



## Canadian Forces Personnel Newsletter

### Op CONNECTION

*“Recruiting is everybody’s business. I expect every sailor, soldier, airman and airwoman to recognize their role as a potential CF recruiter...”*

—General Rick Hillier,  
Chief of the Defence Staff

**From the Assistant Deputy Minister  
(Human Resources – Military)  
[ADM(HR-Mil)]**

Canadians are (justifiably) proud of their Canadian Forces (CF), and that pride is front and center at every public event and ceremony you’re

involved with. Canadians are forever reaching out to make contact with you – they stand in long lines whenever there’s a Coyote to climb on or a Snowbird pilot’s hand to shake or a ship to tour; they ignore November’s chill to attend Remembrance Day ceremonies; they send Christmas greetings and packages to you when you’re serving overseas.

However, there are many Canadians out there who have few if any chances to meet you, to get a feel for what you do, or to ask the hundreds of questions Canadians ask when they do have the opportunity.

While CF Recruiting Group will continue to be the core agency for attraction and recruiting, ADM(HR-Mil) will lead the *Operation CONNECTION* initiative, providing environmental commands and operational commanders with the tools, information and inspiration to make that connection and attract applicants to the Forces. And, ultimately, this all filters down to you. You are a key element of the operation, on two levels.



PO 2 GARRY WALDRAM, CF RECRUITING CENTRE SAULT STE. MARIE

Connecting with Canadians at The Greatest SNOW on Earth, the Ontario Winter Carnival, is a joint effort as CF personnel and equipment (and M. BONSOO) attract attention from residents of the Sault Ste. Marie area. People, vehicles, weapons and displays from 26 Service Battalion and 49 Field Artillery Regiment (33 Canadian Brigade Group, Sault Ste. Marie); from 3 Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, and 2 Combat Engineer Regiment (2 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group, CFB Petawawa); and from 2310 Royal Canadian Army Cadets (Sault Ste. Marie) wowed more than 5000 visitors.

We need you to contribute in any way you can to the CF presence at the hundreds of events and activities we’ll be participating in as the year progresses.

You’ve already been instrumental in bringing the CF to community events

[page 2](#) ➔

## Retention: If we build it, you will stay

The recently announced Recruiter for a Day program takes its life from the idea that recruiting is everybody’s business.

Retention, too, is everybody’s business.

### Why retention matters

**By Mr. Karol Wenek, Director Military Employment Policy (DMEP)**

Retention means keeping those of you who are thinking about leaving the Canadian Forces (CF) or who are in the process of leaving.

In recent years, Regular Force attrition in the CF has been running at about 6% of strength, slightly less than the long-term historical average. Voluntary attrition, the largest piece of the pie, represents about 3% to 4% of strength. While these rates are very low, and compare favourably with attrition rates in our allies’ forces, we can’t afford to sit on our hands and hope things will always be this good, or wait till we have a

full-blown attrition crisis before we do something.

We must take action now to build and maintain a strong retention culture because:

- Some occupations are experiencing above-average attrition, and are having difficulty making up shortages through recruiting. In these occupations, every additional loss of a skilled, experienced person makes a bad situation worse and weakens operational capabilities.

- Our individual training and education programs are extensive and costly. To get a good return on these investments while holding the line on costs, we need to encourage you to serve for longer periods of time as a matter of general policy.

- An unusually large group of you—officers and non-commissioned members (NCMs)—are approaching 20 years of service, at which point you’ll become eligible for an immediate unreduced annuity and a severance package. A normal rate of attrition in this cohort could translate into large numbers and trigger higher-than-normal recruiting to replace those of you who leave. This

additional demand will complicate present efforts to expand the Regular Force and the Primary Reserve.

