

**DOMINION COMMAND  
DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE  
26 September 2024  
MEETING MINUTES**

**File: 82-27**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

<b>Andrea Siew</b>	-	<b>Chair</b>
<b>Brendan Heffernan</b>	-	<b>Vice – Chair</b>
<b>Brian Sauvé</b>	-	<b>Member</b>
<b>Mindy Pearson</b>	-	<b>Member</b>
<b>Dean Young</b>	-	<b>Coordinator</b>
<b>Carolyn Hughes</b>	-	<b>VSS Committee Chair</b>

**1. OPENING REMARKS**

The Chair provided opening remarks highlighting the release of the Parliamentary Committee on Veterans Affairs report - *Invisible No More. The Experiences of Canadian Women Veterans* on 12 June and the change of command of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) from General Wayne Eyre to General Jennie Carignan on 18 July. Of note, the Dominion President sent a letter of congratulations and invitation to the CDS to meet with DEC in November and installation as Honorary Dominion Vice-President of The Royal Canadian Legion.

**2. ADMINISTRATION POINTS**

The Committee reviewed the previous minutes from the last meeting on 29 May 2024. No changes or concerns were noted.

**3. CONVENTION UPDATE**

The Chair provided an overview of significant highlights from the Dominion Convention which was held in St. John, New Brunswick from 25-28 August including the election of the new executive team. Highlights of the Convention are included in the following news release: <https://legion.ca/news/articles/2024/08/29/royal-canadian-legion-delegates-elect-new-executive-team-and-help-move-agenda-forward>

**4. UPDATES**

- a. **CAF** - The Chair provided an overview of the CDS Gen Jennie Carignan's testimony to the National Defence Parliamentary Committee on her mandate and priorities. This was her first presentation to the Committee as CDS, she stated that caring for the members of the CAF was her first

priority focussing on recruiting, retention and readiness. The testimony is available at this link:

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/committees/en/NDDN/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=12860458>

b. **RCMP**

- i. Comrade Brendan provided an update on RCMP initiatives and activities. Attached is an overview of items discussed. Please see **Annex A**.
- ii. Comrade Brian provided an update on National Police Federation (NPF) activities: Please see **Annex B**.

Comrade Brian also provided an update on National Police Federation priorities for the next budget cycle. These priorities included an increase to the RCMP cadet training allowance to align with other police service's training in Canada, to bolster the Federal Policing Program to meet the need, and the creation of Canadian Public Safety Broadband Network. The Committee discussed that they would review these priorities towards offering Legion support.

- c. **VSS** - Comrade Carolyn provided an update on the Veterans Services and Seniors Committee: Please see **Annex C**.

5. **ADVOCACY ISSUES:**

- a. **Women Veterans** - The Committee discussed the ACVA report on Experience of Women Veterans, titled *Invisible No More. The Experiences of Canadian Women Veterans*. The report is available here:  
<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/ACVA/Reports/RP13177333/acvarp15/acvarp15-e.pdf>

The Royal Canadian Legion released a statement fully supporting the 42 recommendations and calling on the Government to produce an implementation plan, including a detailed timeline and defined oversight. The Legion will monitor the progress and outcome of the report and are committed to collaborate and assist to ensure the timely implementation of all recommendations. The Government has until 10 October 2024 to provide their response to the recommendations. To read the statement:

<https://www.legion.ca/news/articles/2024/06/12/legion-calls-on-government-to-implement-acva-recommendations-to-support-women-veterans>

Action: The Committee will continue to follow-up.

- b. **RCMP Definition of Veteran for Commemoration Purposes** – The Chair advised that there has been no response to the 26 October 2023 follow-up letter that the Dominion President sent to the Minister of Veterans Affairs to request that the Government change the definition of a Veteran to formally include the RCMP for commemoration purposes. The Committee Chair briefed that she has also engaged the RCMP Veterans Association on this issue.

Action: The Committee will continue to follow-up.

- c. **CAF Sexual Misconduct and Cultural Change** - The Chair briefed that the next key milestone is the completion of the independent review of the military colleges in December. The Committee continues to monitor the progress of the cultural change initiatives and participates as part of ongoing stakeholder engagement.

