

RETENTION IN THE
CANADIAN
FORCES

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General Studies

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ABSTRACT

RETENTION IN THE CANADIAN FORCES, by Major John D.V. Vass, 106 pages.

Unless the Canadian Forces adequately address the retention concerns, it is very possible that there will not be sufficient trained and experienced personnel to complete the tasks the Government and the Canadian people expect. As a result of budget cuts, personnel reductions and minimal recruiting efforts during the 1990s, approximately 50% of the personnel in the Canadian Forces will be eligible to retire within the next three to five years. Force expansion, high operational and personnel tempo, family instability and high risk deployments make retention of trained and experienced personnel not only challenging, but critical.

This research examines the personnel and retention issues and the current human resource policies and initiatives aimed at retention in the Canadian Forces, the Australian Defence Force and the British armed forces. The research revealed that the key factors influencing members' decisions to leave the Canadian Forces are family/work balance, instability from postings and the perception that the wrong people are being promoted. The research also determined that the Australian Defence Force and the British armed forces are experiencing similar retention issues.

The analysis indicates that the effort the Canadian Forces is putting towards retention is notable and the current Human Resource policies and initiatives are comparable and in some cases superior to those of the Australian and British armed forces. However, both the Australian and British militaries are currently offering retention and in some cases commitment bonuses to encourage key personnel to remain with the force. Notably, these bonuses are effective over the short term but their long term utility can not be measured at this time. Notwithstanding, the Canadian Forces should consider these as a short term solution.

One of the principal personnel concerns in the Canadian Forces lies with those members who are approaching the 20 year mark and beyond. In order to encourage their retention and recognize their long term commitment to the country, the Government needs to look at providing a tangible incentive. In addition, to minimize a soldiers' time away from home, the Canadian Forces needs to contract services that can be performed by civilians or retired military personnel including some instructor billets in training schools and support staff on major exercises.

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ACRONYMS

ADF	Australian Defence Force
BE	Basic Engagement
CDS	Chief of the Defence Staff
CDF	Chief of the Defence Force
CE	Continuing Engagement
CF	Canadian Forces
CFPAS	Canadian Forces Personnel Appraisal System
CFRG	Canadian Forces Recruiting Group
CRA	Compulsory Retirement Age
DAS	Defence Attitude Survey
DND	Department of National Defence
DSPPR	Directorate of Strategic Personnel Planning and Research
DWAN	Defence Wide Area Network
FRP	Force Reduction Program
HR	Human Resource
IE	Intermediate Engagement
IPS	Indefinite Period of Service
IR	Imposed Restriction
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MOC	Military Occupation Codes
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MWDS	Married With Dependents – Separated
NCM	Non-Commissioned Members

OAG	Office of the Auditor General
PAO	Public Affairs Officer
PDR	Personnel Development and Review
PER	Personnel Evaluation Report
RAF	Royal Air Force
SCONDVA	Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs
SDR	Strategic Defence Review
SSE	Short Service Engagement
SWAPP	Services Workforce Access Program for Partners
TOS	Terms of Service
VIE	Variable Initial Engagement

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“YOU’RE AN ASSET AND YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU,” is not a propaganda statement or a coined phrase, it is the truth. With the end of the Cold War and a rising deficit, the Government of Canada needed to reduce spending. One way of cutting costs was to decrease the budget of the Department of National Defence (DND). Between 1994 and 1999 alone, the DND budget was reduced by 23%, down to \$9.25 billion from \$12 billion.¹ As a result, the Canadian Forces (CF) underwent dramatic change over those years which included base closures, the consolidation of headquarters and most importantly, the radical downsizing of the personnel strength from approximately 90,000 to 60,000.²

In order to achieve such a reduction in personnel rapidly, the CF offered a compensation package designed to entice members to take early release or retirement. Members meeting specific criteria in military occupation codes (MOC) projected to be overmanned were offered the compensation package. This package, known as the Force Reduction Program (FRP), was first offered in 1992, and in all subsequent years up to and including 1996. In total, approximately 14,000 members left under this program. Notably, the program was offered to non-commissioned members (NCMs), and later to Officers, in targeted MOCs.³ By 1997, this initiative, coupled with minimal recruiting

¹ All monetary values are in Canadian dollars.

² Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans’ Affairs (SCONDVA), *Interim Report - December 1, 1999* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, House of Commons, 1999, accessed 20 March 2007), 1. Available from http://www.dnd.ca/hr/scondva/engraph/about_e.asp; Internet.

³ Chief Review Services, *Audit of Force Reduction Program, 1997,(7055-29)* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, National Defence, 1997, accessed 22 March 2007), 1. Available from http://www.dnd.ca/crs/pdfs/frp_e.pdf; Internet.

efforts and forecasted attrition, helped the CF in achieving their target strength of 60,000 personnel.

The combined effect of lower recruitment and FRP during those years created a bubble whose consequences are now beginning to be felt. For example, members with at least 15 to 20 years or more service are or soon will be eligible to retire with a pension. This group constitutes approximately 50% of the CF which leaves open the possibility that the CF will lack sufficient numbers of trained, experienced personnel to replace those that are or at least can leave.⁴ Figure 1 depicts the force population and highlights the small population of personnel between the nine to 15 years of service range. In 2000, the CF recognized the fact that a shortage of personnel to conduct the necessary tasks of the CF could very well become reality and has since implemented several initiatives to minimize this exodus, targeting both recruiting and retention.

⁴ Office of the Auditor General, "Chapter 2, National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention," *2006 Status Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts*, 53 [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada: Office of the Auditor General, May 2006, accessed 20 March 2007); available from [http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/20060502ce.html/\\$file/20060502ce.pdf](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/20060502ce.html/$file/20060502ce.pdf) Internet.

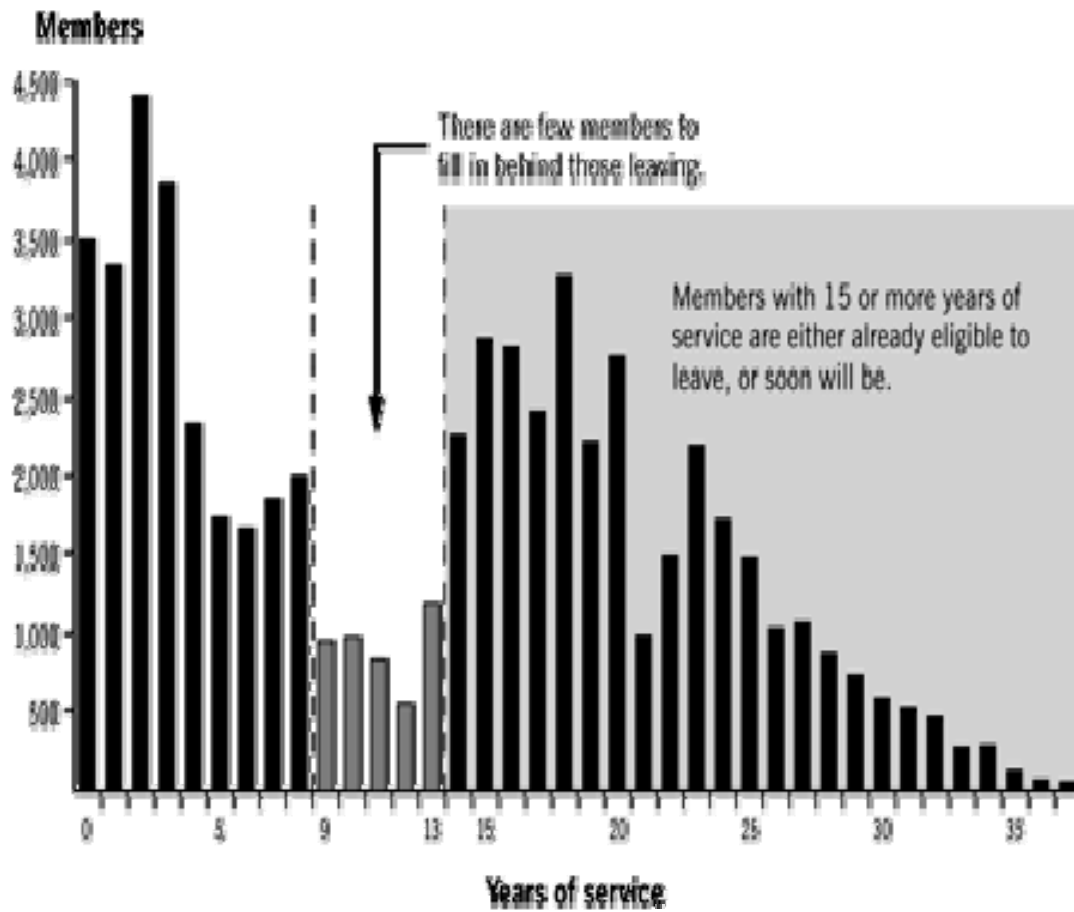


Figure 1. Distribution of the Population of the Regular Force

Source: Canada, Office of the Auditor General, “Chapter 2, National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention,” *2006 Status Report on the Standing Committee of Public Accounts*, 53.

In order to combat attrition and help with retention, the CF increased the compulsory retirement age (CRA) from 55 to 60 for all personnel who joined after 1 July 2004 and provided the option to all currently serving members to extend their CRA to 60. In addition, the CF revised the terms of service (TOS) policy. In the past, officers and NCMs had different TOS which generally saw officers initially committing to a short service engagement (SSE) of nine years and an NCM to a basic engagement (BE) of

three years. After completion of the initial engagement, the officer would be offered an intermediate engagement (IE), an additional 11 years, for a total of 20 years of service. The NCM would be offered a second BE followed by an IE for a total of 20 years of service. At the end of 20 years of service, both the officer and NCM would be eligible for a pension. However, depending on the requirements of the CF, both the officer and the NCM could have been offered an indefinite period of service (IPS) engagement, which would allow them to remain with the CF until CRA, but it was not a guarantee.

The current and revised TOS policy will apply equally to both officers and NCMs. At the beginning of their career, the member will serve a variable initial engagement (VIE) of three to nine years depending on the occupation. After the initial engagement, members may be offered one of three TOS options, depending on the needs of the occupation. One option is an IPS which allows a member to remain with the CF until the individual reaches retirement age. Another option is an IE of 25 years where the individual would be able to retire with a pension. The final option is one or more continuing engagements (CE) where the length in years will depend on the requirements of the CF and the desire of the individual. One of the key differences is the fact that members will not be eligible for a pension until after 25 years of service unlike the 20 years before.⁵

However, these policies will only affect those personnel who are either new to the CF or have been recently offered a new TOS. Those individuals in the 15–20 year category are currently offered the option to convert to the 25 year IE but certainly are

⁵ Department of National Defence, *Canadian Forces Personnel Newsletter Issue 5/05*, [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, 18 May 2005, accessed 12 April 2007); available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfpn/engraph/5_05/5_05_tos_e.asp; Internet.

under no obligation to do so. Furthermore, the CF ordered that all members who have completed 20 years of service and are eligible for further service, be offered an IPS or CE where as before, IPS was only offered to specific rank levels in under-strength occupations.

On the recruiting side, the CF significantly increased the recruiting budget, expanded their target audiences to include visible minorities, women and aboriginals, and are marketing the CF as an attractive career option. The CF is also offering financial incentives to attract skilled workers. Depending on the individual's skill and trade, they may be eligible for a fast-track promotion to corporal upon completion of their basic training. For example, a member on a standard career path normally serves for at least four years as a private before being promoted to corporal. The incentive for an individual receiving a fast-track promotion is a difference of approximately \$1,700 before tax, per month during the initial two to three years of service. Considering the initial contract is generally only three years, this could encourage soldiers to remain with the force and continue their service for an additional engagement.

The CF also continues to develop and employ innovative measures to streamline the recruiting process. In particular, the CF has implemented the e-Recruiting system, enabling potential military candidates to submit application information on-line via the existing CF recruiting website on the internet. This program now allows applicants to view the status of their application throughout the recruitment process on-line. Prior to the e-Recruiting system, the potential recruit had to contact the recruitment centre for an update. This initiative makes the CF more available to those Canadians who do not live near recruitment centers and increases the efficiency and accuracy of the application

process.⁶ It is the hope that this will lead to a higher number and a more diverse number of applicants to the CF.

The Canadian Forces Recruiting Group (CFRG) is confident that their recruiting strategy will continue to attract applicants and meet the demands of the Forces into the future. In 2005/06, the CF received over 25,000 applications and enrolled over 10,500 men and women into full-time and part-time service. With the full-time figure being over 5,800 recruits the CF surpassed their regular force target by six percent. The next few years will see the CF aiming for 6,000 to 7,000 new full-time members per year; a number that represents normal attrition plus a net increase of approximately 1,200.⁷ While the numbers look positive, and the current initiatives seem to be attracting applicants, a variety of factors may pose significant challenges in the near future. The Auditor General's report from 2006 stated that a changing Canadian demographic profile, a low interest among Canadian youth in joining the military, and increasing operational demands may impede the current recruiting system from successfully supporting the growth of the CF.⁸

The tragic terrorist attacks on the United States of America on September 11, 2001, arguably changed the world forever. The relative peace and stability enjoyed by North Americans could no longer be taken for granted. In 2002 the Canadian Government deployed forces to Afghanistan in support of the US campaign against the

⁶ Department of National Defence On-Line, *Canadian Forces (CF) eRecruiting* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, 01 August 2006, accessed 7 May 2007), 1. Available from http://www.ndol.forces.gc.ca/report/2004/05report_e.htm; Internet.

⁷ Major Andy Coxhead, Canadian Forces Recruiting Group PAO, *About Us, News and Events 09/12/2006*, [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, 12 September 2006, accessed 7 May 2007); available from http://www.forces.ca/v3/engraph/aboutus/newsdetails_en.aspx?id=360&bhcp=1; Internet.

⁸ Office of the Auditor General, "Chapter 2, National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention", *2006 Status Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts*, 48.

Taliban. After the fall of the Taliban and the implementation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) under NATO, Canada deployed more forces to Afghanistan and agreed to support the mission until at least 2009. These continued deployments overseas have resulted in a significant increase in operational and personnel tempo for Canadian soldiers and their families.

Consequently in 2005, the Canadian Government announced an increase in the regular force of 5,000 and in 2006, the Government indicated a further increase of an additional 23,000 regular and reserve force personnel. Of these, 13,000 will be regular force. In total, the force expansion plan will increase the CF to 75,000 regular force personnel. The growth will be done in phases that will lead to a total of 70,000 regular force personnel by fiscal year 2010-2011 with the remaining increase occurring in a second phase further down the road. These ambitious numbers represent goals to be achieved after the recruitment phase has been completed and are to be maintained against a background attrition rate that currently rests at approximately 6.5%. Unfortunately, that rate is forecast to increase over the period that the expansion is slated to occur.⁹

The target of 70,000 personnel by 2010-2011 represents a significant quantity of people that need to be recruited into the CF. Equally important is the number of people that need to be retained in the organization. As stated, the CFRG is confident that their plan for recruiting will succeed; however, it is the people currently serving who need to be convinced to stay. In order to achieve this, it is imperative that the CF as a whole, address the reasons people are choosing to leave when their TOS expires, and in some cases, opting to leave voluntarily before their contracts are fulfilled.

⁹ Ibid., 2.

An exit survey conducted that targeted personnel leaving the CF between June 2005 and February 2007 indicated a number of factors that contributed to member's decisions to leave the CF. An unofficial review of the survey by Major Deb Howe, Director Personnel Generation Requirements – 5, determined that the most popular themes included unsatisfactory family/work balance, postings, alternate employment, job dissatisfaction and career dissatisfaction.¹⁰

During this demanding time of uncertainty in the world, Canada is not the only allied nation facing retention issues. The Australian Defence Force, the British armed forces and the US forces are all having problems of their own and have implemented initiatives to combat attrition. The CF could very well learn from the experiences of these nations.

Unless the CF adequately addresses the retention concerns, it is possible that there will not be sufficient numbers to fill the ranks and complete the tasks the Government and the Canadian people expect. This research aims to answer to the primary research question: Does the Canadian Forces retention plan adequately address the reasons people are choosing to leave? In order to answer this question, there are a number of secondary issues that this research also addresses: What are the common reasons contributing to personnel deciding to leave the CF? Does the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the British armed forces have similar challenges and what have they done to address them? What can the CF do to address the retention issue within the organization realistically?

After presenting the methodology and defining key terms in Chapter 2, Chapter 3

¹⁰ Deb Howe, Major, Peddie, S.K., Toussaint, V.F., *Briefing Note for Director General Conditions of Service*, (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, 9 February 2007) 12. This is a preliminary report on the findings from the CF Retention Survey and the CF Exit Survey as the final analysis is not complete.

provides a case study review of the CF. In particular, the review gives background on how the personnel situation in the CF became problematic followed by a detailed review of the current retention issues. Additionally, the research will provide an overview of the current CF Exit Survey completed by personnel who left the CF voluntarily between June 2005 and February 2007. The current HR policies and initiatives that are aimed at maximizing retention will also be reviewed. Lastly, an analysis of the most common reasons that contributed to members deciding to leave the CF voluntarily will be conducted to determine if there are specific areas that the CF should address.