- In the past few years, there’s been a large gap between the number of you in the Regular Force who are trained, effective, and available for service (currently about 52 000), and the total Force strength (about 63 000). This gap—comprising, for the most part, those of you undergoing lengthy entry-level training—makes it more difficult for the CF to meet defence commitments while recruiting and training the large numbers of new people coming in under both routine-production and Force-expansion plans.

- The number of young people in the recruiting pool is decreasing, and is projected to continue decreasing for the next several decades – it may get tougher to meet our future recruiting requirements. This scenario becomes more likely if the Canadian economy remains healthy (a healthy economy increases competition for young people entering the job market), if there are additional increases in the authorized

strength of the CF, or if the attrition rate goes up.

Retention and recruiting are complementary activities in the personnel-generation equation. That’s why, in addition to stepping up recruiting efforts, one way to reduce the gap between trained effective strength and total strength while offsetting present and future pressures on the recruiting and training systems is to hang on to those of you who are skilled and experienced personnel as long as you are able and willing to serve.

### Choosing a retention strategy

There are several ways of going about retention in the CF – legal, monetary, and motivational.

#### Legal

The legal approach would involve using the force of law to retain personnel. The

[page 2](#) ➔



# Diversity recruiting makes the grade

By Lt (N) Johanna Wickie, Diversity Officer, Canadian Forces Recruiting Centre (CFRC) Vancouver

Tamanawis Secondary School in Surrey, B.C. rang with shouts of enthusiasm when Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Edmonton personnel pulled up to the front door in their Coyote Light Armour Vehicle.

"Hey, this is so cool!" "What the hell is it?"

Through the course of the January 26 visit, more than 500 students, teachers and locals climbed over and through the Coyote, getting a real sense of what the crew and vehicle are able to do.

The school, about 50 km from downtown Vancouver, is the heart of a growing population—more than 500 000—of South Asian Canadians. With a limited CF presence in mainland B.C., many of these students and their families have had little or no exposure to the Forces. Sergeant Huf Mullick, South Asian Outreach Co-ordinator at Canadian

Forces Recruiting Centre (CFRC) Vancouver, is hoping to change that.

"Since 2002, when I came into recruiting," he says, "there has been a huge amount of growth in this city. It's important for us to partner with established community and cultural groups. We're not here to reinvent the wheel, but to support what is already on the ground."

Keeping up to that population growth is a struggle. About one in four people in B.C. is a member of a visible minority and, by 2017, that figure is expected to be one in three.

"We need to establish strong ties to these communities now," Major Ken Orr, CFRC Vancouver Commanding Officer, says, "so that our military is healthy and vital and reflective of our country."

As part of the plan to create strong ties to B.C. communities, recruiting offices have been established in Surrey and Richmond, and events such as the Coyote visit generate excitement and interest where there was little or none before.

"We hope to see more of this type of structured effort as we move forward," says Maj Orr. "Every effective business in the country is employing aggressive strategies to position itself in a tough

labour market. Our goal is to stay ahead of the crowd and we are going to use all the tools we have to accomplish that goal." ♦



MR. RICHARD GUERTIN, CFRC MULTIMEDIA SERVICES

Students at Tamanawis Secondary School in Surrey, BC line up to explore a Coyote LAV. Exposure such as this goes a long way to inspiring interest in the CF among young Canadians.

## Op Connection - from page 1

nationwide – the Powell River Career Fair in B.C.; the Bon Soo Winter Festival in Sault Ste Marie, Ont.; the Canadian Engineering Competition in Montréal; the World Pond Hockey Tournament in New Brunswick; the Marine Institute Career Fair in St. John's. And we'll be looking for your support for upcoming events throughout Canada – festivals, ship tours, school visits, vehicle displays, employment fairs, air shows, sporting events... Find out what events are planned in your area and let your unit commander know which you'll support.

As well, ask your unit commander about the senior leaders briefing packages prepared by CF Recruiting Group for *Op CONNECTION*. More than 350 packages with accompanying video presentation and speaking notes have been sent to senior leaders across the country. This resource should be helpful in your recruiting efforts and provide answers to questions most frequently asked by Canadians interested in joining the CF.