- d. **National Women Veterans Monument** – The Chair briefed that the Dominion President sent a follow up letter to the Minister of Veterans Affairs on 31 May 2024. The Legion has not received a response to this second letter. Of note, the recent ACVA Report, *Invisible No More. The Experience of Canadian Women Veterans*, recommendation two states that *“given such resistance to recognizing women’s military service and their full status as Veterans, one would expect the Canadian government to provide some counterbalance and strive to make them more visible. However, there is no public representation or monument specifically dedicated to the contribution of women.”* The Report recommends that Veterans Affairs Canada pay tribute to women Veterans with a work of art worthy of their commitment.

Action: The Committee will continue to follow-up.

## 6. NEW ITEMS

- a. 2025 Advocacy priorities – the Committee discussed their advocacy priorities which have been focussed on cultural change, recruiting and retention challenges, operational readiness capabilities and modernization of the CAF and the RCMP. There was agreement that these priorities still remain important.
- b. PSHCP and Dental Plan Update – The Chair provided an update on the progress being made to resolve the challenges of the transfer of the PSHCP to Canada Life and the upcoming transfer of the Pensioners Dental Plan to Canada Life on 1 November. This impacts both RCMP and CAF Veterans and their families who have access to the insurance programs. Comrade

Carolyn offered to coordinate a social media post reminding dental plan members to confirm their positive enrolment by 1 November.

Action: Comrade Carolyn to coordinate with Communications

## **7. SPONSORSHIP**

- a. Indigenous Youth Programs – Comrade Dean provided an update on the Legion’s support of the Indigenous Youth Programs and his attendance at the Bold Eagle graduation ceremony in Alberta.
- b. Victory March sponsorship – Comrade Dean will engage with Marketing to confirm Legion sponsorship.
- c. WIDs Awards Breakfast sponsorship – The Chair suggested that should the Legion continue to sponsor this event that there should be greater visibility of the Legion’s support. Comrade Dean to investigate options.

## **8. VISITS AND MEETINGS**

- a. Meeting with RCMP Commissioner – A meeting with Dominion President and the RCMP Commissioner has been confirmed for 19 November at 1300 hrs at Legion House. The Commissioner will also be installed as an Honorary Vice President at this time. Comrades Andrea and Brendan will also attend.
- b. Meeting with the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) – Comrade Dean will follow up to confirm the date. Note – the CDS is not available on 23 November. The Committee will confirm a new date.

## **9. UPCOMING EVENTS – The Chair highlighted the following key events:**

- a. Veterans Consultation Assembly – 26 October
- b. Vimy Gala Dinner – 06 November
- c. DEC – 23 November

## **10. OTHER ITEMS**

- a. NIL

11. Next meeting and closing.



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**Andrea Siew  
Chair**



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**Dean Young  
Coordinator**

Dated this day on 10 October 2024.

**DISTRIBUTION LIST**

DEC  
Defence & Security Committee  
Dominion Past Presidents  
Provincial Executive Directors  
Directors  
Committee Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries

## ANNEX A

### RCMP

#### BRENDAN HEFFERNAN

#### DEFENCE & SECURITY COMMITTEE

26 SEPTEMBER 2024

#### 4. UPDATES

##### Organizational Initiatives and Strategies

- 1. Introducing the RCMP's Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Secretariat (AREDIS)** - On May 6, 2024, the RCMP national Anti-Racism Unit (ARU) and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Unit, amalgamated to form the Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Secretariat (AREDIS).

The merger of these two units reflects the RCMP's commitment towards a more modern and inclusive organization. The new Secretariat is the national centre of expertise for the advancement of Anti-Racism, equity, diversity and inclusion through the creation and delivery of policies, strategies and programs. The Secretariat oversees the race-based data collection initiative, the Diverse and Inclusive Pre-Cadet Experience (DICE) Program, and the Diversity Retention and Employee Advancement Model (DREAM). The Secretariat also provides support to RCMP employee networks, realigning the EDI Strategy, and developing and implementing **the first ever RCMP Anti-Racism Strategy**, which aligns with the Government of Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy.

In response to the GoC's call to action, and with ongoing engagement with RCMP employees across the country, at all levels, the RCMP Anti-Racism Strategy will prioritize actions in the following areas:

- Advancing anti-racism and equity within the organization
- Strengthening partnerships to promote reconciliation and mutual respect.
- Prioritizing race-based data collection to ensure better outcomes for Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities in Canada.
- Increasing accountability and transparency to address racial profiling and discriminatory practices.
- Investing in ongoing training for officers to ensure respectful and effective engagement with diverse communities.