Chapter 4 will be a case study review of the ADF personnel issues. In particular, the research will provide a brief background in order to define the personnel situation within the ADF and determine what, if any, are the reasons that contribute to their personnel and retention problems. The research will then focus on the implemented solutions that the ADF has used to try to contend with the problem. This will be followed by an analysis to determine if the issues and reasons that people are deciding to leave the ADF are similar to those of the CF, and whether the ADFs implemented solutions can be of use by Canada. Chapter 5 will be a similar case study to Chapter 4; however, it will concentrate on the British armed forces. Chapter 6 contains the recommendations to be considered by the CF to help combat the retention problem followed by concluding remarks.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s changed the global security environment and had an effect on defence spending for most militaries world wide; however, this research only focuses on Canada, Australia and Great Britain. Although there are obvious differences, the three nations are closely linked politically, economically and socially. More importantly, they share a proud history militarily including participation in the Boer War, the two World Wars, Korea and more recently Afghanistan.¹¹ The 1990s saw the three nations reduce defence spending which ultimately resulted in downsizing of their respective forces throughout the decade.

The tragic events of 11 September and subsequent troop commitments that followed, has caused the three nations to refocus their efforts toward defence and security. In particular, the three countries are currently restructuring and rebalancing their capabilities to become more efficient and expeditionary in nature. As a result, the Canadian Forces and Australian Defence Force are increasing the size of their forces while the British armed forces are focusing on filling the gaps caused by an undermanned force. Notably, the high personnel tempo, instability of military life and high employment rates in the three countries are creating retention issues of trained and experienced personnel in their militaries. While the three countries and respective forces are not identical, the current restructuring efforts, personnel challenges and the

¹¹ John C. Blaxland, Lieutenant Colonel, Australian Army Journal, *Strategic Cousins? Australian and Canadian Military Outlooks Compared* [journal on-line] (Published in Volume I, Number 2, December 2003, accessed 15 October 2007), 140. Available from http://bingo.clarus.com.au/public/static/AAJ_December_03.pdf; Internet.

population base relative to the strength of their respective militaries make them suitable for comparison of retaining trained and experienced personnel.

This thesis uses a three step methodology to determine if the CF retention plan adequately addresses the reasons that members are choosing to leave. The first step is a case study of the current CF situation with respect to retention issues. In particular, the research analyzes the current data obtained from the most recent CF Exit Survey to determine the reasons that contribute to personnel deciding to leave the military. Furthermore, the case study outlines the current human resource policies and initiatives implemented by the CF that aim to increase retention. The second step has two case studies on both the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the British armed forces. For both forces, the case studies provide background information on their government directed manning policies in order to outline the current challenges they are both facing. This is followed by an overview of the factors contributing to retention issues in the two forces. The final segment of the case studies provides the details of the current policies and solutions being implemented by the two forces in order to increase retention within their military organisations.

The third step in the methodology, conducted for each of the case studies within the respective chapters, is a detailed analysis of the information. In particular, the analysis seeks to determine if the reasons or factors contributing to personnel deciding to leave the three militaries are at least similar in nature. The next determination is whether the retention policies and initiatives currently being implemented by the CF, the ADF and the British armed forces are comparable. Finally, the analysis aims to determine if any of the ADF or British retention policies or initiatives can be of use by the CF. The last

chapter includes recommendations of initiatives for the CF to consider for inclusion in their retention plan to encourage personnel to remain in the military. The recommendations are followed by concluding remarks and suggestions for further research.

There is one limitation and two delimitations in this research that require some explanation. The limitation is primarily a result of the timing of this research paper. In particular, the preliminary results of the current CF Exit Survey that is being used collected data up until February 2007. Unfortunately, the responsible Department in the CF has not had sufficient time to conduct a detailed analysis of the results. However, an accurate review of the unofficial results has been obtained and permission granted to use them as part of the research. The delimitations are due to self imposed constraints. The research examines the retention issues in a service-wide context as opposed to concentrating on one particular branch, trade or rank level. Additionally, by choice, the research is aimed at the Regular Force and not the Reserve Force component as the two elements of the CF are considerably different regarding commitment, quality of life and operational and personnel tempo.

Key Terms

There are five key terms used throughout the research and are defined below to provide to maximum clarity:

- (1) Regular Force. The component of the CF that consists of officers and non-commissioned members who are enrolled for continuing, full-time military service;¹²
- (2) Reserve Force. The component of the CF that consists of officers and non-commissioned members who are enrolled for other than continuing, full-time military service when not on active service;¹³
- (3) SCONDVA. Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs. Standing committees are created by the House of Commons, for the life of a Parliament. They study and report on all matters relating to the mandate, management and operation of a particular department such as Finance, Health or National Defence;¹⁴
- (4) Terms of Service. An agreement between the CF and individuals specifying the duration of service and providing the framework for managing personnel flow within the Military Occupations in the CF;¹⁵ and
- (5) The Office of the Auditor General (OAG). The OAG audits federal government operations and provides Parliament with independent information, advice and assurance to help hold the government to account for its stewardship of public funds. They are responsible for performance audits and studies of federal departments and agencies. The OAG conducts financial audits of the government's financial statements (public accounts) and perform special examinations and annual financial audits of Crown Corporations.¹⁶

Significance of the Research

This research examines a timely and relevant issue. Unless the CF addresses the retention issue, there is a very good possibility that there will not be sufficient trained and experienced personnel to fill the ranks and complete the tasks the government and the Canadian people expect. Due to the current global security environment and the fact that

¹² Department of Justice, *National Defence Act, Part II, The Canadian Forces Constitution, Article 15(1)* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of Justice, R.S., 1985, accessed 10 May 2007); available from http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/N-5/bo-ga:l_II-gb:s_20/en#anchorbo-ga:l_II-gb:s_20; Internet.

¹³ Ibid., 15(3).

¹⁴ SCONDVA, *Interim Report - December 1, 1999*, 1.

¹⁵ Department of National Defence, *Canadian Forces Personnel Newsletter Issue 03/2001* [article on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, March 2001, accessed 12 April 2007); available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfpn/pdf/cfpn3_01_ef.pdf; Internet.

¹⁶ Auditor General, *Office of the Auditor General of Canada* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Office of the Auditor General, 1 May 2007, 1, accessed 10 May 2007); available from <http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/oag-bvg.nsf/html/menue.html>; Internet.

other militaries are actively engaged in operations throughout the world, it is likely that their personnel issues with regard to retention are similar. Consequently, it is prudent to research the policies and initiatives they are implementing to combat the retention problem to determine if the CF can benefit from their ideas. The next chapter will be a detailed case study review of the current personnel issue in the CF with particular focus on retention. Additionally, the research will include a detailed review of the latest CF Exit Survey conducted between June 2005 and February 2007.

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDY – CANADIAN FORCES

Introduction

The current personnel situation in the Canadian Forces requires attention now because there is a possibility that the CF will not have enough people to conduct the tasks that the Canadian Government and the Canadian people expect of them. This chapter provides background information with particular emphasis on how the personnel situation in the CF became problematic followed by a detailed review of the current retention issues. Additionally, the research provides an overview of the current CF Exit Survey completed by personnel who left the CF voluntarily between June 2005 and February 2007. The current human resource policies and initiatives that are aimed at maximizing retention will also be reviewed. Lastly, an analysis of the most common reasons that contributed to members deciding to leave the CF voluntarily will determine if there are specific areas that need attention now.

Background

The Canadian Forces is Canada's military organization responsible for protecting Canada, defending North America and contributing to international peace and security. The force is a unified, tri-service (navy, army and air force) organization.¹⁷ Canada is a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy with an elected prime minister. The Prime Minister appoints a Minister of National Defence, who is accountable to the

¹⁷ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Proudly Canadian* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Advertising brochure produced by National Defence, 16 August 2007, accessed 15 September 2007); available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/about/index_e.asp; Internet.

government for the management and direction of the CF in all matters relating to national defence. The Minister draws on policy advice and other support from the senior civilian advisor, the Deputy Minister of National Defence and the senior military advisor, the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) who also plays a key role in the policy process by providing advice on military requirements, capabilities, options and consequences.¹⁸ The CDS is the senior uniformed member in the Canadian military and is equivalent to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the United States. The CF has an air, land, sea and special operations component and four operational commands. Canada Command, Canadian Expeditionary Force Command, Canadian Special Operations Forces Command and Canadian Operational Support Command all report to the National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa.¹⁹

The end of the Cold War changed the global security environment during the early 1990s which had an impact on the CF. The Government of Canada viewed the relative stability between the East and the West as an opportunity to devote funds to other areas that had been neglected for years and reduce the budget normally allocated to the Department of National Defence. Consequently, the CF developed a plan that would allow them to not only accomplish the assigned tasks directed by the Government but to do so under significant budgetary reduction. In essence, the CF required a long-term program that was affordable, that enabled them to respond to a rapidly evolving and fluid international situation, and that satisfied the domestic concerns of the Canadian people.

¹⁸ Canada, National Defence, *Responsibilities of the Minister* [on-line] (DND Policy Group, 15 February 2007, accessed 15 September 2007); available from <http://www.forces.gc.ca/admpol/content.asp?id={96534736-BCA7-44B3-8C04-F1D9FF82D5DE}>; Internet.

¹⁹ Canada, National Defence, *About DND/CF* [on-line] (National Defence and the Canadian Forces, 16 August 2007, accessed 15 October 2007); available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/about/index_e.asp; Internet.

More importantly, the program needed to achieve a balance among the resources devoted to personnel, operations and maintenance, and capital. Recognizing that the CF still required sufficient personnel to achieve the fundamental objectives, the organization also needed to devote sufficient funds to capital in order to ensure that the Forces had the tools to do the job.

The resulting program minimized the requirements necessary in each category of expenditure. It was well understood by the Department that the CF could not maintain high personnel levels at the expense of its capital budget. In addition, they could not operate at an intensity that would prematurely wear out their equipment and they could not retain infrastructure that was no longer essential. In effect, limited funds for capital would be used frugally on the highest priority items. The 1994 Defence White Paper stated clearly that fiscal restraint meant that the size of the regular forces would decline. In addition, infrastructure would be eliminated to ensure the Forces would not be strangled by an imbalance in personnel, operations and maintenance costs.²⁰

Personnel Issues

As a result of the shift in the defence policy at the end of the Cold War and significant budgetary restraints, by the end of the 1990s the CF effectively reduced its forces from approximately 90,000 to 60,000. A number of factors contributed to the CF's success in reducing its strength in such a short period of time: minimal recruiting efforts, regular attrition and the implementation of the Force Reduction Program (FRP).

²⁰ Canada, Department of National Defence, *1994 Defence White Paper* [on-Line], (Ottawa, Canada, Minister of Defence, 1994, accessed 20 May 2007) 13. Available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/admpol/downloads/CanadaDefPoLE_all.pdf; Internet.

The unfortunate effect of such success in reducing the strength during the 1990s is the fact that the trend of downsizing the force has continued into the 21st century when the operational commitments and personnel tempo is on the rise. In particular, the effect of the FRP which was offered from 1992 up to and including 1996 and aimed primarily at NCMs and Officers, created a bubble and the consequences are now beginning to be felt. Specifically, almost 50% of the CF is approaching the 15 to 20 years of service point where financial incentives such as an entitlement to a pension will provide members a motivation to retire while they are still young enough to enter into another career field.

In 2001, the CF recognized that significant effort needed to be invested into updating a current and relevant Human Resources agenda within the organization. A memorandum written by Lieutenant-General Christian Couture, the Assistant Deputy Minister Human Resources – Military (ADM(HR-Mil)) in 2001, stated that an analysis of the attrition rates and attrition patterns of Regular Force attrition over the past several years had been slightly below historical averages. However, he also noted that the CF needed to establish and maintain a human resource (HR) agenda that focused on and reinforced personnel retention for at least the next decade. The compelling reasons included the fact that the CF was below strength, they faced an increasing competition for smaller youth cohorts in the eligible population, some occupations were experiencing an above-average loss of personnel, and finally the fact that CF demographics showed a long-service wave approaching the 20 years of service point.²¹

Accordingly, ADM(HR-Mil) determined that the retention strategy theme would

²¹ Christian Couture, Lieutenant General, *CF Retention Strategy ADM(HR-Mil) Group Action Plan*, (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, Memorandum 30000-2-8 (DMEP 4), October 2001), 1.

need to concentrate on strengthening the social contract. In other words, the CF would build on their achievements and progress to date in providing fair pay, benefits, and other tangibles to the members and also live up to the organizations' obligations of security, equitable treatment, and support of the personnel.²² Some initiatives implemented to increase retention included the extension of CRA to 60 years, more pay increases, improvements to military housing and streamlining support to military families.²³

In 2002, the Auditor General of Canada conducted a balanced and accurate audit of the CF with focus on the Recruiting and Retention of Military Personnel.²⁴ In particular, the audit concentrated on the plans and actions of the Department to improve its ability to attract and recruit new members to the CF and to retain the knowledgeable and skilled members in whom it has invested the time and money. The audit found that the military needed to fill shortages in most of the occupations and determined that the CF did not have enough trained and effective personnel to meet occupational demands. The ceiling on regular force membership at the time was about 60,000 personnel and in 2001, around 57,600 men and women then were serving in the CF. However, not all of them were available for operations. Some were not yet trained and others were on medical leave or retirement leave, or unavailable for administrative or disciplinary

²² Ibid., 2.

²³ Office of the Auditor General, "Chapter 5, National Defence – Recruitment and Retention of Military Personnel", *2002 Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the House of Commons* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada: Office of the Auditor General, April 2002, accessed 20 March 2007), 13. Available from [http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/20060502ce.html/\\$file/20060502ce.pdf](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/20060502ce.html/$file/20060502ce.pdf); Internet.

²⁴ Office of the Auditor General, *How Do We Ensure the Quality of our Audits?* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada: Office of the Auditor General, 17 March 2005, accessed 10 October 2007); available from http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/other.nsf/html/auqdn_qual_e.html; Internet. Given the mission of the OAG is to be a reliable and objective source of information and assurance for Parliament, the quality of work is of paramount importance. The Office ensures the quality of its audit work by following professional auditing standards set by the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants. The Office also draws on the standards and practices of other disciplines such as statistics, engineering, economics, and the social sciences.

reasons. Consequently, only about 52,300 trained and effective members were serving in the CF. The audit also determined that retention would become a significant issue in the near future.²⁵

One of the key recommendations from the audit was the requirement for the CF to determine the reasons why people leave the CF voluntarily. The audit found that for several years the Department did not track reasons for leaving and did not have complete or reliable data that would help it to focus on retention efforts. However, further analysis indicated that most military members who left voluntarily did so for family concerns, for example, stability and the impact of regular moves, spousal employment, or the time spent away from families. Another reason was the organizational climate and morale, including the conditions of service, workload, and the perception that better employment was available elsewhere. The final reason was regarding concerns about leadership. It should be noted that the leadership concerns were shaped by the inability to obtain adequate equipment, poor communications, lack of direction and failure to address high personnel tempo caused by frequent deployments, training, tasks and courses. As a result of the noted reasons that personnel decided to leave the CF voluntarily, the updated version of the Canadian Forces Attrition Information Questionnaire now includes an exit interview process. By 2005, the exit interview also includes a CF Exit Survey.²⁶

Additionally, the CF developed a CF Retention Survey to explore specific work and non-work related items and their impact on whether an individual intended to stay or leave the organization within the next few years. The survey was administered between November 2002 and February 2003 to 19 occupations and a total of 6,456 CF members

²⁵ Ibid., 15.

²⁶ Ibid., 15.

with the response rate for the 19 occupations varying between 29% and 80%.²⁷ Although the sample was not drawn from all CF occupations, the consistency in the responses of the members from the 19 occupations and the fact that all the environments (army, navy and air force) were represented, the authors of the survey believe that the results are a reliable source of information for identifying career dissatisfaction issues.²⁸ Notably, several domains explored in the survey revealed trends (consistent for all occupations) for the CF as a whole. The trends in the factors that all respondents perceived as problematic regardless of occupation included career management, procedural fairness in dealing with unproductive personnel,²⁹ civilianization of the CF, bureaucracy, senior branch leadership and the CF future. After a detailed analysis of the survey, the authors provided the Department with a number of discussion points aimed at assisting the National Retention Team in the development of retention strategies and policies.