To connect with all Canadians, the CF has to be present at events throughout the country, and the CF is you. With your help and support, the "connecting with Canadians" blanket can be stretched to cover the country.

We also need you to provide the best possible representation of the CF – yourself.

Wearing your uniform to work is good; wearing your uniform to work on the bus is great. Tell people what you do for a living, and that you enjoy it, and that it's exciting and challenging and rewarding. Make it apparent that you're willing to answer questions. Familiarize yourself with the local recruiting centre and with key defence websites so you can answer questions accurately or point the questioner in the right direction for information. Telephone your children's schools or your grandmother's seniors' residence and ask if you and/or your unit could be of help planning a Canadian Forces Day event or setting up a Remembrance Day program or arranging a tour of a local military museum. If the answer is yes, talk to your unit commander about it and involve other members of your unit.

And if you're a civilian defence worker, all this goes for you, too – minus the uniform.

The goal of *Op CONNECTION* is to fill recruiting centres with viable applicants. Along the way, however, the possibilities for connection are limitless, and the benefits of those connections will extend far beyond recruiting centres. ♦

## Retention - from page 1

*National Defence Act* gives us the authority to retain you during an emergency, when you are on active service, or until you complete the terms of service you accepted on enrolment or re-engagement. In other words, there is no general right to release on request.

However, the routine use of legal muscle to keep you in service when no emergency exists or when you are not obliged to pay back educational and training benefits would generate negative feelings about military service. It would not be a good long-term retention strategy, nor would it help recruiting. That's why, other than when it is clearly in the public interest to hold you, the general policy is to grant requests for release.

## Monetary

We could "buy" low attrition by providing cash incentives such as re-engagement bonuses to influence you to stay. Although retention bonuses are often proposed as a fix to attrition problems, they are not always cost-effective, and, at best, only defer attrition. Bonuses also foster expectations of a continuing entitlement to them and create equity problems if they are applied selectively rather than universally. This is why the monetary approach should be used only by exception.

## Motivational

If we build it, you will stay.

We can build individual commitment to continued service by becoming the kind of organization that you become attached to and will freely choose over alternatives.

page 3 ➔

MGen George R. Pearkes Building  
15 North Tower  
101 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa ON K1A 0K2

E-mail: [Urquhart.R@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Urquhart.R@forces.gc.ca)  
Fax: (613) 996-7483 or  
CSN 846-7483

**Managing Editor**  
Ruthanne Urquhart – (613) 996-6820

**Graphic Designer**  
Manon Mackey – (613) 996-9173

*Canadian Forces Personnel Newsletter*  
is a publication of the Assistant Deputy  
Minister (Human Resources – Military).

Submissions regarding HR-Mil policy and programs are welcomed. Please contact the editor for submission guidelines.

Visit [www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfnp](http://www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfnp) and click on "Supplement" for news and information not available in the print edition.



# Employment equity and diversity: Myth-busting

By Maj Robert Soucy, CF Desk Officer,  
Visible Minorities

The Canadian Forces (CF) was first named an “employer” under the *Employment Equity Act* (EEA) in 1996, but it was not until 2001 that the Governor in Council put it into effect. The delay allowed us to study how the application of this law and the Universality of Service would impact on one another.

Under the EEA, four designated groups (DGs) represent women, Aboriginal peoples, members of visible minorities, and persons with disabilities. The CF, like all employers under this Act, must eliminate all barriers that could prevent entry to the CF or impede the advancement/promotion of a member of a DG.

There is, however, one difference between the CF and other employers under the EEA: The *Canadian Human Rights Act* recognizes that the CF has a particular job to do with unique operational requirements, and

because of this we have a need for Universality of Service. Potential recruits must meet the CF’s physical and medical standards, and that’s why the CF is not obliged to recruit persons with disabilities.