The Anti-Racism Strategy is on target to be launched in fall 2024.

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### 2. Appointment of new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Champion -

Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer Shelley Peters has been appointed as the new EDI Champion. She began her career at the RCMP in 1982, working in Happy-Valley-Goose-Bay as the first black woman member. After leaving the RCMP, she joined the Canadian Armed Forces, where over her 22-year tenure, she focused on policing and diversifying ranks within the organization. She retired in 2008 at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel - the highest-ranking black woman at the time.

Prior to returning to the RCMP earlier this year, Shelley worked at the Privy Council Office as the Chief Security Officer which included working on ministerial security and oversight with the RCMP. She has also played a key role within the government security community.

Throughout her career, Ms. Peters has held various positions related to equity and diversity, including as the Director of Human Rights and Diversity, and the Deputy Chairperson for the Committee for Women in NATO Forces. Most recently, while at the Privy Council Office, Shelley was the Champion for Persons with Disabilities and Visible Minorities and was the lead of the Black, Indigenous and Persons of Color Employee network.

As EDI Champion, Ms. Peters will play a key role in the RCMP's efforts to build a more inclusive and diverse organization. She will be responsible for supporting the many projects underway, including:

- a. Implementing the departmental [Accessibility Strategy and Accessibility Plan](#);
- b. Supporting our [employee networks](#) in driving the work of equity, diversity and inclusion, and the anti-racism strategy;
- c. Building on our reconciliation efforts in collaboration with the [RCMP-Indigenous Collaboration Co-Development and Accountability \(RICCA\) Unit](#); and
- d. Expanding opportunities for Employment Equity groups through programs such as the [Diverse and Inclusive Pre-Cadet Experience \(DICE\)](#) and the [Diversity Retention and Employee Advancement Model \(DREAM\)](#).

### 3. Appointment of new National Mental Health Champion - Assistant Commissioner Martin Roach has been appointed as the RCMP's next National Mental Health Champion.

A/Commr. Roach is from Montérégie, Quebec, and comes from a long line of police officers. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Criminology and Substance Abuse from Université de Montréal, and with [27 years of service at the RCMP](#), was appointed C

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Division's Commanding Officer in 2023. He will maintain the position of Assistant Commissioner while assuming the role of National Mental Health Champion.

Throughout his career, he has consistently inspired others to seek support and build resilience and has built trust and credibility in supporting the diverse mental health needs of different employee groups.

As National Mental Health Champion, A/Commr. Roach will be instrumental in integrating psychological health and safety in organizational decision-making, and he will continue the progress the RCMP has made in building a healthier workplace with his holistic and forward-thinking approach. He will work with our [Well-Being Ambassadors](#) and [Divisional Mental Health Champions](#) to advocate for a psychologically healthy and safe workplace, and drive culture change across all divisions by embracing diversity and helping to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.

## OTHER NEWS

- 1. Celebrating 50 years of women police officers in the RCMP** - On September 16, 1974, 32 women across Canada simultaneously took the oath to become RCMP police officers. They arrived at Depot on September 18 and 19 and formed Troop 17. In March 1975, they completed their training and started work at detachments across the country – the first women police officers in the RCMP. They broke through the glass ceiling and inspired other women to join our ranks. Today, approximately one fifth of the RCMP's police officers are women, with more and more women in key leadership roles.
- 2. National Peacekeepers' Day** - In 1989, the RCMP deployed its first 100-member [contingent](#) on a United Nations peacekeeping operation to Namibia. Thirty-five years later, we are still deploying Canadian police peacekeepers overseas but the threat landscape and the number of police agencies participating have grown.

We now deploy not only RCMP members but Canadian police officers from over 30 provincial, regional, municipal and indigenous police agencies. More recently, we've also started deploying civilian personnel to certain missions.

Learning from our experience, we are focusing on specialized and strategically chosen [deployments](#) to create a more impactful and sustained effect to areas around the world like the West Bank, Haiti, Kosovo, Ukraine and other specialized police [postings](#).