The analysis also determined that the two levels of attrition related issues are individual and organizational level. Individual level issues and concerns relate to individual development, the perceived justice in the career management system, promotions, postings and recognition to name a few. Organizational issues which members are concerned more about the military than themselves relate to the changing values and culture of the CF. These issues include the civilianization of the CF, bureaucracy and concerns about the future of the organization. The concerns leave them with doubts about senior leaders they see as responsible for these issues at the

²⁷ Martin Villeneuve, Lieutenant Colonel, Tzvetanka Dobрева-Martinova, John G. Currie, *Buying Low Attrition or Building High Retention? That is the Question*. (Ottawa, Canada, Director Military Employment Policy, June 2004, received through email from Major Deb Howe in April 2007), 2.

²⁸ Ibid., 10.

²⁹ Ibid., 14. Survey participants felt that the CF is too lenient on unproductive military and civilian personnel. In addition, 44% of the survey participants stated that the CF promotion system influenced their decision to leave.

organizational level.³⁰

The survey concludes that if the needs of the organization are placed in jeopardy due to unforeseen circumstances or are always stronger than the needs of the individual members, then buying low attrition would be the preferred approach of the organization. However, if building a retention culture is desirable, a focus on individual needs and flexibility in policy and leadership style is required. Additionally, the fact that the organization created the attrition problem and needs to deal with it now, HR practices that were unthinkable a few years ago may need to be considered.³¹ The authors of the survey made a number of recommendations for discussion by the CF to deal with the noted issues. Career managers need to pay more attention to members' needs and aspirations and move away from vacancy management to fill positions. To address the perceived procedural justice/fairness in the organization, the CF needs to review the Personnel Evaluation Process (PER) to ensure it is not rewarding mediocrity. To address the concerns about senior leadership, the CF needs to improve communication between senior organizational leadership and the troops, and improve mechanisms for communicating the needs of the members to the senior leaders.³²

In 2006, the Office of the Auditor General conducted another audit of the CF and provided a status report on their findings from the original audit in 2002. Again, the audit focused on Recruiting and Retention and determined that while the CF did address some key issues that were identified in the previous audit there was still work to be done. Of particular interest for this research is the fact that the audit in 2002 determined that the

³⁰ Ibid., 26–27.

³¹ Ibid., 31.

³² Ibid., 26–30.

Department needed to gather better information on attrition and to develop more effective retention initiatives. Since then, the CF has been analyzing reasons for attrition and ways to address why members leave. Although some steps have been taken to address concerns, attrition in the early stages and later stages of a members' career are expected to increase. In particular, it is anticipated that members will complete their initial contract of three to six years, then release. Similarly, others will leave after completing 20 years of service. The Department needs to continue its work to better identify what actions it should take to ensure that attrition does not become problematic.³³ The Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts reviewed the May 2006 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention, and recommended that the Department of National Defence begin to report the results of exit surveys it conducts by including them in the Departmental Performance Reports beginning with the Report for the period ending 31 March 2007.³⁴ Notably, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts is a committee appointed by the House of Commons responsible to review and report on the Public Accounts of Canada, all reports of the Auditor General of Canada, the Office of the Auditor General's Reports on Plans and Priorities and Annual Performance Reports and any other matter that the House of Commons shall, from time to time, refer to the Committee.³⁵

As in 2003, the CF administered a retention survey between February and May 2006. Additionally, the CF implemented an exit survey from June 2005 until February

³³ Office of the Auditor General, "Chapter 2, National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention," *2006 Status Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts*, 69.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

³⁵ Canada, House of Commons, *Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PACP)* [on-line] (House of Commons – Committees, 10 October 2007, accessed 28 October 2007); available from http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/cmte/CommitteeList.aspx?Lang=1&PARLSES=391&JNT=0&SELID=e20_&COM=10466; Internet.

2007. Only a preliminary report on the survey results is available as the responsible department has not had sufficient time to complete the detailed analysis as requested by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. A review of the CF Exit Survey will be provided followed by an overview of the current HR policies that have been initiated to combat attrition and maximize retention.

CF Exit Survey

Notably, the information regarding the CF Exit Survey is from a Briefing Note prepared by Major Deb Howe, Canadian Forces, Director Personnel Generation Requirements – 5, on 9 February, 2007. The information is only a cursory analysis of the survey but provides insight to the relevant retention issues. The purpose of the CF Exit Survey is to understand the reasons why regular force members choose voluntary release and how the decision to exit is made. The organizational framework for the development of the CF Exit Survey resides with the CF Retention Strategy and it integrates the process (how) and content (why) theories of voluntary turnover to explore the following issues:

(1) Process. Regarding process, the survey focuses on how people quit by exploring shock or trigger and decisive events (i.e., the influence of “push factors,” which are factors within the control of the organization, and “pull factors,” which are external factors on the quit decision. Additionally, the timeframe of the quit decision, the affective side of the quit decision, and the search for and availability of alternatives including the level of difficulty in finding an alternative employment are examined; and

(2) Content. Regarding content, the survey examines why people quit by exploring departing members satisfaction (agreement) with organizational issues and issues of dissatisfaction identified as proximal or distal antecedents of turnover behaviour, and examines the extent to which these organizational issues and issues of dissatisfaction influence members in their decision to leave the CF. Examples of surveyed areas include: job (e.g., challenge, resources, use of skills), recognition, fair treatment leadership (e.g., leading people, leading institution), career (e.g., career progression, career management), family, postings, pay/benefits, and value congruence.

The CF Exit Survey is administered electronically to members who are voluntarily releasing from the CF. The survey is hosted on the Canadian Defence Wide

Area Network (DWAN) and a stand-alone version is available for those members who do not have access to the DWAN. From June 2005 to February 2007, 736 respondents had completed the survey. The sample consisted of 155 Officers (23%) and 517 NCM's (77%), with 90% being males and 10% females. Notably, the number of personnel who participated in the survey is quite small; however, it needs to be emphasized that these personnel are those that chose to leave voluntarily and not those members who left for medical reasons, retirement or contract fulfillment.

As stated, a cursory analysis of the CF Exit Survey was conducted to determine the areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and influence to leave items. As well, a qualitative analysis of the trigger items that prompted members to start thinking about leaving the CF was performed. The findings are as follows:

Areas of Satisfaction

Table 1 shows the eight items with the highest mean values. These items represent the areas that respondents were most satisfied with. All of these items fell within the "satisfied" response range. The item with the highest mean value relates to pay and benefits ($\bar{M} = 4.84$).

Table 1. CF Exit Survey Highest Satisfaction Items.

CF Exit Survey Items	Mean Value
My pay and benefits.	4.84
Availability of personnel administrative services.	4.53
Quality of personnel administrative services.	4.46
The competencies, knowledge and technical skills of my immediate supervisor.	4.43
The working relationships in my work unit.	4.41
The quality of my career training.	4.41
The respect I receive in my work unit.	4.36
The quality of my occupational training.	4.35

Note. Response Scale: 1= Completely dissatisfied; 2= Dissatisfied; 3= Somewhat dissatisfied; 4= Somewhat satisfied; 5= Satisfied; 6= Completely satisfied.

Source. Howe, Deb., Major. *CF Retention Survey (2006) & Exit Survey (2005-07)* (Preliminary results provided in Briefing Note for DG Cond Svc), February 2007, 10.

Areas of Dissatisfaction

The items with the lowest mean values are presented in Table 2. These eight items represent the areas of highest dissatisfaction. All of these items fell within the “Somewhat dissatisfied” range. The top item pertains to the perception that the merit system does not ensure the promotion of the right people ($\underline{M} = 2.72$). In fact, three of the eight items in which members expressed dissatisfaction concerned the application of the merit principle and the system used to determine promotions. The second highest dissatisfaction item related to CF Fairness and how the CF deals with poor performers ($\underline{M} = 2.79$).

Table 2. CF Exit Survey Highest Dissatisfaction Items.

CF Exit Survey Items	Mean Value
The CF merit system ensures that the right people get promoted.	2.72
The way the CF deals with poor performers.	2.79
The career management system.	3.16
The way the merit principle is used to decide promotions.	3.27
The effect my postings have had on my partner/spouse's employment.	3.38
The CF operates by its values – walks the talk.	3.40
Promotion decisions in my occupation or branch.	3.41
The way senior leadership overcomes organizational problems or challenges.	3.42

Note. Response Scale: 1= Completely dissatisfied; 2= Dissatisfied; 3= Somewhat dissatisfied; 4= Somewhat satisfied; 5= Satisfied; 6= Completely satisfied.

Source. Howe, Deb., Major. *CF Retention Survey (2006) & Exit Survey (2005-07)*, (Preliminary results provided in Briefing Note for DG Cond Svc), February 2007, 10.

Influence to Leave Items

In addition to indicating their satisfaction or agreement with the items, respondents were also asked to report the extent to which these items influenced them to leave the CF. The higher the mean value for an item the lesser the extent to which this item influences members to leave the military. The five-point Likert scale ranges from the lowest mean value (i.e., Extremely influential) and ends with the highest mean value (i.e., Not at all influential).

Table 3 illustrates the items that most influenced members to leave. All of the items fell within the “Moderately influential” response range. The item that was most influential was “the time available to spend with my family” ($M = 3.22$). Of note, three of the five influences to leave items concerned issues relating to family.

Table 3. CF Exit Survey Influence to Leave Items.

CF Exit Survey Influence Items	Mean Value
The time available to spend with my family.	3.22
How challenging my work is.	3.26
The effect my postings have had on my ability to maintain family stability.	3.27
The career management system.	3.34
The effect my postings have had on my partner/spouse's employment.	3.41

Note. Response Scale: 1= Extremely influential; 2= Very influential; 3= Moderately influential; 4= Only slightly influential; 5= Not at all influential.

Source. Howe, Deb., Major. *CF Retention Survey (2006) & Exit Survey (2005-07)*, (Preliminary results provided in Briefing Note for DG Cond Svc), February 2007, 11.

Triggers to Exit Behaviour

The CF Exit Survey asks respondents to identify triggers to exit behaviour. In response to the question “What first prompted you to think about leaving the CF?,” 741 comments were provided. These comments were analyzed for content and categorized into 23 themes. The top themes were: Family/Work-Personal Life Balance (14.4%), Posting (12.8%), Got Another Job (10.7%), Job Dissatisfaction (10.4%), and Career Dissatisfaction (9.6%). The most prominent theme, family/work-personal life balance, is a pull factor. In other words, the “pull factor,” is seen by the CF as an external factor and not necessarily within the control of the organization. Respondents commented on wanting to improve their quality of life and that of their family by being available to spend more time at home. They report being tired of being away and are concerned with the extra stress their families have to deal with as a result of their absence (i.e., deployments, tasks, unaccompanied postings).

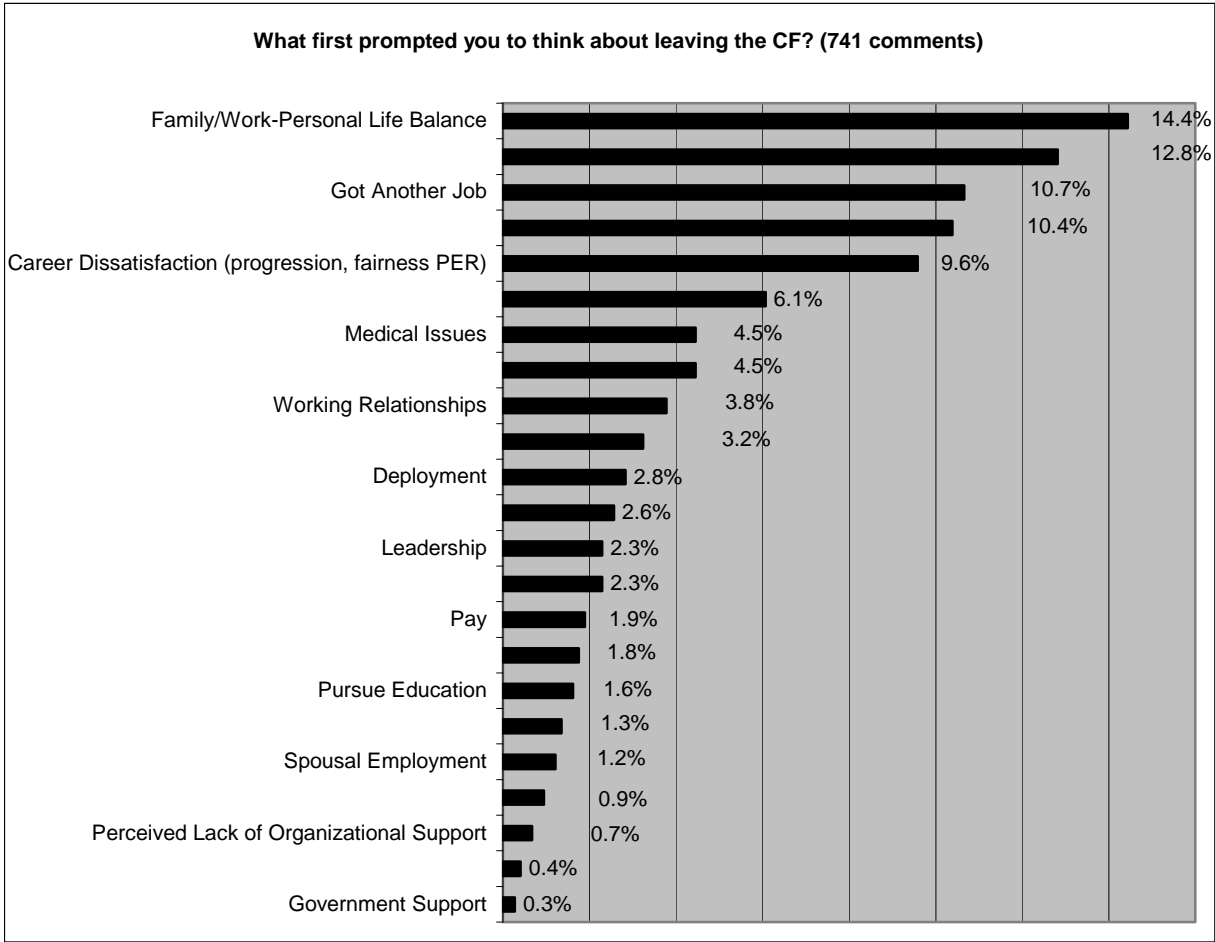


Figure 2. Triggers to Exit Behaviour.

Source. Howe, Deb., Major. *CF Retention Survey (2006) & Exit Survey (2005-07)* (Preliminary results provided in Briefing Note for DG Cond Svc), February 2007, 12.

HR Policies and Initiatives

Due to the various issues identified by the reports from the Auditor General’s Office, the results of the earlier retention surveys and the observations made by the CF itself, several initiatives are being implemented to increase retention. Two of the more recent programs, specifically the increase in the CRA to 60 years and the amendments to

the TOS policy are both described in the introduction. However, as stated in the Government Response to the 11th Report of the Auditor General, April 2007, some additional HR policies and initiatives that are being implemented to address the personnel bubble created by the FRP include the following:

- (1) Trained members of the Primary Reserve, who are committed to undertaking duty and training even when not on active service, are being encouraged to transfer to the Regular Force;
- (2) A special transfer arrangement for Primary Reservists returning from Afghanistan has been established. Offers for direct and expedited transfer are presented so that Reservists need only say yes or no, thus eliminating much of the delay associated with administrative processing;
- (3) Letters to former members of the CF who have retired over the past few years and to members of the Supplementary Reserve, who are not required to perform duty or training except when on active service, are being prepared to solicit their return to active service; and
- (4) A process of identifying high performers early on in their career has been developed so that specific mentoring, training and succession planning will prepare them for early promotion to higher rank.³⁶

Notably, these initiatives certainly target personnel shortages; however, they are not necessarily only aimed at retention. Other than the initiative to identify and mentor high performers, the stated initiatives aim to bring people into the CF and not necessarily retain those that are already serving.

In order to encourage further commitment after the 28 year mark, an annual leave incentive was initiated in 2002. All regular force members who have completed 28 years of regular force service are now entitled to receive an additional five days of annual leave bringing their total days up to 30 days from 25 days. The hope is that this tangible recognition of long service might encourage personnel to continue their commitment with

³⁶ Minister of National Defence, *Government Response to the 11th Report of the Auditor General, Recommendation 11, April 2007* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, April 2007, accessed 20 May 2007), 10. Available from <http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/cmte/CommitteePublication.aspx?COM=10466&Lang=1&SourceId=203568>; Internet.

the CF until CRA.³⁷

To address the high demands on personnel from operations, training, tasks and courses, the CF implemented a PERSTEMPO policy. The aim of the policy is to address the time members spend away from home due to the high level of workload across the CF with a view to striking an appropriate balance between the demands of military service and the needs of CF members and their families. In essence, a member who returns from an unaccompanied operational tour or isolated posting is exempt from another such tasking for one year, and longer where possible. Furthermore, personnel are entitled to a respite period where members returning from a deployment of six months or more are entitled to a period of 60 days during which they are to be excluded from postings, exercises, courses or Temporary Duty that would prevent them from returning to their normal residence during a 24 hour period. In extreme cases and primarily due to operational requirements, varying levels of command can wave these policies.³⁸

Analysis

After a careful look at the background, retention issues, the CF Exit Survey and some of the current HR policies and initiatives implemented to maximize retention, the situation looks quite promising. The CF has recognized the fact that there is a personnel issue that is forecast to worsen, and the CF is certainly taking steps to mitigate the effects. The various audits, readings and surveys outline a number of different reasons that

³⁷ Department of National Defence, *CANFORGEN 053/02 – Modifications to the CF Leave Policy* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, May 2002, accessed 20 May 2007), 1. Available from https://www.cdls-w-elfcw.forces.gc.ca/personnelsupport/g_canforgens/2002/053-02_e.asp; Internet.

