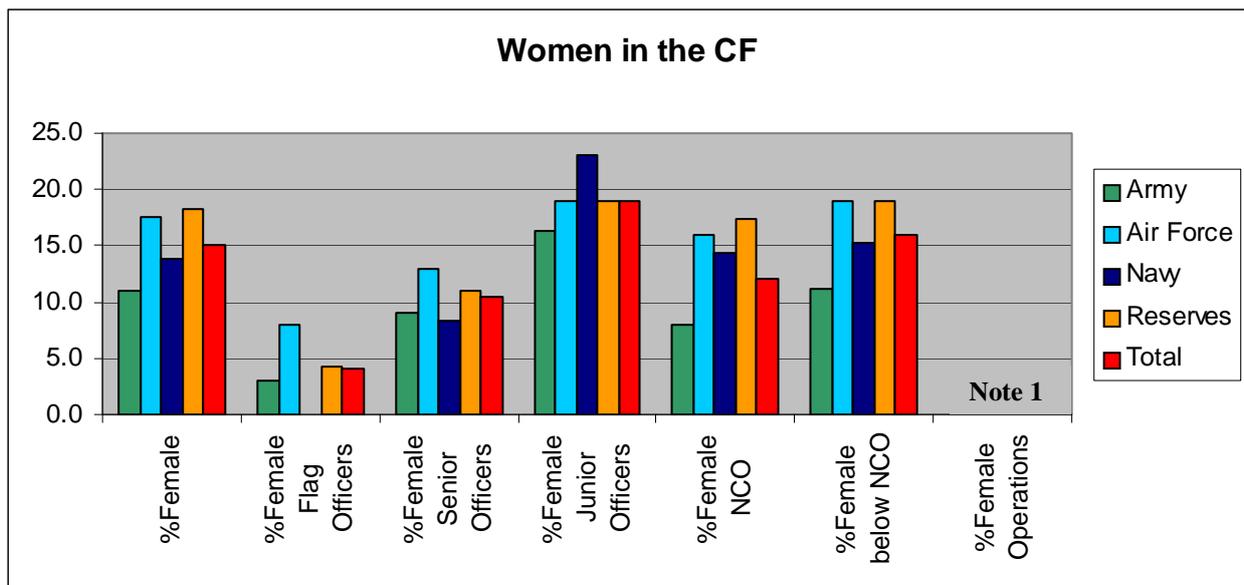
including the Canadian Forces and Department of National Defence (DND) are involved in the implementation of 1325 and 1820, each with a specific area of responsibility.

The Peace Support Training Center (PSTC) and Department Foreign Affairs International Trade have developed specific country cultural programs and awareness training for those to be deployed to and or in support of operations. The training emphasizes an awareness of gender, gender differences, and culture. The cultural training and gender consideration components taught during pre-deployment training have allowed the CF to more effectively prepare personnel to effectively deal with cultural and gender aspects during deployment. This training approach has resulted in a net benefit in the operational aspect. In Afghanistan, this approach demonstrates both men and women respect by recognizing their differences and similarities to mainstream Canadian culture and gender interaction.

Organization

Table I: Representation of Women in the Canadian Forces (Regular and Reserve)
May 2009

	%Female	%Female Flag Officers	%Female Senior Officers	%Female Junior Officers	%Female NCO	%Female below NCO	%Female Operations
Army	11.0	3.0	9.0	16.4	8.0	11.2	
Air Force	17.5	8.0	13.0	19.0	16.0	19.0	
Navy	13.9	0.0	8.4	23.0	14.4	15.2	
Reserves	18.2	4.3	11.0	19.0	17.3	19.0	
Total	15.1	4.0	10.4	19.0	12.0	16.0	Note 1



Note 1. The percentage of women deployed on CF operations normally corresponds with the percentages displayed in the columns to the left as gender is not a factor in selection for deployment. However, the percentage of CF women deployed to combat operations such as in

Afghanistan is in the range of 8%. This lower percentage can be attributed to the higher concentration of Combat Arms personnel on such deployments and the lower representation of women within these military occupations.