## EE myths

**Myth:** Employment equity means quota-based recruiting and selection.

**Reality:** There are significant differences between quotas and targets.

Quotas are rigid, arbitrary numbers that must be reached to avoid penalties, and are not a part of any

page 4 ➔

## Retention - from page 2

On one level, this means providing you the tangible necessities of a satisfying job and career – the right tools and equipment to do the job, fair pay and benefits, and quality support services for you and your family.

On another level, it means paying attention to the intangibles that strengthen your commitment to the profession of arms and to the Forces – creating vision and direction for the CF, giving you meaningful and challenging assignments that allow you to make a difference, socializing you in ways that strengthen your professional identity and pride in service, recognizing your efforts and achievements, treating you fairly, giving you a voice in matters that are important to you, and honouring our moral and legal obligations to you.

In the long run, this is our most effective approach – to become an organization of choice providing a career of choice. If we build it, you will stay.

## Managing retention

Assistant Deputy Minister (Human Resources – Military) staff routinely monitor attrition rates and survey both serving personnel and those who take voluntary release. Survey findings are used to establish the cause-effect relationships between existing conditions of service and stay/leave intentions or actual release.

Results relating to specific occupations are fed into occupational “get well” programs or other interventions. Those related to the CF as a whole, or to national policies and programs, are brought to the National Retention Team for review and action planning.

## What unit leaders can do to improve retention

As in other areas of personnel management, retention is a shared line and staff responsibility. While senior commanders and staff shape policies, programs, and services that influence individual commitment and retention, those of you who are unit leaders at all levels should understand that you, too, have responsibilities for managing retention. Things you do or fail to do can influence the commitment and stay/leave decisions of the members of your unit.

One of the most important things you should do as a unit leader when someone submits a request for release is make a special effort to talk with that person – the sooner the better. There may be things you can do that will persuade that person to change his or her mind.

This does not mean pressuring the individual, but it does mean ensuring that his or her decision has been thought through. It also means reviewing the decision to leave to see if anything might be done to change it. This could require personally intervening with local or higher authorities, for example, if intervention might improve the individual’s circumstances.

Obviously, anything of a systemic nature that seems to be contributing to local attrition should also be raised with your chain of command.

As a unit leader, you can take preventive measures. As outlined in *Leadership in the CF: Conceptual Foundations*, unit and sub-unit leaders have a number of responsibilities related to personnel well-being and commitment:



SGT FRANK HUDEC, COMBAT CAMERA  
PALHOT BALA, PAKISTAN—MCPJ Stuart Ruselle from Sudbury, Ont., a medical technician with the Canadian Forces (CF) Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) Mobile Medical Team (MMT), gives medicines to a family in a remote mountain village in the Pakistan-administered region of Kashmir affected by an October 2005 earthquake. CF personnel taking care of families halfway around the world can do so knowing the CF is taking care of their families back at home.

- mentoring, educating, and developing subordinates;
- treating subordinates fairly, responding to their concerns, and representing their interests;
- resolving interpersonal conflicts;
- consulting subordinates on matters that affect them;
- monitoring morale and ensuring subordinate well-being; and
- recognizing and rewarding success.

In combination with the sense of accomplishment that comes from mission-focussed and team-building activities, these behaviours on your part as a unit leader help to establish a positive unit climate. In that respect, they contribute to both unit effectiveness and retention.

U.S. Navy Captain D. Michael Abrashoff’s account of his command experience onboard USS *Benfold*—*It’s Your Ship: Management Techniques from the Best Damn Ship in the Navy*—offers a striking illustration of this.

“The most important thing a captain can do,” Captain Abrashoff wrote, “is to see the ship from the eyes of the crew.” When he assumed command of *Benfold*, he made a point of interviewing every member of his crew and “listening without prejudice” to their views of what was good about the ship, what wasn’t good, and what needed changing. By focussing on performance and the crew’s quality of life, and by acting on what he heard, Captain Abrashoff was able to transform *Benfold* into the best ship in the Pacific fleet while raising the second-tour re-enlistment rate from 54% to 100%.