³⁸ Department of National Defence, *CANFORGEN 124/05, PERSTEMPO Policy for DCDS International Operations* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, July 2005, accessed 21 May 2007); available from https://www.cdls-w-elfcw.forces.gc.ca/personnelsupport/g_canforgens/2005/124-05_e.asp; Internet.

contribute to personnel deciding to leave the CF which include levels that are both individual and organizational based. This analysis will not separate the levels but rather it will concentrate on the specific reasons provided by those personnel that have chosen to leave the CF voluntarily. The three major reasons are as follows:

- (1) Family/Work balance. Members feel that it is difficult to find an acceptable balance between work demands and family time;
- (2) Effect of postings on family. Postings have a significant effect on a spouse's employment/career. In addition, members are concerned about the family instability created from postings; and
- (3) CF Merit System. In particular, members perceptions are that the merit system does not ensure the right people are being promoted.

The fact that the CF Merit System was raised as one of the reasons contributing to a member's decision to leave the CF is definitely a concern. The current system, which only came into effect in 1998, certainly appears to be very thorough and fair and is based primarily on a member's personnel evaluation report (PER). The PER is the key document used by promotion boards to determine an individual's merit list standing and thus the possibility of promotion, as well as suitability for further terms of service. The PER is written after a year of observation and counselling within the guidelines of the Canadian Forces Personnel Appraisal System (CFPAS).

CFPAS consists of two interrelated processes: a formal feedback and counselling process called a Personnel Development and Review (PDR) and an assessment process called a Personnel Evaluation (PE). In addition, the CF has produced matrices, which provide the basic requirements for the promotion of general service officers and officers in specialist occupations for each rank from officer cadet to general officer and for NCMs from private to chief warrant officer (CWO). These requirements specify qualifying service, experience, education, training (both MOC and professional development) and

second language ability at each rank level. Meeting these criteria is not a guarantee of promotion as other conditions also apply; e.g., a vacancy in the appropriate occupation, position on the merit list, meeting medical and security clearance standards for the occupation, and the concurrence of the commanding officer (CO). In addition, a member's file must be put forward to a merit board for promotion consideration.³⁹ Furthermore, to ensure objectivity and procedural fairness of a merit board within an occupation, the composition includes members from outside that specific occupation. Generally these unbiased members have no knowledge of the people being considered for promotion other than the files provided by the various career managers.

The merit system is certainly not perfect; however, it appears to be fair in that it not only takes into account a members' performance but also their education, second language ability, potential for future employment, course qualifications and conduct. The perceived unfairness can sometimes be attributed to the fact that a member may be higher on a merit list as a result of the cumulative points achieved through factors that are above and beyond performance. Unfortunately for some members, these additional factors and broad promotion criteria mean that a member, who is the top performer in their rank level within a certain organization, will not necessarily be promoted before an individual that does not perform as well. The individual whose file provides the additional information and is well-rounded with respect to education and qualifications will likely be the candidate for promotion. Unless the system for meriting is properly communicated to the members of the CF, it will often appear that the wrong people are being promoted.

³⁹ Minister of National Defence, *Chapter 4 – Human Resource Management Issues* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, March 1997, accessed 22 May 2007), 1–5. Available from http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/Reports/mmcc/Changes/hrm_e.asp#personnel; Internet.

Dedication to duty, working long hours and performing well will not necessarily lead to promotion; there are other factors involved that make a member eligible for promotion. High performers may not always be eligible for promotion; however, their efforts can be rewarded through various levels of notable mention, Commanders Commendations and Honours and Awards.

Another concern that members conveyed was the difficulty they had in finding the perfect balance between family and work. Considering the demands of the current operational tempo this is definitely a challenging task. Between deployments, exercises, courses and tasks a member seems to be away from home often. Although the CF has implemented a number of policies to minimize the time spent away, it is inevitable that members will be required to leave shortly after they return from a deployment.

Generally, the CF is efficient at ensuring the exempt and respite periods are respected; however, after the respite period it is highly likely that a soldier will be required to participate in a lengthy exercise, act as a training cadre or attend a course. These are the unfortunate realities of having a small military with a minimal number of deployable soldiers and a multitude of tasks. It is essential that the CF make all attempts to alleviate additional tasks on soldiers if possible.

With the priority for manning traditionally being placed with the operational units, the various training schools within the CF are often understaffed and frequently require instructor augmentation to properly conduct courses. Consequently, a significant manpower draw from the operational units tends to be instructor billets for the various schools within the CF. With the planned force expansion, the number of tasks will only increase. An alternate option to augment the school staffs definitely requires

investigation. Retired military, civilian contractors, non-deployable positions are all potential candidates to take the burden off the operational units. In addition, operational units that have recently returned from deployments are normally in high demand to provide assistance in training the subsequent unit preparing for deployment. While it is logical to harness the experience of the recently returned soldiers and leaders, the fact remains that they will be taken from home to provide the assistance. In addition, these same people are often required to fill the various range safety staff billets for major live fire exercises and to act as opposing forces and role players for the scenario oriented portions of the pre-deployment training.

The reality is that the CF does not have sufficient manpower to man most of these positions permanently. Again, alternative options need to be considered to alleviate the burden from the operational units. Whether it is retired personnel or contractors, something needs to be done that will decrease a members time away from home. Soldiers understand and accept the fact that they must train hard to prepare for operations properly; however, it is more difficult to convince them that it is necessary to act as a role player for an exercise that last up to two months when they have only recently returned from their own operation. In addition to the significant time away from home, members are also required to move their families with a minimum of 90 days notice to meet the needs and priorities of the CF.

The burden that postings and moves place on soldiers and their families is clearly one of the major issues of dissatisfaction made evident through the survey. Whether it is the detrimental effect it has on a spouse's employment or the instability it causes for the entire family, the fact remains that postings contribute to members choosing to leave the

CF. While postings are often necessary to meet the needs of the CF and as much as possible, members are provided options, some personnel would rather leave the CF than move their families. The current policy essentially leaves the member no choice but to either take the posting or submit a voluntary release. Although, a career manager will normally try to accommodate the member while still meeting the needs of the CF; however, it is inevitable that personnel will sometimes be directed to move to a location that they do not particularly want to go. Unless the circumstances are dire, the member's request will generally be accepted.⁴⁰ However, the CF will also accommodate a member to proceed on a posting while leaving his family in the last location.

The concept of Imposed Restriction (IR) allows a member to proceed on a posting to meet the needs of the CF, but also permits them to leave their families at the last post. IR does not necessarily contribute to an exceptional quality of life for the soldier or their family, but it certainly shows that the CF is willing to accommodate a member who wants to avoid moving and uprooting his or her family. Furthermore, the members' rent and a percentage of their meals are covered by the CF providing acceptable military quarters or messing facilities are not available.

Unfortunately, members have opted to release from the CF to avoid the results of a posting instruction which in the CF is the document or order that provides the details for your next post. While it is not prudent to allow members to dictate their demands to the CF, it is essential that every option be exhausted before a member resorts to release as a means to avoiding a posting. With the current shortage of manpower, surely there are

⁴⁰ Department of National Defence, *Canadian Forces Administrative Orders, 15-2* [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, June 1987, accessed 20 May 2007), 1. Available from http://www.admfincs.forces.gc.ca/admfincs/subjects/cfao/015-02_e.asp; Internet.

positions throughout Canada that members can fill without uprooting their families. This venue definitely needs to be addressed in more detail. Undoubtedly a member will need to make a choice to either accept a posting or remain in location with significant career implications; however, at least the member would still be on strength and performing an important function for the CF. Notably, a policy does exist that addresses a similar issue but is reserved for compassionate and unique circumstances only. However, there are also temporary career implications associated with the policy.

An obvious point that is not addressed in the HR policies or initiatives are incentives for members to continue their service after reaching either the 20 year or 35 year mark. In particular, the Compulsory Retirement Age (CRA) is now 60 years, which is superb for those members who decided to join the CF at a later stage in life; however, members who are well below the CRA but have reached the 35 years of service point can no longer contribute to their pension as the maximum number of years is 35.⁴¹ As shown in Figure 2, the number of members with 35 years of service is minimal. In addition to members reaching CRA, these low numbers should be expected considering a member has marginal financial incentive to serve beyond 35 years. Consequently, these are also the individuals with the most experience in the organization and can definitely fill a number of important jobs. Retention of the personnel with the most experience also requires further investigation considering the CRA has been raised and if the intent is to keep people until they are 60 years old, the CF needs to offer them some incentive to stay rather than relying solely on loyalty to the organization.

⁴¹ Department of National Defence, *Your Pension Plan and Release Pay Benefits*, [on-line] (Ottawa, Canada, Department of National Defence, April 2000, accessed 20 May 2007), 15. Available from http://www.admfincs.forces.gc.ca/pension/handbook_e.asp; Internet.

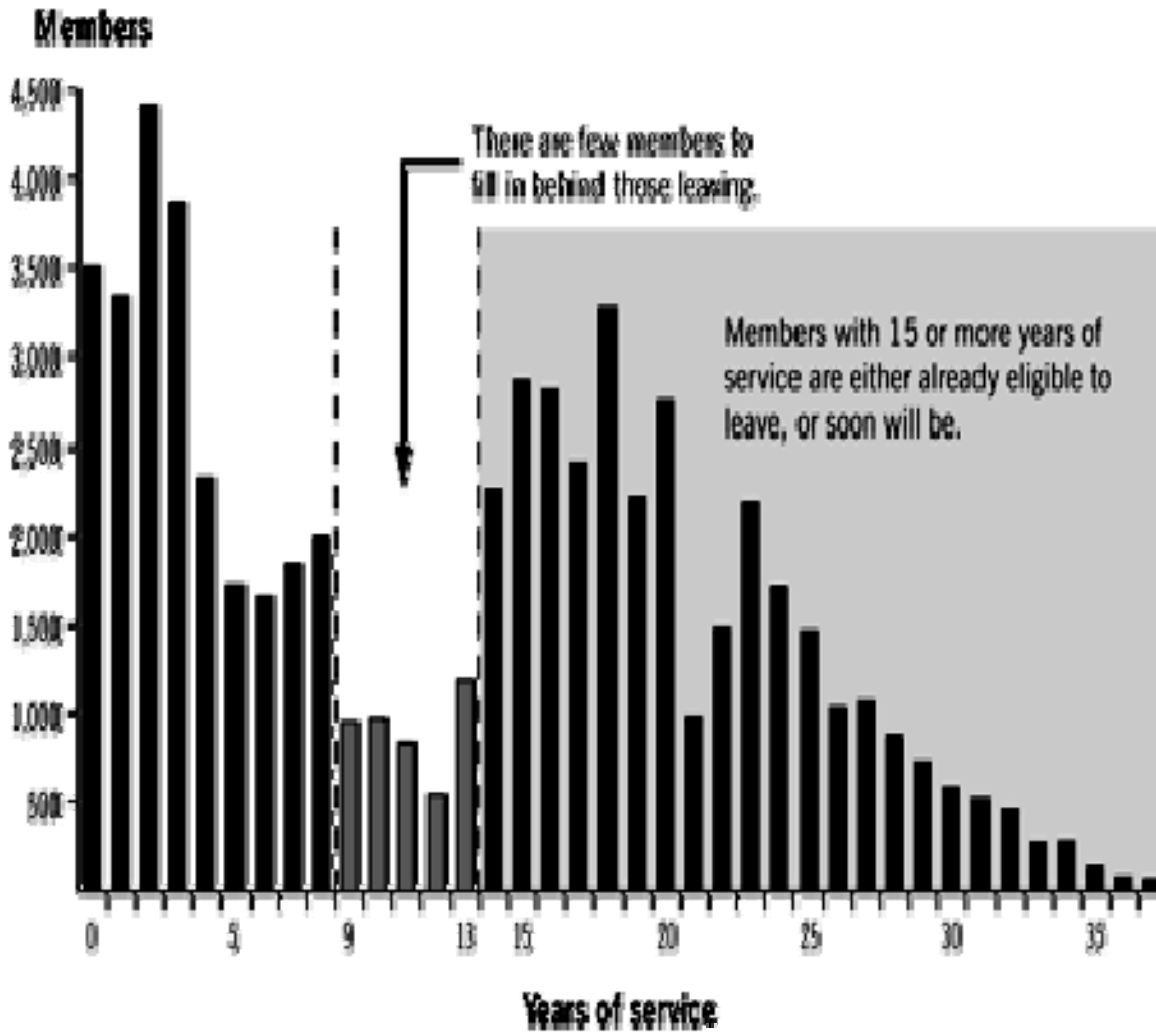


Figure 3. Distribution of the Population of the Regular Force.

Source: Canada, Office of the Auditor General, “Chapter 2, National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention”, *2006 Status Report on the Standing Committee of Public Accounts*, 53.

The 20 year point is a time when the majority of members make the decision to either remain with the CF or begin another career. Figure 2 shows that there are a significant number of personnel who will reach that decision point within the next few

years. The research for this study has found no indication that the CF is planning to offer any tangible incentives for personnel to continue their service beyond the 20 year mark. Notably, there are significant shortages of personnel in the 10–15 years of service range so it would be prudent for the CF to target the personnel in the 15–20 year range to continue their service for at least an additional five years to make up for the void. While pay and benefits was not conveyed as a reason to leave the CF, providing an incentive to remain with the CF for an additional five years would undoubtedly increase retention.

The CF definitely has personnel issues as a result of the bubble caused by the FRP and minimal recruiting in the early 1990s. Retention of currently serving CF personnel is critical to ensure the CF has adequate numbers to accomplish the tasks expected of the Canadian Government and people. The CF Merit System, the balance between work and family demands and the effect of postings are some of the key reasons that contribute to members deciding to leave the CF. Several initiatives have been implemented to maximize retention and address the reasons stated by the departing members; however, more can be done. The following chapter will be a case study on the ADF. In particular, the study will provide a background on their personnel situation, any issues that deal with retention and the policies and initiatives that are being implemented to maximize retention. The intent is to determine whether they are implementing any retention policies or initiatives that may be of use by the CF.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY – AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE

Introduction

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) is the military organization responsible for the defence of Australia and it consists of the Royal Australian Navy, Australian Army, Royal Australian Air Force and a number of tri-service units. During the first decades of the 20th Century, the Australian Government established three separate armed services with each having an independent chain of command. In 1976, the government made a strategic change and established the ADF to place the services under a single headquarters. Since the change, the degree of integration has increased and tri-service headquarters, logistics and training institutions have supplanted many single-service establishments.

Like the CF, the Commander-in-Chief of the ADF is vested in the Governor-General as the Queen's representative.⁴² In addition, similar to the Canadian Chief of the Defence Staff, the Australian Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) is the most senior appointment in the ADF. The CDF commands the ADF under the direction of the Minister of Defence and is notionally the equal of the Secretary of Defence, the most senior public servant in the Department. The CDF is the equivalent to the Chairman of

⁴² United Kingdom, The Official Website of the British Monarchy, *Queen and State* [on-line] (UK, Monarchy Today, 2007, accessed 18 October 2007); available from <http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4676.asp>; Internet. The Queen is Head of State in the United Kingdom. Her official title in the UK is "Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Her other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith". The Queen is also Head of the Commonwealth, a voluntary association of 53 independent countries with some of them who have The Queen as their Sovereign whilst remaining independent in the conduct of their own affairs, and are known as Commonwealth Realms. Canada and Australia are both Commonwealth Realms and as such, the Queen also acts as the Queen of Canada and Australia. The Governor General is the Queens representative and carries out Her Majesty's duties on a daily basis.

the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the US and is the highest ranking officer in the ADF and is a General, Admiral or Air Chief Marshal. The current ADF command structure sees the Minister of Defence playing a significant role in the military decision making on behalf of the Government of Australia which is very similar to that of the Minister of National Defence in Canada.⁴³

Although Australia and the ADF are not identical to Canada and the CF, there are significant similarities between the two countries and their respective forces that make them comparable. Both countries are democracies with notable land masses and rather small populations, approximately 21 and 33 million respectively. Both Canada and Australia have relatively small tri-service armed forces that exist to serve their people and government. Like Canada and the CF, the ADF is an armed force that is in the midst of rebalancing their capability priorities in response to the changed global security environment after the 2001 attacks on New York and Washington. The rebalancing includes a greater emphasis on the ADF being flexible, mobile and at a higher state of readiness. The plan includes the purchase of long-range strategic airlift capability and to increase the Army's size, firepower and protection.⁴⁴ Similarly, as stated earlier, the CF is also rebalancing their capabilities and increasing the size of the force.