Recruitment

The CF has introduced several measures to attract greater numbers of qualified women from the Canadian workforce. Current activities targeting potential female applicants range from local initiatives like Recruiting Open Houses for women on International Women’s Day, participation in “Women in Leadership” career days and speaking engagements at different universities in Canada where women leaders of business and industry have the opportunity to discuss their own careers with the leaders of tomorrow. At these latter venues, women in senior military positions share their experiences and provide women with important career information about the CF. Each major recruiting centre has a designated Diversity Officer whose primary responsibility is to liaise with key influencers in different groups and organizations. The recruitment of women is a priority. The Diversity Officers highlight the significant contributions made by women in the CF in Canada and abroad, and increase awareness of career opportunities for women and other in the CF. The increase in the representation of women in the CF in recent years is encouraging and suggests outreach activities to promote Diversity within the CF have positioned the CF as a viable career option for women.

Academic achievement, leadership potential, physical fitness and a desire to serve in the military are the key criteria for all successful applicants. Currently, women comprise 21% of the Royal Military College’s (RMC) student population. Table 2 summarizes the courses of study by gender.

	Women	Men	Total
Bachelor of Arts	48%	45%	45.5%
Bachelor of Engineering	32%	39%	38%
Bachelor of Science	20%	16%	17%

Training

Prior to deployment to an operational theatre, Canadian Forces personnel receive specific training on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Law of Armed Conflict, ethics, individual conduct and responsibilities, and the appropriate Rules of Engagement. United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 are embedded in Canadian Forces training. There is an emphasis on types of human rights violations (including trafficking in persons, child soldiers, sexual violence and abuse of women children and minorities) the impact of conflict on vulnerable groups (including women, children, the elderly, minorities, refugees and displaced persons), gender differences and culture, gender and conflict and how these affect forces operationally and from the moral viewpoint of the individual.

During international operations, including armed conflict, the Canadian Forces conduct their operations in accordance with the law. This includes respect for and the protection of women and children in conflict zones. For example, in the case of Afghanistan, all

Canadian Forces personnel receive either individual pre-deployment training or Individual Battle Task Standards training.

The Individual Pre-deployment Training provides specific instruction on the protection of women and other vulnerable populations. The curriculum for this training was developed in Kingston, Ontario at the Peace Support Training Centre. It is regularly updated, based on the experiences of previously deployed personnel from the Canadian Forces, the Department of National Defence and other government departments, as well as other non-governmental organizations in the field.

Following the completion of this individual training, personnel attend the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre. The Centre employs civilians in battle space as role players to ensure realism in the collective training scenarios that are used to prepare for operations in Afghanistan

Deployments

The CF does not differentiate between the sexes when selecting personnel for operations and women are an integral part of the groups serving on missions overseas. During 2008, CF women served on a number of international deployments including operations in Afghanistan and Darfur.

Career Development

Since 2000, five extra seats at the new Joint Command and Staff Programme (JCSP), formerly Canadian Forces Command and Staff College (CFCSC), have been established for women. This special measure was introduced to address systemic barriers impeding career development of female officers, stemming from the exclusion of women in operational occupations prior to 1989. Today, women are employed without restriction across the CF and many more women are becoming eligible for attendance. However, the number of women actually attending the program has not been increasing at the same rate. The vast majority of women eligible for JCSP still come from the non-operational occupations, but approximately 60% of the seats to JCSP are reserved for those in the operational occupations. A recent study recommended the special measure be continued to compensate for women's persistently lower attendance rates at JCSP.

The CF has increased the amount of diversity training in order to promote inclusiveness in the workplace and keep diversity in the eyes of CF members throughout their career.

Basic Diversity Training. Basic Diversity Training is given as part of the Basic Officer Training Course as well as on the Basic Military Qualification Course (Non-Commissioned Members).

Basic Leadership Training. Diversity Training in a Leadership Role is introduced at the Primary Leadership Qualification level (for promotion to Master Corporal or Master Seaman).

Advanced Leadership Training. More advanced training is provided on the Advanced Leadership Qualification course (for promotion to Master Warrant Officer or Chief Petty Officer Second Class).

Chief Qualification Course. Diversity is also an integral topic of discussion on the Chief Warrant Officer/Chief Petty Officer First Class Course.

Officer Training. The Canadian Defence Academy is currently exploring a delivery method for Diversity Training for junior officers (Lieutenants and Captains).