Captain Abrashoff’s approach provides a good model for commanding officers of units, schools, and other CF establishments. It’s all part of effective leadership, but for this approach to work, you who are unit leaders have to take the first step by recognizing that you have some measure of responsibility for managing retention. At a minimum, this means finding out what the local attrition rate is and what proportions are voluntary, medical, and

administrative. Release categories with the highest numbers are obvious targets for further investigation and action.

Given both the amount of effort devoted to attracting and screening people for service and the current pressures on the recruiting and training systems, it simply makes good sense to do our utmost to hang on to the good people we have.

➤ For information about Component Transfer and other career avenues, and the many training programs and professional development opportunities available to you, consult the Canadian Forces General Messages (CANFORGENs) at [http://vcds.dwan.dnd.ca/vcds-exec/pubs/canforgen/2005/intro\\_e.asp](http://vcds.dwan.dnd.ca/vcds-exec/pubs/canforgen/2005/intro_e.asp), visit ADM(HR-Mil) Instructions at [www.forces.gc.ca/hr/instructions/engraph/home\\_e.asp](http://www.forces.gc.ca/hr/instructions/engraph/home_e.asp) or at [http://hr.dwan.dnd.ca/docs/instruction/instructions/engraph/home\\_e.asp](http://hr.dwan.dnd.ca/docs/instruction/instructions/engraph/home_e.asp), and read back issues of *CF Personnel Newsletter* or visit *CFPN Online* at [www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfpn/engraph/home\\_e.asp](http://www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfpn/engraph/home_e.asp).

➤ Consult CANFORGEN 186/05 at [http://vcds.dwan.dnd.ca/vcds-exec/pubs/canforgen/2005/intro\\_e.asp](http://vcds.dwan.dnd.ca/vcds-exec/pubs/canforgen/2005/intro_e.asp) and visit [www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfpn/engraph/I\\_06/I\\_06\\_e.asp](http://www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfpn/engraph/I_06/I_06_e.asp) for information about the Recruiter for a Day program.

➤ For U.S. Navy Captain D. Michael Abrashoff’s book *It’s Your Ship: Management Techniques from the Best Damn Ship in the Navy* (Warner Business Books, 2002, ISBN: 0446529117), visit [www.twbookmark.com/books/50/0446529117/index.html](http://www.twbookmark.com/books/50/0446529117/index.html).

# question corner

## Revisiting release for medical reasons

**Q**: I released voluntarily from the Canadian Forces (CF) in Oct 2004. I have since learned that I am quite ill, and that I should have sought medical help prior to release. I am now being treated for my illness, and I receive a veteran's pension. I should have taken a medical release but I didn't know I was sick at the time. Is it too late to have my

case reviewed? Where would I go to have this looked at? Is there a Department of National Defence (DND) office that can help?

**A**: CF personnel are released under the most appropriate release item. All personnel receive a medical examination prior to release. If a medical condition is

discovered during the release process, then a medical specialist will conduct a review to determine if the condition warrants recommending release for medical reasons.

If you were released from the CF and no serious medical problems were identified at the time of your release, you may, indeed, have your release item reviewed if you feel you had a serious underlying illness at the time of your release. In this case, you may forward a request for review to the Director Military Careers Administration and Resource Management (DMCARM).

The onus is on you to provide any additional information not available on your medical file to demonstrate that your

illness was, in fact, present at the time of your release.

If you feel your release should be reviewed, send a request for review by mail to **DMCARM 4-2 – Release Administration, MGen George R. Pearkes Bldg., 101 Colonel By Dr., Ottawa ON, K1A 0K2.** ♦



### EE - from page 3

Department of National Defence/CF equity program. In fact, the EEA prohibits imposing quotas.