⁴³ Australia, Department of Defence, *Chief of the Defence Force* [on-line] (Roles and Responsibilities, 2007, accessed 16 August 2007); available from <http://www.defence.gov.au/cdf/role.htm>; Internet.

⁴⁴ Jane's Sentinel Country Risk Assessments, '*Armed Forces, Australia*' [on-line] (Jane's Sentinel Library: Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – Oceania, 31 July 2007, accessed 16 August 2007); available from http://www4.janes.com.lumen.cgscarl.com/subscribe/sentinel/OCEA_doc_view.jsp?Sent_Country=Australia&Prod_Name=OCEA&K2DocKey=/content1/janesdata/sent/oceasu/austs100.htm@current#toclink-j0011140001905; Internet.

Background

During the 1980s the Government of Australia determined that the forces developed for the defence of Australia may also be called upon to operate beyond their shores in order to protect regional and global strategic interests. This became reality in the early 1990s with deployments to the Gulf War, Somalia and Cambodia. However, the 1994 Defence White Paper did not recognize the fact that the changing strategic circumstances were changing the levels of demand placed on their forces in such operations. Although it was not long before the government came to the realization that the forces that were capable of dealing with low-level contingencies in the defence of Australia and primarily within Australia, were not necessarily sufficient to also handle conflict beyond their territory.⁴⁵ Due to significant budgetary cuts on defence spending the emphasis was on saving money rather than increasing the forces' strength.

Furthermore, during the 1980s Australia had a full time force of approximately 70,000 personnel and a reserve force of about 28,000. Throughout the 1990s the strength of the ADF fluctuated between 51,000 regular force and 38,000 reserve force to around 55,000 and 33,000 respectively. By 2000, the ADF had a regular force of 51,500 and a reserve component of almost 27,000.⁴⁶ The changes and developments in Australia's external strategic environment, major changes in military technology and increasing costs and budget pressures for the Defence organization, and the fact that the last major review

⁴⁵ Australia. Minister for Defence. *Australia's Strategic Policy* [On-Line] (Canberra, Australia, Parliament House, December 1997, accessed 14 May 2007), 1. Available from <http://www.minister.defence.gov.au/sr97/s971202.html>; Internet.

⁴⁶ James Ferguson, *Australian Defence Policies: Alliance or Independence?* [On-Line] (The Indo-Pacific Region 5: INTR13-305 & INTR71/72-305, The Department of International Relations, SHSS, Bond University, Queensland, Australia, 2000/2001, accessed 17 August 2007), 1. Available from <http://www.international-relations.com/wbip/wbnlec5.htm>; Internet.

of the Australian defence policy was in the 1980s the Government of Australia launched a Public Discussion Paper on Defence in 2000. The government stated that it would be making important decisions about the future of Australia's defence force and produced a new Defence White Paper in 2000.⁴⁷

The 2000 Defence White Paper explained the Government's decisions about Australian's strategic policy over the next decade, and it outlined the Government's plan for the development of its armed forces matched by a commitment to provide the funds required. With the end of the Cold War and the upsurge in intra-state conflicts, the Government is cognizant of the fact that the various disputes throughout the world have placed new demands on the armed forces and believes this will be a lasting trend. Over the next decade, the government believes the ADF will continue to undertake a range of operations both within their region and beyond. Consequently, the government outlined three tasks for the ADF in priority. The first priority for the ADF is the defence of Australia and is shaped by three principles. The government feels the ADF must be able to defend Australia without relying on the combat forces of other countries—self reliance. Second, Australia must control the air and sea approaches to their continent—a maritime strategy. Third, the government realizes that although Australia's strategic posture is defensive in nature; it wants to have the ability to attack hostile forces as far from their shores as possible—pro-active operations.

The second priority for the ADF is to contribute to the security of Australia's immediate neighbourhood. In the event of an unprovoked armed aggression against any

⁴⁷ Australia. Minister of Defence. *Defence White Paper – Defence 2000, Our Future Defence Force*. [On-Line] (Commonwealth of Australia 2000, ISBN 0 642 295441, accessed 18 July 2007), V. Available from <http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/>; Internet.

of their immediate neighbours, the ADF wants to be in a position to assist if asked. The government understands that for the most part, its current forces are capable of conducting such operations but some important enhancements are needed for unique demands. The third priority for Australia's forces is supporting Australia's wider interests and objectives by being able to contribute effectively to international coalitions of forces to meet crisis beyond their immediate neighbourhood. This would be achieved by committing forces that are developed for higher priority tasks, notably an increased special operations force capability. Understandably, in addition to conducting the core tasks in support of Australia's strategic objectives, the ADF must continue to execute their regular tasks in support of peacetime national tasks. These include specific and ongoing commitments to coastal surveillance and emergency management, as well as support to wider community needs.⁴⁸

With a realistic but bold defence policy, the Government has placed a significant burden on the ADF, particularly the operational and personnel tempo of its members. This was anticipated and addressed in the 2000 Defence White Paper resulting in the expansion of the ADF from the current strength of 51,500 personnel to 54,000 by 2010. Similar to Canada, the ADF faces a number of challenges to successfully expand the force by recruiting sufficient numbers to fill out the ranks but equally important is retaining its qualified and experienced personnel.

Personnel Issues

The reductions in ADF personnel over the past two decades, the planned expansion of the force throughout the remainder of this decade and the high tempo of

⁴⁸ Ibid., VII–XII.

operations has placed considerable pressures on many ADF personnel and affected their ability to recruit and retain sufficient numbers into the organization. Similar to other western defence forces, the ADF has an impending manpower shortage due to Australia's ageing demographic profile and low unemployment rate. Despite pay increases and other benefits that will be discussed later, the ADF is having difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified personnel. For three years, the strength of the force has fallen at a time when attempts have been made to expand.⁴⁹

The Defence Personnel Environment Scan 2025 compiled by the Directorate of Strategic Personnel Planning and Research (DSPPR) in 2006 provides an excellent overview of the personnel challenges that are, and will continue to impact the ADF in the future. In particular, Table 2 provides the results of the 2004 Australian Defence Force Exit Survey Report and details the top ten reasons for service members choosing to leave the ADF at different times within their respective careers. Notably, the majority of the service members departing the force at an early stage of their ADF career (less than years) typically do so for reasons pertaining to work satisfaction, whereas those who separate after a longer time in service typically do so for reasons relating to separation from family, and a desire for stability.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Jane's Sentinel Country Risk Assessments, *Armed Forces, Australia – The Department of Defence* [on-line] (Jane's Sentinel Library, Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – Oceania, 31 July 2007, accessed 16 August 2007); available from http://www4.janes.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/subscribe/sentinel/OCEA_doc_view.jsp?Sent_Country=Australia&Prod_Name=OCEA&K2DocKey=/content1/janesdata/sent/oceasu/austs100.htm@current#toclink-j0011140001909; Internet.

⁵⁰ Australia. Department of Defence., *Defence Personnel Environment Scan 2025* [on-line] (Commonwealth of Australia 2006, accessed 14 May 2007), 48. Available from <http://www.minister.defence.gov.au/sr97/SR97.pdf>; Internet.

Table 4. Top 10 Reasons for Leaving the ADF by Years of Service.

	< 5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	>15 years
1	Better career prospects in civilian life	Desire for less separation from family	Desire for less separation from family	Desire to stay in one place
2	Lack of job satisfaction	To make a career change while still young enough	To make a career change while still young enough	Desire for less separation from family
3	Desire for less separation from family	Better career prospects in civilian life	Desire to stay in one place	Desire to live in own home
4	Low morale in work environment	Desire to stay in one place	Better career prospects in civilian life	To make a career change while still young enough
5	A desire for more challenging work	Lack of job satisfaction	Little reward for what would be considered over-time in the civilian community	Probable location of future postings
6	Inadequate day-to-day unit management of personnel matters	Little reward for what would be considered over-time in the civilian community	Insufficient personnel in the units to do the work	The effect of postings on family life
7	To make a career change while still young enough	A desire for more challenging work	Lack of confidence in senior defence leadership	I have satisfied my goals in the service
8	Under-use or non-use of training and skills	General dissatisfaction with Service life	Desire to live in own home	Insufficient opportunities for career development
9	Insufficient opportunities for career development	Lack of control over life	Impact of job demands on family/personal life	Better career prospects in civilian life
10	Inadequate information provided on my career management	Low morale in my work environment and impact of job demands on family/personal life	A desire for more challenging work	Insufficient personnel in units to do the work

Source: Johnston, K. "2004 Australian Defence Force Exit Survey Report: Reasons for Leaving. Directorate of Strategic Personnel Planning and Research, Research Report 26/2005." Reproduced in *Defence Personnel Environment Scan 2025*, 2006, 41.

The senior leaders in Defence recognize they must ensure that Defence continues to attract high calibre people; and they must retain a significant proportion of the existing workforce. To help achieve this, in addition to the Defence Personnel Environment Scan 2025, the ADF also conducted a Defence Attitude Survey (DAS) with the sixth iteration

being finalized at the end of 2005. The survey was administered to a 30% sample of the ADF and Australian Public Service personnel within Defence, but for this research, the focus will remain on ADF personnel. The purpose of the DAS is to obtain a clear understanding of the needs and expectations of its workforce. Since its inception in 1999, the DAS has evolved as an important tool in understanding Defence's organizational climate including leadership, conditions of service, career intentions, wellbeing, and personal and family issues. The DAS results continue to play an increasingly important role in informing evidence-based personnel and human resources policy development and workforce planning.⁵¹ The DAS results outline several areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the members in the ADF.

Defence personnel perceptions of their immediate supervisors have remained positive since the first iteration of the DAS and over 70% of respondents indicated they have confidence in their immediate supervisors. Although the level of confidence in Senior Officers/Staff and Senior Defence Leadership remains lower than that of immediate supervisors, results have continued to improve since 2001 and are between 56–63%. When compared to results from other contemporary research in relation to confidence in leadership which range between approximately 40% and 70% with most being less than 55%, Defence Leaders are well within those seen in other organizations.⁵²

Regarding pay, 40% to 45% of respondents believe that civilian employment is more financially attractive than Service employment meaning that more than half of the respondents are satisfied with their salaries. Similarly, respondents were asked to

⁵¹ Australia. Department of Defence., *2005 Defence Attitude Survey, Summary of Results*. [on-line] (Commonwealth of Australia 2005, accessed 14 May 2007), 1. Available from http://www.defence.gov.au/dpe/dpe_site/publications/Defence_Attitude_Survey_2005_Summary_of_Results.pdf; Internet.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 12.

indicate the importance of various benefits provided as part of their conditions of Service in influencing their decision to stay in the ADF. These included childcare, spouse employment assistance, subsidized housing and free medical and dental treatment. In general, all items indicated were noted by service personnel as being important in influencing their decisions to remain with the ADF with over 70% noting that medical and dental coverage was very significant in influencing their decision to stay.⁵³

Attitudes toward career management remain positive and at least half of ADF personnel believed their promotion prospects were good. In addition, 63% of all respondents indicated that their career development has been good. At least 45% also felt that information on career management was adequate. When asked about postings within their service, most members hold positive views, although fewer than 50% indicated that they would leave the ADF if they were given a posting to a location where they did not want to serve. This suggests that career managers are having some success in meeting members' career aspirations but it also suggests that personnel are willing to serve providing they live in a location of their choice. Notably though, more than half the respondents indicated that they would stay in the ADF longer if more flexible work practices, career breaks and respite postings were available. Lastly, at least half the respondents were satisfied with the performance appraisal system.

The survey also asked respondents to indicate whether they were intending to leave the force and an average of almost 30% indicated that they were. However, the attrition rate remains at approximately 11%, thus the results demonstrate that self-reported intention to leave does not necessarily lead to release. Military values were also

⁵³ Ibid., 15.

discussed and approximately 70% of uniformed personnel believed there had been a decline in traditional military values and standards, particularly a lack of discipline in the service. However, at least 65% trusted the ADF to operate with fairness and integrity, and equally, the personnel believe their immediate supervisors actively provide and support a fair and inclusive work environment that does not tolerate discrimination or harassment.

Operational tempo does not appear to be a significant factor in dissatisfaction with only an average of 20% indicating that they felt the operational commitments were high. Although, over a third of respondents felt that their responsibilities and general workload were excessive. In addition, almost half the Navy and Army respondents indicated that their work schedule often conflicted with their personal life. The respondents felt they were working excessive hours making it difficult to balance and fulfill their family obligations properly. More than half are satisfied with their personal well being including mental health, standard of living, personal achievements and relationships although at least 80% of the respondents felt that Defence should still address the issue.⁵⁴

Considering the ADF is currently rebalancing their capabilities and operates in a dynamic and constantly evolving environment to which it must adapt and change, the management of this change was another factor on which respondents were asked to comment. The results indicate that only 26% of respondents believe the information about organizational changes is communicated to them properly and that the changes in their workplace have been well planned. Notably, perceptions have been better over the past few years considering in 1999 less than 20% agreed; however, there is still room for

⁵⁴ Ibid., 15–26.

improvement.⁵⁵

The DAS also included a number of survey items that measure various aspects of employee engagement. The results were encouraging and approximately 75% of respondents indicated that they really care about the future of the Services and they find life in the military enjoyable. Approximately half indicated that their personal morale was “good” to “very good”. In addition, more than 90% of respondents indicated that the quality of the work done in their workplace is very important to them, and they are willing to put in extra effort in order to help the Service be successful. Furthermore, at least 70% of respondents indicated that they like the work in their current posting or position and feel that it makes an important contribution to the team as a whole. Notably, they are proud of what they do and speak highly of their Service to their friends. Overall, almost 70% of ADF personnel indicated they were satisfied with the military way of life.⁵⁶

In general, the DAS indicates that personnel within the ADF are confident in their leadership and at least half are satisfied with their current pay and benefits. Most are satisfied with their current postings but almost half would consider leaving if they were moved to a location that they did not want to go. Operational tempo does not appear to be an issue; however, excessive workloads and work hours are affecting their ability to adequately balance and meet family obligations. The respondents for the survey appear to be satisfied with the military way of life although at least 30% did indicate that they were considering leaving the force. The Personnel Environment Scan 2025 indicated that the majority of personnel in the beginning of their career leave for reasons pertaining to

⁵⁵ Ibid., 26.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 27–29.

work satisfaction, whereas those who separate after a longer time in service typically do so for reasons relating to separation from family, and a desire for stability. Notably, the ADF is currently implementing several initiatives in hopes of maximizing retention.

HR Policies and Initiatives

The ADF Exit Survey Report and the DAS indicated several issues that need to be addressed to maximize retention within the organization. The planned expansion of the force and the changing demographics for recruiting make it essential that the ADF retain their trained and experienced personnel and maintain the ADF as an employer of choice. One of the significant initiatives recently implemented is the Recruitment and Retention Reform. While this research is primarily concerned with the retention aspect of the reform, the initiative also addresses recruiting.

The first phase of the Recruiting and Retention Strategy which was announced in December 2006 aims to meet the challenge of sustaining and growing the Defence's military workforce. The key aspects of the strategy that address retention issues are to maintain the ADF as an employer of choice through initiatives to provide contemporary rewards for a competitive market place, and valuing their people through flexibility and choice. Secondly, the ADF intends to provide mechanisms to evaluate and adjust policies and programs. To maintain the ADF as an employer of choice, retention bonuses and allowances will be used as a short term measure until other major career and remuneration reforms are in place. The allowances and bonuses as defined in

DEFGRAM NO 697/2006 dated 15 December 2006 are as follows:

- (1) Critical Employment Category Retention Bonus. Chief of Navy and Chief of Army will offer bonuses of up to \$25,000 to selected personnel to serve for an additional two years. Bonuses will be offered where numbers have reduced, or are reducing, to levels below that required to sustain operational or supporting capabilities.
- (2) Army Expansion Rank Retention Bonus. Chief of Army will offer an initial bonus of \$10,000 for an additional year of service, followed by a further bonus of \$30,000 for those who complete an additional three years service. The bonus will be offered to eligible personnel in the ranks of corporal and sergeant with at least two years service; and to eligible personnel at the rank of captain and major with at least three years service on 01 March 2007 and 01 March 2008.
- (3) Army Trade Transfer Bonus Scheme. Chief of Army will offer an incentive bonus of \$17,500 or \$25,000 to encourage personnel to transfer from non technical trades within Army to technical trades which are becoming critical.
- (4) Navy and Army Military Instructor Allowance. Chief of Navy and Chief of Army will provide a \$5,000 per annum allowance to encourage personnel to undertake a posting as a training instructor and to recognize the additional demands associated with such postings.
- (5) Navy Recruit Training Instructor Allowance. Chief of Navy will provide a \$10,000 allowance paid upon completion of each year of instructional posting to compensate for the additional demands placed on personnel in these positions and recognize their influence on the future RAN workforce for the duration of their posting.
- (6) Sea Going and Submarine Service Allowance Review. The Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal will conduct a review of the current allowance to better recognize the demands associated with serving at sea.