Base/Unit Leadership Team Training. The Director of Human Rights and Diversity and the Directorate Chief Warrant Officer deliver a specially designed Diversity Package to the senior leadership of the Canadian Forces (Base and Unit Commanders and their Chief Warrant Officers/Chief Petty Officers). This training is delivered either before or immediately after they take over command of their organizations.

Special Interest Items/Events (Recent and Projected Developments)

Military Family Well-Being Initiatives - CF Family Services Summit II

The CF increasingly recognizes the integral role that well-being of the military family plays in operational effectiveness. The military family is truly “the strength behind the uniform.” Commitment to CF families and recognition of their important role within the mandate of the CF is a source of confidence for members and is beneficial for the attraction and retention of women and supports their efforts to achieve a satisfactory career/life balance.

In January 2009, the CF Family Services Summit II drew together almost 300 persons including military family members, Military Family Resource Centre staff, and members of the senior military leadership. The Summit focussed on the unique challenges that frequent postings and deployments place on military families.

The Canadian Forces Family Covenant

The Canadian Forces Family Covenant was unveiled in September 2008. The Covenant reflects a commitment to military families and serves as a cornerstone from which we can enhance existing services and introduce new programs that are relevant to the needs of today’s military family.

Maternity and Parental Leave and Benefits

The CF provides benefits that assist female and male members to balance the demands of military service with family responsibilities such as those associated with the birth or adoption of their children, child and elder care, etc. These benefits support policies of: gender equity by encouraging equitable sharing of family responsibilities; and employment equity, by encouraging the recruitment and retention of women. Maternity leave lasts a maximum of 17 weeks. Members may request a maximum of an additional 37 weeks of parental leave. Parental leave can also be taken for adoption purposes.

Parents may split parental leave, but both parents cannot be on leave and benefits at the same time.

The principle underlying CF policy on maternity and parental benefits is that members shall have adequate time away from military duties with compensation allowing them to manage their new family responsibilities, free from undue financial or duty-related concerns. Members on Maternity or Parental Leave may be entitled to benefits equivalent to 93% of their regular pay.

Women in Defence and Security Canada (WiDS)

Women in Defence and Security (WiDs) is a new volunteer-based organization that promotes the advancement of women in defence and security careers across Canada. WiDs provides its members with a forum and activities for professional development, exchange of ideas and experiences, and opportunities for networking across the entire defence and security spectrum.

CF Exit Survey and Attrition of Female Members

The CF monitors the rate of attrition for female members of the CF and conducts Exit Surveys that seek to establish which factors prompt female members to leave the forces before full service is completed. A comprehensive analysis of the Exit Survey data set (2005-2008) is currently being conducted. Although a full report on these results has not been produced, preliminary findings indicate that work and personal life balance (postings, family stability, spousal employment, etc.) remain enduring issues that influence members' decisions to leave the CF. The results of this latest CF Exit Survey will be analysed to determine the factors which prompt female members to leave the CF and will be used as a basis for recommendation of corrective measures to encourage women to complete their full period of service.

Successes Regarding Gender Initiatives

In March 2009, the CF held a "Working Group on Gender Integration" to review the original goals and objectives for gender integration dating from the decision of a Canadian Human Rights Tribunal in 1989 which first opened all military occupations to women. The group confirmed many successes and identified new areas of concern where proactive measures may be needed to create and sustain an environment that is appealing for attraction and retention of women in the CF. The Group was composed of a representative cross-section of the CF population (age, rank, environment, occupation, experience levels). The number one area of concern was life/career balance and it was agreed that while this issue is not related to women alone, it may have a more pronounced impact on women, perhaps due to familial responsibilities.

New Facts

In 2008/09 a woman of the Canadian Navy has, for the first time, been appointed to command a major warship – Cdr Josée Kurtz, CO of HMCS Halifax. Women have been serving aboard Canadian Navy ships for more than 25 years.

Conclusion

Demographic trends indicate that traditional CF recruitment pools are slowly drying up. Recruitment and retention of women, as equitable contributors to mission success, is becoming increasingly more critical. The CF is responding to this trend by developing new recruitment strategies and considering flexible employment options that will be more appealing to women and other minority groups.