Instead, the CF has established recruiting targets for women, Aboriginal peoples and persons belonging to a visible minority. Targets are flexible goals that the CF can use like other operational objectives as planning and evaluation tools, and are based on the Workforce Analysis and the Interest and Propensity Survey.

Although the CF is actively recruiting designated group members, once applicants enter recruiting centres, they are all treated equitably – and only the best-qualified applicants are accepted. Acceptance into the Forces, and promotions, courses and evaluations, are based solely on the merit system.

**Myth:** Employment equity puts white males at a disadvantage.

**Reality:** Employment equity is about eliminating discrimination, not creating it.

Intentionally or not, discriminatory policies and practices in the workplace have the effect of denying some people access to jobs, promotions or training. Equity programs make opportunities available to everyone by ensuring that the skills and potential of all our personnel are fully used.

**Myth:** Employment equity means hiring unqualified people and runs counter to the merit principle.

**Reality:** There is a perception that employment equity programs do not require selection of the best-qualified people for positions and, therefore, are not merit-based.

Employment equity means providing all qualified individuals with equal employment opportunities. It does not mean hiring under-qualified workers just to reach a numerical goal. EE is not about putting people in jobs because they are members of a DG. Employment equity encourages the selection, hiring, training, promotion and retention of qualified individuals.

Some employers have systems, policies and practices that could impede the selection, hiring, training, promotion and retention of persons in those four designated groups. Employment equity ensures that those barriers are identified and eliminated.

The EEA specifically states that the obligation to implement employment equity does not require an employer to hire or promote unqualified individuals. The Act also ensures and emphasizes that hiring and promotion standards are not lowered in order to recruit employees from designated groups. Such practices

would create a counterproductive work environment.

Employment equity programs reinforce the merit principle by ensuring that all DND/CF personnel and employees can compete on a level playing field. Their objectives are to open up the workplace and ensure that our personnel policies and practices are free of any overt or subtle biases.

**Myth:** Employment equity means lowering job standards.

**Reality:** Employment equity programs examine standards to ensure that job criteria are realistic and work-related. They guarantee that no DND/CF employee is denied employment or opportunities for reasons unrelated to valid job requirements. The Supreme Court of Canada, in rendering a decision in *British Columbia v. BCGSEU* (the Meiorin decision), introduced a three-part test to determine this:

1. A standard must be rationally connected to the purpose and the job performance.
2. A standard must be adopted in honest and good faith to achieve the purpose.
3. A standard must, in fact, be reasonably necessary to achieve the purpose, and the organization must show that accommodation is not possible without undue hardship (cost, health and safety).

The onus is on organizations to prove that their hiring and employment standards are bona fide operational standards.

### More

- Consult the *Employment Equity Act* at <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/E-5.401/50293.html> for general information and for information on Workforce Analysis.
- Consult the *Canadian Human Rights Act* at <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/H-6/31435.html>.
- For information on *British Columbia v. BCGSEU* (the Meiorin decision), visit [http://www.lexum.umontreal.ca/csc-scc/en/pub/1999/vol13/html/1999scr3\\_0003.html](http://www.lexum.umontreal.ca/csc-scc/en/pub/1999/vol13/html/1999scr3_0003.html). ♦



MCPL ROBERT BOTTRILL, COMBAT CAMERA

Sgt. Randolph Idlout, a Canadian Ranger, patrols on his snowmobile in Resolute Bay, Nunavut.



SGT FRANK HUDEC, COMBAT CAMERA

405 Maritime Patrol Squadron pilot Capt. Lisa Reimer waits for pre-departure clearance in Sigonella, Italy.



SGT FRANK HUDEC, COMBAT CAMERA

LS Wright Eruebi, a naval reservist from Surrey, B.C., hauls in a line during a replenishment at sea on board HMCS Winnipeg in the Gulf of Aden.