In addition, Defence is introducing a new strategic framework for the career management of ADF personnel. The framework will be underpinned by two key principles: support to the individual members to be their own career manager by providing flexibility and choice in their postings and employment preferences, and secondly to give the Service Chief's greater responsibility and flexibility to effectively manage their workforce. Lastly, the ADF intends to provide mechanisms to evaluate and adjust policies and programs which have not yet been defined.⁵⁷

As noted in the DAS, the issue of child care services was not a significant

⁵⁷Australia. Government of Australia, Department of Defence., *\$1.0 Billion for Retention and Recruitment Reform* [on-line] (Commonwealth of Australia 2006, DEFGRAM NO 697/2006, 15 December 2006, accessed 15 June 2007), 1–2. Available from <http://www.navy.gov.au/SCIMARS/Docs/HPDocs/148A23D2-4F4C-495C-A44D-416159DE9289.pdf>; Internet.

concern; however, this is primarily due to the fact that the ADF has put forth recent efforts to expand the availability of childcare services and further develop the Defence Services Workforce Access Program for Partners (SWAPP). This program provides services and initiatives to assist partners of ADF members to become job ready and access the workforce in their new posting localities. In addition to providing personalized assistance including resume preparation and job search, the program will assist with childcare.⁵⁸

One of the concerns addressed by the respondents of the Exit Survey was the effect postings were having on spousal employment. In order to alleviate the requirement for a service member to move his family, the ADF has implemented the Married With Dependants – Separated (MWDS) Allowance. The ADF Family Stability Initiative gives ADF members who are required to relocate on posting the opportunity to choose geographical stability for their families. This means that families may elect to remain in their current localities to achieve educational constancy for children and employment continuity for spouses and partners, while the ADF members proceed on their new postings unaccompanied. Allowing ADF members to choose what is best for them and their families is intended to encourage continued military service.

Families choosing geographic stability will continue to access the range of Defence entitlements such as housing or rent assistance and family support provisions. ADF members who proceed to their new postings unaccompanied will also receive an entitlements package that includes accommodation or rent and meals assistance, up to six

⁵⁸ Australia. Government of Australia, Department of Defence., *Defence Service Workforce Access Program for Partners (SWAPP)* [on-line] (Defence Community Organisation, Supporting Command, ADF Members and their Families, accessed 13 Aug 2007); available from [http:// www.defence.gov.au/dco /swapp.htm](http://www.defence.gov.au/dco/swapp.htm); Internet.

family reunion visits each year and assistance with additional costs associated with living away from their families.⁵⁹

Several issues that had a significant impact on retention in the ADF were identified by the ADF Exit Survey and the DAS. In order to address these concerns and attempt to maximize retention in the ADF a number of initiatives are being implemented. Spousal assistance and child care services, various re-enlistment bonuses, closer communication with career managers and more influence on career choices, and several family stability initiatives are but a few. Only time will tell whether these initiatives have a positive effect on retention; however, the ADF is certainly taking steps to address the concerns.

Analysis

After examining the background, retention issues and some of the current HR policies and initiatives aimed at maximizing retention within the ADF, it is clear that the ADF has similar issues to those of the CF. The three primary reasons for members of the CF deciding to leave the force are their perception that the CF Merit System does not ensure the right people are being promoted, secondly, the members feel that it is difficult to find an acceptable balance between work demands and family time and lastly, the effect that postings have on a spouses employment/career. In addition, the members are concerned about the effects of instability on their families resulting from postings. Similarly, members of the ADF identified postings as an issue, excessive workloads and work hours that impact their ability to balance work/family responsibilities. Lastly, the

⁵⁹ Australia. Government of Australia, Department of Defence., *Family Stability Initiative - FAQs* [on-line] (Defence Personnel Executive, Pay and Conditions, accessed 13 Aug 2007), 1. Available from <http://www.defence.gov.au/dpe/pac/>; Internet.

ADF identified that personnel in the beginning of their career leave for reasons pertaining to work satisfaction, whereas those who separate after a longer time in service typically do so for reasons relating to separation from family, and a desire for stability.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the CF, like the ADF has implemented an incentive defined as Imposed Restriction (IR), which allows a service member to proceed on an unaccompanied posting to meet the needs of the CF, but also permits the member to leave their family at the last post. IR does not necessarily contribute to an exceptional quality of life for the soldier or their family, but it shows that the CF is willing to accommodate a member who wants to avoid uprooting his family. Notably, the members' rent and a portion of their meals are covered by the CF providing acceptable military quarters or messing facilities are not available. In addition, the member is entitled to one trip home per year that will also be reimbursed by the CF. The ADF is presently implementing a similar incentive which is described above and defined as MWDS. The significant difference between the Canadian policy and that of the ADF is that the ADF permits a member to return home six times throughout the year as opposed to once. Five additional trips throughout the year with the cost being born by the institution would undoubtedly be extremely well received by any member who is presently on an IR. This is definitely an incentive that is worthy of further research by the CF.

The other initiatives that are being implemented by the ADF are very similar to those of the CF except for the various bonus incentives. Currently, the CF is not offering any type of bonus for the purposes of retaining its members; however, bonuses were used by the CF in the past. In particular, a Pilot Terminal Allowance was introduced from

April to August 1998 which targeted pilots in the three years-of-service groups. Depending on the group (type of pilot and service), pilots received either \$75,000 or \$50,000 paid over three years for five years return of service. Notably, during the two months that the bonus was offered, 65% of the pilots accepted the terms of the allowance. As discussed by Major Deb Howe, Director Personnel Generation Requirements – 5, in her policy paper titled “The Bonus Fix – The Role of Retention Bonuses in the Canadian Forces and Policy Recommendations”, the pilot bonus has not been studied to the degree that its effectiveness can be measured accurately. However, the voluntary attrition rate for pilots over the past seven years does show a significant decline from the year 2000 onward. Furthermore, in 2003/04, the year in which the return of service obligation ended, the lowest voluntary attrition of members is recorded. These data alone suggest that the program was successful in reducing voluntary attrition, but they are not conclusive as the timing of the program must also be considered.

Notably, the bonus and the contracted period of service was in effect during a period of economic turmoil that followed from the 9/11 attacks and forced the restructuring of Canadian civilian aviation industry which decreased employment opportunities. Consequently, the pull on pilots from the civilian market was considerably less than in the past. Unfortunately, the significant change in the external factors contributes to the difficulty in evaluating the effectiveness of the program as a tool for controlling voluntary attrition. The author also notes that the timing of the bonus, the amount, length of the return-of-service obligation, and the ability of the organization to respond to changes in the external market are important lessons to bear in mind when

developing policy.⁶⁰

In the same paper, Major Howe recommends that while the CF cannot ignore market forces in choosing among retention options, the emphasis on building organizational commitment through a relational strategy should be maintained. She notes that theory and research suggests that this approach is more cost effective in the long run and it is more congruent with core institutional values as embodied in the military ethos. Although, Major Howe does not discount retention bonuses, she does recommend that if bonus programs are to be used, evaluation research must be conducted. Furthermore, she provides numerous recommendations on who to target and when, how to administrate the program and some considerations when developing the terms and conditions of a bonus are but a few.⁶¹

As stated earlier, the ADF is also offering an annual allowance to encourage personnel to undertake postings as training instructors due to the additional demands associated with such a posting. In the CF, these types of postings are not necessarily viewed as postings with additional demands and on the contrary, they provide the instructor a fixed schedule without a looming operational deployment and the associated training, risks and separation that goes with it. Demanding postings in Canada are those positions within the operational units in the army, navy and air force that regularly train, deploy and complete a multitude of tasks that often require members to be away from home for extended periods. It is these men and women who often work exceptionally

⁶⁰ Canada, Department of Defence, Deb Howe, Major., *The Bonus Fix, The Role of Retention Bonuses in the Canadian Forces and Policy Recommendations*, (Director Military Employment Policy, Attrition/Retention Team, DMEP-A/RT Report 2005-004, 18 April 2005), received via email from Major Deb Howe on 20 April 2007, 63.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 72.

long hours and react to an ever changing training schedule who should be provided with an additional incentive to keep serving. While an environmental allowance policy does exist in the CF and offers financial compensation to members whose duties involve sporadic or continuous exposure to adverse environmental conditions including hazards which are not normally experienced by other members, it needs to be refined.⁶² In particular, the policy does not adequately address the high tempo and demand experienced by soldiers in operational field units.

Canada and Australia are experiencing similar issues with regard to retention within their respective militaries. Consequently, the CF and the ADF are implementing various initiatives aimed at maximizing retention. While both forces are taking a similar approach, the ADF is also implementing a retention bonus. Time, research and the strength of the ADF in the future will determine whether the ADF Retention Bonus Scheme is successful or not. Presently the CF is not offering a retention bonus to service members although the organization is concerned about the number of members that will be eligible to retire with a pension over the next five years. As discussed in Chapter Three, the theme of the current retention strategy is aimed at strengthening the social contract with regard to HR policies and organizational commitments. However, this may not be enough as the operational tempo, workloads, risks and challenges of balancing family time are on the increase. As with the ADF, it is the experienced personnel and their families within the organization that need to be targeted and financially recognized for their long term efforts and dedication to the force considering the present tempo of

⁶² Canada, Department of National Defence, *CFAO 205-25 Environmental Allowances* [on-line] (Finance and Corporate Services, Canadian Forces Administrative Orders (CFAO), 2007, accessed 20 October 2007); available from http://www.admfincs.forces.gc.ca/admfincs/subjects/cfao/205-25_e.asp; Internet.

operations and training.

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY – BRITISH ARMED FORCES

Introduction

The British Armed Forces is the military organization responsible for protecting the United Kingdom (UK) including its overseas territories, promoting Britain's wider security interests, and supporting international peacekeeping efforts. The armed forces consist of three separate and distinct services including the Royal Navy which includes the Royal Marines, the British Army and the Royal Air Force (RAF). In addition, the force has recently formed a Permanent Joint Headquarters to facilitate integration among the three services. The armed forces have approximately 191, 840 total regular force personnel and are a professional and all volunteer force with the highest level of military headquarters being the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

The MoD provides political control of all military operations and controls the budget of the armed forces. The MoD headquarters is headed by the Secretary of State for Defence who is the Cabinet Minister responsible for defence policy, and for providing the means by which it is carried out. He is also the Chairman of the Defence Council⁶³ and of its three Boards, (the Admiralty Board, the Army Board and the Air Force Board). The Secretary of State for Defence has three subordinate Ministers: the Minister of State for Defence Procurement, the Minister of State for the Armed Forces and the Under-

⁶³ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence., *Defence Council* [on-line] (MoD, About Defence, accessed 16 October); available from <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/WhatWeDo/DefenceManagement/DefenceCouncil/>; Internet. The Defence Council is the senior Defence Departmental committee. It is chaired by the Secretary of State for Defence, and comprises the other Ministers, the Permanent Under Secretary, the Chief of the Defence Staff and senior Service officers and senior officials who head the Armed Services and the departments major corporate functions. It provides the formal legal basis for the conduct of defence in the UK.

Secretary of State for Defence who are his principal civilian advisors. The Ministers primary military advisor is the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) who, similar to Canada's CDS, is the professional head of the military.⁶⁴ Although the British armed forces have three separate services and the Canadian Forces (CF) is more of a tri-Service or unified organization, the British CDS is still the senior uniformed advisor to the Secretary of State for Defence. Similarly, the Canadian CDS is also the senior uniformed advisor to the Minister of National Defence.

Like Canada, the Commander-in-Chief of the British armed forces is Queen Elizabeth II who is queen and head of state of both countries, although in Canada, the powers of that appointment are exercised by the Governor General of Canada. Both countries are parliamentary democracies with a Prime Minister who is the head of government. Notably, there is no written constitution rather the relationship between the State and the people relies on statute law, common law and conventions. The UK Parliament makes primary legislation and is the highest authority in the land and it continues to have the supreme authority for government and law-making in the UK.⁶⁵ In both the UK and Canada, the Prime Minister holds actual authority over their respective armed forces.

There are several differences between the two countries and their armed forces. Canada has a relatively small tri-service or unified military where the British armed forces are a comparatively large force with three separate services. However, the overall

⁶⁴ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence., *Defence People – Secretary of State for Defence* [on-line] (MoD, About Defence, 10 September 2007, accessed 16 September 2007); available from <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Ministers/>; Internet.

⁶⁵ United Kingdom. Government of UK., *Guide to Government – Overview of UK Government* [on-line] (Directgov, 4 July 2005, accessed 16 September 2007) available from http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Gtg11/GuideToGovernment/Parliament/DG_4003244; Internet.

military command of the two militaries rests with the CDS in both countries. In addition, like the CF, the British armed forces are in the midst of rebalancing their capability priorities and restructuring their force in response to the changed global security environment after the attacks of 9/11.

In particular, British forces place more emphasis on conducting expeditionary operations; however, this is not necessarily a new concept for them as they addressed this requirement in 1998 in the *Strategic Defence Review*. In addition, a greater emphasis is placed on using the reserve force including the Territorial Army in home defence and security and maintaining the ability to backfill regular force efforts overseas. Furthermore, the attacks of 11 September suggested that forces would need to deploy further than Europe, the Gulf and the Mediterranean which the *SDR* originally identified as the primary focus of UK interests in 1998.⁶⁶

Background

During the 1990s the UK MoD conducted three major reviews of the structure of the Armed Forces: *Options for Change* in 1990; *Frontline First* in 1994 and as mentioned earlier, the *Strategic Defence Review (SDR)* in 1998. In July 2002 the MoD published a new chapter to the *SDR* reflecting the changes in the international security environment after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. The result of the *Options for Change* study saw a regular force structure that was appropriate for the new security situation and would meet the peacetime operational needs of the UK and bring savings and reduction in the share of the GDP taken by defence. The review implemented major restructuring

⁶⁶ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence., *The Strategic Defence Review: A New Chapter* [online] (Presented to Parliament by The Secretary of State for Defence, July 2002, accessed 16 September 2007), 4–9. Available from <http://www.comw.org/rma/fulltext/0207sdrv011.pdf> ; Internet.

of the armed forces and was regarded as the beginning of a shift towards a capability-based rather than a threats-based policy in determining future force structure.

The main conclusions of the review outlined a reduction in manpower across all three services of approximately 18% (56,000) by the mid-1990s. The most significant cuts fell on the Army, which reduced in strength by one third, from 160,000 to 120,000. The largest cuts came from the ground forces based in Germany which were cut by over half, while tactical air power based in Germany was reduced with the withdrawal of six RAF Squadrons and the closure of two air bases. The review also advocated a reduction in the Royal Navy from 48 destroyers and frigates to 40 and a 15% reduction in Nimrod Maritime Patrol Aircraft. Notably though, the same basic force composition and balance between the Services that existed during the Cold War would be maintained, albeit on a much smaller scale.⁶⁷ Figure 3 highlights the drawdown during the 1990s as a result of the *Options for Change* review.

⁶⁷ Claire Taylor, *Research Paper 04/71, The Defence White Paper* [on-line] (Library of the House of Commons, International Affairs and Defence Section, 17 September 2004, accessed 15 September 2007), 7–9. Available from <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2004/rp04-071.pdf>; Internet.

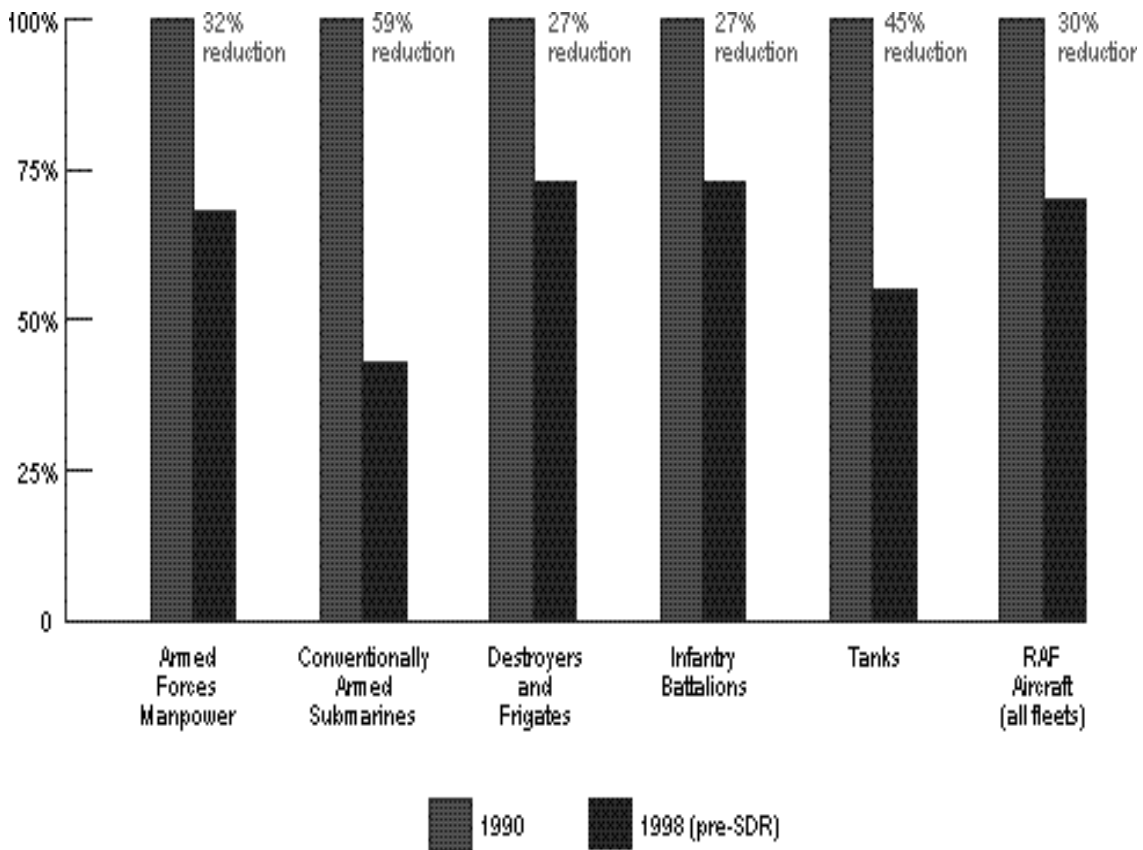


Figure 4. British Armed Forces Reductions during the 1990s.

Source. UK MoD, “Supporting Essay Six – Future Military Capabilities”, *1998 Strategic Defence Review*, 1998, 1.

The 1998 *SDR* stated that defence expenditure had fallen by some 23% and the forces had been cut by nearly a third since 1990. Yet, over that same period the force faced a series of new and unexpected operational challenges beyond the regular commitment to Northern Ireland, including deployments to Bosnia followed by Kosovo, Macedonia, East Timor and Afghanistan in support of international operations. With a reduced force and an increase in operational commitments, the review noted that excessive strain and unsustainable pressures were placed on the soldiers. Other areas of

weakness identified included rapid deployment capability and the ability to sustain and support overseas operations.⁶⁸

The report highlighted that military capability needed to be built around a pool of powerful and versatile units from all three services which would be available for operations on short notice. The panel recommended that Joint Rapid Reaction Forces be created that would put together the best force packages for particular circumstances. In order to achieve this, improvements in strategic transport, operational support and deployable command and control capabilities were necessary, resulting in substantial restructuring of the armed forces.

Most important in this effort were increasing the capabilities and resources available to the Joint Rapid Deployment Forces and in 1999, formally renaming the enhanced organization to the Joint Rapid Reaction Forces. This force brings together readily available resources and capabilities from the three services to create the right force packages to conduct short-notice brigade-level or equivalent force projection operations. However, this plan required restructuring of the forces and the procurement of various transport platforms. Container ships, strategic airlift and transport aircraft were but a few major purchases or contracts made. The MoD enhanced logistical support to sustain two medium scale deployments and created a joint forces logistics component and headquarters to coordinate joint support assets. The enhancements also included the creation of some 1,900 new regular logistical posts and the use of contractors to assist with logistical support. The RAF improved its ability to conduct operations from remote

⁶⁸ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence. *Strategic Defence Review July 1998* [on-line] (Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Defence by Command of Her Majesty, July 1998, accessed 15 August 2007), 9. Available from http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/65F3D7AC-4340-4119-93A2-20825848E50E/0/sdr1998_complete.pdf; internet.

locations. The overall effect of the logistical changes provided more effective support for deployed forces and reduced the operational tempo faced by personnel in many logistical specializations. Furthermore, the MoD enhanced medical support by investing in additional equipment and personnel, including establishing an ambulance regiment.

Furthermore, improvements in tactical communications and command and control systems saw the creation of a Joint Task Force Headquarters capable of rapid deployment for the command and control of the Joint Rapid Reaction Forces, and the formation of the nucleus of a second headquarters which could take command of a separate concurrent deployment. The Royal Navy modernized the destroyer and frigate force but reduced overall strength from 35 to 32 vessels based on two concurrent medium scale deployments. The nuclear-powered submarines modernization reduced strength from 12 to 10 and the mine countermeasures force will increase from 19 to 22 ships. The Royal Navy will also maintain a full commando brigade and its specialist shipping. Additional enhancements will be made but the net result regarding personnel for the navy will be a reduction of 1,400 personnel from an already undermanned force. Notably, those people will be re-rolled and re-trained into different specialties to fill the voids.

The review recommended that the army retain a balanced, combined arms, highly capable structure of two deployable divisions and recommended some rebalancing to make existing forces more capable and versatile. The number of infantry battalions would remain at 40 although in the case of the Parachute Regiment, two of the three battalions will be re-rolled to air assault battalions as opposed to airborne battalions. Two armoured regiments will also be re-rolled; one to nuclear, biological and chemical defence and the other to armoured reconnaissance. These are but a few examples of the army

restructuring within British forces. Notably, the size of the regular army will require an additional 3,300 troops with increases primarily in signals, engineer and logistics personnel.

Similarly, RAF will also change; however, the net effect on manpower will be minimal.⁶⁹ The *SDR* recommended restructuring to the British armed forces but in terms of personnel, the increase in strength was less than 10,000. While in Canadian terms this is a notable increase in manpower. For the British, who had an approximate strength of 212,200 personnel at the time of the review, this was not a dramatic change and only constituted about a 5 % increase in addition to those personnel who will be re-roled and re-trained.⁷⁰

In 2004, the MoD conducted another review of their capabilities and determined that while the original plan based on the 1998 *SDR*, and further emphasized in the 2003 White Paper, was a good start point, the future structure of the armed forces needed to change to meet the current demands. In July 2004, they published an additional chapter to the White Paper titled *Future Capabilities*. In essence, the British armed forces expect that multiple, concurrent, small-to-medium scale operations over a wider geographical area than those envisaged in the 1998 *SDR* will become the norm. As a result, planning assumptions have been revised to ensure the sustainability of three simultaneous and enduring operations of small-to-medium scale rather than two. In addition, they want the capability to undertake a large-scale intervention operation while maintaining a

⁶⁹ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence. *Strategic Defence Review July 1998, Supporting Essay Six – Future Military Capabilities*, 1–14.

⁷⁰ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence. *MOD Performance report 2000/2001* [on-line] (Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Defence by Command of Her Majesty, November 2001, accessed 20 September 2007), 26. Available from http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D46F4964-6B49-473E-841A-5F3698CEAD98/0/dpr2001_report.pdf; Internet.

commitment to a small-scale peace support operation. In keeping with budgetary restraints, personnel issues and the threat, the MoD is focusing its efforts on effects-based operations.

The British want to be capable of achieving one or a combination of eight desired effects across a range of military tasks including the establishment of a fully integrated Network Enabled Capability (NEC). NEC is the enhancement of capability through the effective linkage of platforms and people through a network with the goal of exploiting information superiority in order to achieve military dominance and decisive effect. As a consequence, fewer platforms will be required to achieve the desired effect. The emphasis is no longer on quantity as a measure of capability, and this translates to substantial changes to the three services. The British Army will be further restructured to provide a more balanced and flexible force with the emphasis on developing a medium-weight capability. The restructuring will reduce the manpower requirement of the Army by 1,500 to 102,000. The Royal Navy will also lose a number of vessels with the manpower requirement being reduced by 1,500 to 36,000 by 2008. The restructuring of the RAF will result in a reduced manpower requirement by 7,500 to 41,000 by April 2008.⁷¹ While restructuring and transforming a military is challenging in a stable environment, the MoD has been making changes while maintaining substantial commitments overseas.

The operational tempo of the British armed forces has increased since the

⁷¹ Claire Taylor, *Research Paper 04/72, The Defence White Paper: Future Capabilities* [on-line] (Library of the House of Commons, International Affairs and Defence Section, 17 September 2004, accessed 15 September 2007), 3. Available from <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2004/rp04-072.pdf>; internet.

restructuring of the force began and it is affecting their ability to recruit and to retain personnel within the force. Notably, in addition to Iraq and Afghanistan the British forces are deployed to more than 80 countries around the world in varying strengths from single military advisors to full operational deployments. The international commitments are forcing personnel to spend more and more time away from home. In addition, the overall manpower of British forces is declining. In 1990, strength rested at 305,800 total; in 2001, 205,600; in 2004, 207,000; and in 2006 the strength of the force was 195,900. With the ongoing restructuring, the forces strength will decline by a further 10,000 by 2008. Of note, these strengths are total numbers and include those personnel who are not fully trained and available for operations.⁷²

Personnel Issues

Although a variety of factors influence personnel in decisions to stay or leave the British armed forces, workload, separation, and the impact on family life are key drivers. Increased operational tempo has led to heavier workloads and more separation from families than expected than expected by both the senior leadership and the soldiers. However, the British forces have conducted extensive studies on this issue and determined that the force as a whole is not necessarily at risk but rather a select few that are in specific trades and rank levels within a particular service. The British classify these as “pinch point trades”, which in broad terms defines those trades or areas of expertise where there are insufficient trained personnel to perform operational tasks without curtailing the time provided between deployments for recuperation, training and

⁷² United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence., “Chapter 2 – Personnel”, *UK Defence Statistics 2006*. [on-line] (National Statistics Publication, 2006, accessed 10 September 2007), 2. Available from <http://www.dasa.mod.uk/natstats/ukds/2006/pdf/UKDS2006Chapter2r.pdf>; Internet.

leave. Notably, pinch points can often present substantial risks to operational capability and can relate to either whole trade groups or to problems at specific ranks. In September 2005, the three services together identified a total of 88 separate pinch point trades.

The force determined that pinch points arise for a number of reasons, but most notably, they are due to the failure to recruit sufficient numbers; poor retention leading to troops leaving before the end of their enlistment period; the number and frequency of operational commitments placing excessive demands on existing personnel whose trade group would otherwise be at, or near, full strength; and finally the fact that the nature of modern warfare has led to an increased requirement for specializations, while manning strengths have not kept pace with that demand.⁷³ As noted above, the restructuring efforts will result in a smaller force allowing them to reach target strengths relatively easy. The fact of the matter is that the services have been operating well below their respective manning levels for years. With regular attrition, minimal recruiting and voluntary release, and the competitive labour market, the services will likely have difficulty in meeting their numbers. The three services believe they will reach their target levels by 2008; however, the pinch point trades will still exist. Furthermore, employment in the UK is high and the demands in both the public sector and commercial world offer competing attractions for young people, including those with military experience. The British forces recognize that in order to remain competitive, they require agile and well-targeted recruiting and retention policies.⁷⁴ The following section will concentrate on the

⁷³ United Kingdom. National Audit Office. *Ministry of Defence – Recruitment and Retention in the Armed Forces*. (Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, London: The Stationary Office, 31 October 2006), 13.

⁷⁴ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence. *Armed Forces Overarching Personnel Strategy* [online] (Produced by DCCS Media on behalf of SP Pol, 02/03, accessed 20 September 2007), 6. Available

retention policies and initiatives.

HR Policies and Initiatives

With the increased operational tempo, ongoing restructuring efforts and a reduction in force strength, the British forces have identified that certain personnel, particularly those in pinch point trades, are overworked and many are on the verge of leaving the force. As a result, they have placed emphasis on developing human resource strategy that will help the British armed force remain competitive in the labour market. In particular, the armed forces produced the *Armed Forces Overarching Personnel Strategy* (AFOPS) in 2000 and updated the original document in 2003. The AFOPS is based on five themes; cultivate – prepare the ground for obtaining personnel, obtain – attract, acquire and train high quality, motivated people, retain – provide personnel with a rewarding career which stimulates and develops them and provides the foundation of a second career on leaving the services, sustain – provide an environment in which personnel and their families will be willing to maintain their commitment, and remember – provide ex-service personnel and their dependants with help and support, particularly with resettlement back into civilian life. Notably, this overarching strategy is aimed at providing strategic direction to each of the three services when defining their respective personnel policies.⁷⁵ For the purposes of this study, only the initiatives directed at retention that are currently being implemented or forthcoming are discussed.

In order to address the concern of personnel spending too much time away from home due to operations, training or education, each service has set “harmony guidelines”.

from <http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/3605EB3B-3CAE-4BE0-BFAA-7FCE1E7B4D8D/0/afops.pdf>; Internet.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 6.

These guidelines aim to ensure that personnel and their families have a sustainable balance between time away and time at home. Due to the different tasks and roles of the three services, their respective guidelines for both individual separated service and unit tour intervals vary. The Royal Navy/Royal Marines specify that in any 36 month period, no individual is to exceed 660 days of separated service. The Army directs that in any 30 month rolling period no individual is to exceed 415 days of separated service. The Royal Air Force directs that no more than 2.5% of personnel are to exceed more than 140 days of detached duty in 12 months. Regarding unit tour intervals, the Royal Navy directs that fleet units are to spend a maximum of 60% of time deployed in a three year cycle. The Army is to have an average of 24 month interval between unit tours which are typically six to seven months in duration, and the Royal Air Force directs that there is to be no less than 16 months between tours which are generally three to four months in duration.⁷⁶

The MoD defines individual separated service as absence from normal place of duty or lack of freedom to enjoy leisure at the normal place of duty/residence at place of duty. This typically includes deployments, pre-deployment and other training activities, exercises, public duties, recruitment and other activities that involve not being able to sleep in normal accommodation.⁷⁷ Notably, the Services make all attempts to remain within the guidelines to ensure a sustainable balance between work and family for their personnel; however, the operation tempo has necessitated some deviation. The most profound is in the Army where nearly 14% of the personnel exceeded the guidelines and

⁷⁶ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence. *Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts 2006-07* [on-line] (Produced by the Defence Management Board for the Government of UK for the year ending 31 March 2007, accessed 28 September 2007), 21. Available from <http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/42C010BE-9935-4C00-B62B-B8DAF3487A03/0/preface.pdf>; Internet.

⁷⁷ United Kingdom. *Ministry of Defence – Recruitment and Retention in the Armed Forces*, 40.

the unit deployment rotation was on average every 20 to 21 months rather than 24 months.⁷⁸ Consequently, this has an effect on retention as conveyed in the results of the retention survey, particularly in the pinch point trades.

As a short term solution, British forces have also introduced a number of financial retention incentive schemes, either on a tri-service basis where there are common problems or to target specific trades in individual services. The financial incentives range from £10,000 for soldiers completing either Class 1 Systems Engineering Technician or Foreman of Signals training with an agreement of continued service, to £30,000 to Aircrew Officers for an additional five years of service. In addition, the British forces also offer commitment bonuses to certain trades for an additional engagement. The *Recruitment and Retention Report* stated that the incentives had varying degrees of success and were difficult to measure, although for the short term the outflow rate did decrease. Furthermore, the detailed survey of pinch point trade personnel has shown that the incentives were a deciding factor in their decisions to stay for only 11% of the personnel who had been offered them while, for a further 53% of the personnel, the incentives had no impact on their decision as they would have stayed anyway.⁷⁹

The British forces have also adopted a range of non-financial measures to improve manning in pinch point areas aimed at retaining its most experienced personnel and alleviating some of the pressures caused by the combination of under-manning and high commitment levels within these groups. For example, they have introduced continuance and long service schemes to retain experienced personnel for additional

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 48–50.

periods after their initial contracts have expired.⁸⁰ Notably, these schemes are similar in nature to that of the CF Continuing Engagement discussed in the CF case study. In addition, the British forces are pursuing a number of schemes to speed up the promotions of personnel in certain pinch point trades and rank levels to provide additional manpower in shortage areas. Furthermore, the forces are researching initiatives to reassign roles or to restructure trades to help reduce pressures on certain pinch point trades.⁸¹

British forces are also putting significant effort into improving the quality of life of its personnel while at home and abroad. At home, the MoD is investing in housing and accommodation upgrades. They are also developing options for personnel to exercise greater choice in housing options through Assisted House Purchase Schemes. While deployed, they are targeting morale and welfare by providing the soldiers access to more amenities. The operational welfare package includes items such as extra free phone calls, internet, satellite television and travel concessions to name a few.⁸² The impact on personnel to maintain these systems is minimal and the benefits greatly surpass the cost in man-hours.

The British armed forces have identified that retention is an issue and are certainly taking measures to retain its personnel. Closely managing operational and personnel tempo, offering financial retention incentives and commitment bonuses, improving the quality of life for the soldiers while in both the UK and abroad and closely managing the personnel numbers to alleviate the strain on pinch point trades. While they

⁸⁰ United Kingdom. Ministry of Defence. *Soldiers' Career Structures and Terms of Service* [online] (British Army Home Page, accessed 2 October 2007); available from http://www.army.mod.uk/servingsoldier/termssofserv/tossldrs/ss_tos_sltrs_w.html; Internet.

⁸¹ Ibid., 2,3.

⁸² United Kingdom, Ministry of Defence. *Armed Forces Overarching Personnel Strategy*, 13,14.

are still operating below their required strength for their operational commitments, they are confident that by the time the restructuring of the force is complete, they will be at their required numbers and capable of sustaining the force and meeting their commitments.

Analysis

After examining the background, retention issues and some of the current HR policies and initiatives aimed at maximizing retention within the forces, it is clear that the British have similar issues to those of the CF. As discussed in previous chapters, the three primary reasons for members of the CF deciding to leave the force are their perception that the CF Merit System does not ensure the right people are being promoted, secondly, the members feel that it is difficult to find an acceptable balance between work demands and family time and lastly, the effect that postings have on a spouses employment/career. In addition, the members are concerned about the instability on their families resulting from postings. Similarly, some of the key factors that influence personnel in their decisions to stay or leave the British armed forces include excessive workloads, separation from their families and the impact of service life on family life and the inability to plan outside of work.

Increased operational tempo for British forces has led to heavier workloads and more separation from families than expected. However, the force is confident that the organization as a whole is not necessarily at risk but rather a select few. These individuals are in trades classified as pinch point trades and are in specific ranks within a particular service. Several initiatives are being implemented by the British armed forces in an attempt to alleviate the strain on their members' and maximize retention of their

personnel primarily in the pinch point trades.

One of the most notable initiatives is the establishment of “harmony guidelines” which serve to control the amount of time personnel are away from their families. As discussed earlier, the guidelines are being followed as much as possible but due to the current operational tempo, there are still individuals and units that by necessity, must deviate. In the British Army for example, units are to rotate overseas after having spent at least 24 months at home although this has on average, been reduced to about 20–21 months. In addition, individuals are not to be separated from their home station for more than 415 days (approximately 13.8 months) within a 30 month period. While a noble concept, this still equates to spending almost half their time away within a 30 month period. As discussed in the Canadian case study, the CF policy directs that an individual is not to be deployed within one year of returning from overseas duty or be separated from his family within the first two months of arriving home. Considering the rotations for CF members generally last from six to nine months plus pre-deployment training of one to two months, the end result still sees, on average, CF members having more time at home than those in the British forces within a 30 month period. Notably, when compared to the British, the CF is placing less demand on the soldier and minimizing the operational and personnel tempo as much as possible.

As a result of the operational tempo and instability caused primarily from overseas deployments and organizational restructuring, the British forces are offering financial incentives to its personnel to encourage them to remain with the force. As noted earlier, the incentives are having varying degrees of short term success but are difficult to measure accurately. As discussed in Chapter Four, the CF is not currently offering

financial retention incentives although it was done in the past. Similar to the British though, the bonuses did appear to work as a short term solution but again, were difficult to measure accurately.

Notably, the British forces, as a matter of routine, offers commitment bonuses to personnel who agree to re-enlist for an additional enlistment period at the end of their contract. This is something that needs to be investigated by the CF. Considering the CF is concerned about those personnel who are reaching the end of their obligatory service and qualify for a pension (20 year mark), a re-engagement bonus may encourage more personnel to remain with the force. This is not to be confused with a retention bonus as it would be aimed at those personnel who have completed their obligatory service and are being asked to re-engage for an additional period. A retention bonus would be aimed at those personnel who are leaving voluntarily before the end of their contract. As stated earlier, the concern in the CF is ensuring they retain those personnel that are at, or approaching the 20 year mark. Notably, the majority are at a point in their lives that they are still young enough to start a second career and receive a 40% pension for their 20 years of service. With the increased operational tempo, risk and instability, loyalty and job satisfaction may not be enough to keep people in the force, especially if their employment is adversely affecting their family life.

Other initiatives the British are implementing are aimed at improving the quality of life of their personnel. As noted above, they include the improvements to armed forces housing, Assisted House Purchase Schemes and the operational welfare package. These initiatives will likely have a very positive effect on retention as they will undoubtedly increase morale and provide families with more stability. The CF currently

has similar initiatives that definitely contribute to the morale and stability of the personnel and their families. The amenities and benefits provided to deployed personnel in the CF are second to none: free phone calls, internet, hygiene facilities, messing, accommodations, leave and travel assistance and allowances are but a few. Notably, these services are provided by a civilian organization with no additional responsibilities burdened by the soldier. The re-location benefits and home purchase allowances are also superb and provide serving members with the option of purchasing or selling a home without having to pay real estate or legal fees. These initiatives currently being implemented by the CF are definitely comparable, if not superior to those of the British forces.

After examining the background, retention issues and some of the current HR policies and initiatives aimed at maximizing retention within the British forces, it is clear that the British have similar issues to those of the CF. As stated earlier, the primary reasons for members of the CF deciding to leave the force are their perception that the CF Merit System does not ensure the right people are being promoted, the balance between work demands and family time, the effect that postings have on a spouses' employment/career and family instability. Similarly, some of the key factors that influence personnel in their decisions to stay or leave the British forces include excessive workloads, separation from their families and the impact of service life on family life and the inability to plan outside of work. Both the CF and the British forces are implementing various initiatives aimed at maximizing retention. While both forces are taking a similar approach, the British are also offering various retention bonuses as a short term solution. Only with time and research will the success of the bonuses be

determined. The other initiatives and policies being implemented by the British are similar to those of the CF and in some cases not as developed or as lucrative.

After researching the background, retention issues, HR policies and initiatives of the CF, the ADF and British forces and conducting an analysis of the three, the final chapter will provide findings, recommendations and concluding remarks.

CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter will provide an overview of the personnel issues in the Canadian Forces (CF), a summary of the findings to the research questions and recommendations to the CF to consider when contemplating retention initiatives. Lastly, the chapter will note items that require further investigation followed by concluding remarks

With the end of the Cold War and a decrease to the budget of the Department of National Defence (DND), the CF underwent dramatic change throughout the 1990s. Base closures, the consolidation of headquarters and most importantly, the radical downsizing of the military personnel resulted in the personnel strength dropping from approximately 90,000 to 60,000.⁸³

In order to achieve such a reduction in personnel rapidly, the CF offered a compensation package designed to entice members to take early release or retirement which is known as the Force Reduction Program (FRP). Over a four year period, the CF reduced the force by approximately 14,000 members under this program alone. By 1997, this initiative, coupled with minimal recruiting efforts and forecasted attrition, helped the CF in achieving their target strength of 60,000 personnel. The CF recognized the fact that a shortage of personnel could very well become reality around the year 2000, and has since implemented several initiatives to minimize this exodus, targeting both recruiting and retention.

The Canadian Forces Recruiting Group (CFRG) is confident that their recruiting strategy will continue to attract applicants and meet the demands of the Forces into the

⁸³ SCONDVA, *Interim Report - December 1, 1999*, 1999, 1.

future.⁸⁴ However, the Auditor General's report from 2006 stated that a changing Canadian demographic profile, a low interest among Canadian youth in joining the military, and increasing operational demands may impede the current recruiting system from successfully supporting the growth of the CF.⁸⁵ The noted comments in the report from the Auditor General emphasises the necessity to retain trained and experienced personnel considering the envisioned recruiting challenges.

The attacks on 9/11 arguably changed the world forever and the relative peace and stability enjoyed by North Americans could no longer be taken for granted. In 2002 the Canadian Government deployed forces to Afghanistan in support of the US campaign against the Taliban. After the fall of the Taliban and the implementation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), Canada deployed more forces to Afghanistan and agreed to support the mission until at least 2009. These continued high threat deployments overseas have resulted in a significant increase in operational and personnel tempo for Canadian soldiers and their families.

The combined effect of lower recruitment and FRP during the 1990s created a significant manning bubble whose consequences are now beginning to be felt. In particular, 50% of the Forces are or soon will be eligible to retire with a pension which leaves open the possibility that the CF will lack sufficient numbers of trained, experienced personnel to replace those that are or at least can leave.⁸⁶ Unless the Canadian Forces adequately addresses the retention concerns, it is very possible that there

⁸⁴ Major Andy Coxhead, Canadian Forces Recruiting Group PAO, *About Us, News and Events* 09/12/2006.

⁸⁵ Office of the Auditor General, "Chapter 2, National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention," *2006 Status Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts*, 48.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

will not be a sufficient numbers of personnel to fill the ranks and complete the tasks the Government and the Canadian people expect.

Findings

The purpose of this research was to answer to the primary research question: Does the Canadian Forces retention plan adequately address the reasons people are choosing to leave? In order to answer this question, there were a number of secondary issues that this research addressed: What are the common reasons contributing to personnel deciding to leave the CF? Do the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the British armed forces have similar challenges and what have they done to address them? What can the CF do to realistically address the retention issue within the organization? In order to provide the findings to the noted research questions in a logical format, the secondary questions will be addressed first followed by the primary research question.

Secondary Research Question 1: What are the common reasons contributing to personnel deciding to leave the CF voluntarily? After a careful examination of the CF background, retention issues, the CF Exit Survey and various government documents, there appears to be three key reasons that contribute to members decisions to leave the CF. The first reason is the family/work balance in that members feel it is difficult to find an acceptable balance between work demands and family time. The second reason is the adverse effect postings have on a family. In particular, the instability to the family from moving and the negative impact on a spousal employment and career. The third reason is the CF Merit System in that members perceptions are that the merit system does not ensure the right people are being promoted.

Secondary Research Question 2: Do the ADF and the British armed forces have similar challenges and what have they done to address them? This research has determined that both the ADF and the British armed forces have retention issues and are taking measures to address them. The primary reasons that personnel are leaving the ADF are identified as postings, excessive workloads and work hours that impact their ability to balance work/family responsibilities. Furthermore, the ADF identified that personnel in the beginning of their career leave for reasons pertaining to work satisfaction, whereas those who separate after a longer time in service typically do so for reasons relating to separation from family, and a desire for stability. Similarly, the primary reasons that personnel leave the British armed forces include excessive workloads, separation from their families and the impact of service life on family life and the inability to plan outside of work. Both the ADF and British armed forces are implementing initiatives to maximize retention and address the reasons their personnel are choosing to leave.

There are numerous HR policies and initiatives that contribute to the management and functioning of the ADF and British armed forces that are similar in nature to that of the CF. However, there are initiatives aimed at retention that are currently being implemented by the ADF and the British now, and not the CF. Most notably are the various financial incentives being offered to personnel within the respective forces that are deemed to be critical to the operational effectiveness of the organization. However, these incentives are seen to be short term solutions and their effectiveness in the long term can not be measured at this time. Other initiatives addressed in the two case studies are not significantly different than those in the CF.

Secondary Research Question 3: What can the CF do to realistically address the retention issue within the organization? A close examination of the personnel issues and current retention initiatives in the CF, ADF and the British armed forces determined that in comparison to the other two forces, the CF is being proactive in addressing the retention issues within the organization. The HR policies and initiatives being implemented are definitely on par with those of our allied countries other than the various financial incentives. The personnel and operational tempo is being addressed through the PERSTEMPO policy, the negative effect of postings is being addressed through the Imposed Restriction policy and the CF Merit System is fair although it needs to be better communicated to the members.

Primary Research Question: Does the Canadian Forces retention plan adequately address the reasons people are choosing to leave? The various policies and initiatives aimed at increasing retention do address the reasons members are choosing to leave the CF. In comparison with the ADF and the British Armed Forces, the CF is taking appropriate measures to maximize retention; however, there are numerous financial initiatives that the ADF and British armed forces are implementing and the CF is not. In addition, there are a number of initiatives that are not currently being implemented by any of the three militaries that need to be investigated.

Recommendations

While the ADF and the British armed forces are currently offering retention bonuses and in the case of the British, an additional commitment bonus, the CF is not. The long term success of financial incentives is unknown at this time; however, the CF needs to consider them as a potential option. In order to maximize retention in a global

context and target those personnel nearing the 20 year point in their career, the incentive needs to be aimed at personnel in certain year groups as opposed to trades and rank levels. Understanding the budget restraints of the CF and the costs of offering every member in the organization a bonus for agreeing to serve more than 20 years, consultation with the Treasury Board of Canada needs to be done to investigate the possibility of an annual tax break to those who serve beyond 20 years.

As noted earlier, pay and benefits are not significant factors that influenced members' decisions to leave the CF and for the most part, personnel are very satisfied with them. Notably though, if an individual can leave the force with a pension after 20 years and still be young enough to enter another career field their annual net income will likely not decrease. However, their family stability will increase and they will not be subject to deployments into high risk military environments. If leaving the military is a good option, the CF needs to make staying in the military a better one. To make staying more lucrative beyond 20 years, the Canadian Government should offer an annual tax break to those who have 20 plus years of service. Considering a soldier's contract comes with the caveat of unlimited liability and this incentive is already offered to personnel when they deploy to a high threat environment, it is certainly plausible to offer it to those who continue to devote their lives to the defence of the country for more than 20 years.

As discussed in Chapter 3, a member only contributes to their pension for 35 years to receive a maximum of 70% of their pay upon retirement. However, in order to maintain experience within the organization, the retirement age has been changed to 60 years of age making it possible for personnel to serve for more than 40 years. If the intent is to retain the experience of personnel beyond 35 years, the CF needs to

investigate measures to provide members with the option to continue to contribute to their pension for every year of service.

The recent changes in the Terms of Service policy for the CF need to be researched further. In particular, during the exit survey process, members need to be asked if the change in the intermediate engagement from 20 to 25 years influenced their decision to leave the force. The difference in five years at that stage in an individuals' life is significant considering it may be the difference between being young enough to enter another career field, or not. Furthermore, the initiative of offering members an additional 5 days of annual leave after completing 20 years of service should be done at the 20 year point considering those are the personnel who make up the majority who need to be retained.

As noted earlier, the adverse effects of postings on family stability are a significant factor contributing to a members' decision to leave the CF. While it is not prudent to allow members to dictate their demands to the CF, it is essential that every option be exhausted before a member resorts to release as a means to avoiding a posting or a move. With the current shortage of manpower, surely there are positions throughout Canada that members can fill without uprooting their families. This venue definitely needs to be addressed in more detail. Undoubtedly a member will need to make a choice to either accept a posting or remain in location with significant career implications; however, at least the member will still be on strength and performing an important function for the CF.

High personnel and operational tempo caused primarily from deployments overseas, tasks and courses typically have a greater impact on those personnel serving in

operational and deployable units in the army, air force and navy. Although the PERSTEMPO policy does aim to minimize these issues as much as possible, the CF needs to update their environmental allowance policy. In particular, all soldiers in operational units within the army should be receiving an additional monthly allowance comparable to the environmental allowances provided to members of operational units within the navy and air force. Notably, the CF defines Environmental Allowances as financial compensation provided to members whose military duties involve sporadic or continuous exposure to adverse environmental conditions including hazards which are not normally experienced by other members.⁸⁷ The nature of employment in operational army units is undoubtedly continuous and equally demanding to those of the navy and air force, when compared to organizations that are not deemed operational. Understanding that the issue is being investigated, implementation needs to happen now to encourage personnel to remain in those demanding and high tempo positions.

Furthermore, the CF needs to investigate the possibility of contracting personnel to conduct the additional tasks currently done by uniformed members. In particular, some instructor billets at the various training institutions can and need to be filled by people other than those who deploy overseas regularly. In addition, exercise support staff should be contracted to the maximum extent possible. These personnel should include role players, range safety staff, general labourers and technicians. Notably, trained and experienced personnel will likely be required to lead these contractors throughout; however, a significant burden would be lifted off those soldiers who are normally directed to execute similar tasks. Alleviating some of these tasks would allow soldiers to

⁸⁷ Canada. Department of National Defence. Finance and Corporate Services, Canadian Forces Administrative Orders (CFAO), *CFAO 205-25 Environmental Allowances*.

concentrate on training, courses and deployments. In addition, it would help them find that acceptable balance between work and family.

Concluding Remarks

The CF recognizes that there is a retention issue and has taken measures to retain trained and experienced personnel in the organization. In comparison with the ADF and the British armed forces, the CF is certainly on par with their HR policies and initiatives aimed at maximizing retention. Less the various financial incentives being offered by the Australian's and British, the CFs policies make serving in the CF an attractive career option providing a member is also willing to accept the adverse effects of typical military life. Understanding that the current global security environment contributes to the high personnel and operational tempo faced by serving personnel, the fact remains that this situation is not likely to change in the near future. It is therefore critical that the Government of Canada take extreme measures to recognize and reward a members' lifetime commitment to the service of their nation better. The military profession is definitely not for everyone; however, those that choose to put their life on the line in the service of their country will likely make it a life long commitment providing the nation offers tangible acknowledgement in line with the members' contract of unlimited liability.

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