National Peacekeepers' Day was established to commemorate the events of August 9, 1974, when nine Canadian Armed Forces peacekeepers serving with the United Nations Emergency Force in Egypt and Israel lost their lives when their plane was shot down over Syria. Fifty years later, we continue to recognize the service and



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sacrifices of thousands of Canadian Armed Forces and police personnel who have served on missions overseas in challenging circumstances.

- 3. Truth and Reconciliation: 30 Days of Action – Reconciliation Begins with Me**  
- September 30th is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day. It is a day to reflect on the hard realities of the past and to honour First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples across Canada. For RCMP employees, it provides an important opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to strengthening trust and relationships with the Indigenous communities we serve.

Leading up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day on September 30th, the RCMP launched its [30 Days of Action – Reconciliation Begins with Me](#) campaign. Each day, employees can participate by reading, listening, watching, and learning about the rich and diverse cultures, voices, experiences and stories of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples across Canada.

- 4. Equipment Update - New duty pistol and ancillary items** - There has been significant interest from industry regarding our pistol replacement procurement. The Request for Proposal (RFP) closed Friday, June 7, 2024.
- 5. Summer 2024: Technical Evaluation of Bids**  
Subject matter experts from the National Police Intervention Unit, the National Armourer Program and the Uniform and Equipment Program reviewed the bids to ensure all potential suppliers meet the technical requirements set out in the request for proposal.

## NEXT STEPS

- 1. Fall 2024: Endurance Evaluation of Bids** - This testing ensures the pistol will adhere to our safety standards and hold up to the wide varieties of environments we police in. This includes accuracy testing, dropping the pistol from various heights, and exposing it to extreme temperatures to ensure the ancillaries also function well in these environments.
- 2. Fall 2024: User Trials** - Select members will be provided training and the opportunity to use the new pistol at the range. They will also be asked to provide feedback on each of the pistols provided by each bidder.
- 3. Winter 2024/2025: Financial Evaluation and Contract Award**  
After the evaluations and trials of the pistol and accessories are complete, the bids are evaluated from a financial perspective which is then followed by the official contract award. At this time, the supplier will share a manufacture and delivery plan with the RCMP and each division will develop training and rollout plans.

## ANNEX B

### RCMP / NATION POLICE FEDERATION

### BRIAN SAUVE

### DEFENCE & SECURITY COMMITTEE

26 SEPTEMBER 2024

#### 4. UPDATES

1. **Collective Agreement** - August 6, 2024 2<sup>nd</sup> collective agreement implemented, salaries continue to rise comparative to the police universe. This contract expires March 31, 2025 and we expect to be back in bargaining January 2025 again.

2. **New sidearms** - Many challenges as the RFP was published – mostly due to vendor inquiries for clarity on specifics (type of grip, sights etc.).

Cautiously optimistic a vendor will be selected later this Fall (2024) for roll out in early 2025. Rollout will begin with cadets at Depot, then serving Members as they return to training facilities for mandatory in service training every 3 years. Essentially 1/3 of the Force will be issued and trained on the new sidearm each year thru 2028/2029.

3. **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of women in the RCMP** - The NPF was one of many sponsors of the September 15/16 celebration of Troop 17 at the RCMP Heritage Center and RCMP Training academy at Depot.

The NPF is also a minor sponsor of the NHQ Officer's Mess Regimental Ball on October 5, 2024 in Ottawa celebrating this milestone.

4. **Federal Policing** - As noted in the NSICOP report from November 2023 and the Management Advisory Board Report from February, Federal Policing needs added resources.

The NPF made a submission to the NSICOP Committee as well as

The Minister of PS has made a commitment to modernize Fed Policing, creating a PSC Secretariat to accomplish that goal. The NPF has been in consultation with PSC on the topic and made a submission last week.

The NPF continues to work with the Commissioner on modernizing Depot training to meet the modern needs of the RCMP. For example, the current 26 weeks is excellent for uniform/front line policing, but how can we modernize that to have a specific stream for Federal duties like VIP.

There has been a marked increase in requests from MPs and parliamentarians for security details and there is funding for another 200+ VIP Members of the RCMP this fall. Working to expedite the resources needed with the RCMP.

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5. **Recruitment** - In fiscal 2023/2024 the RCMP saw more than 17,500 applicants – breaking the record for the past decade. At present, Depot Troops are full with an anticipated 40 troops of 32 cadets being trained this fiscal 24/25. There are plans to increase that to 50 troops for 2025/26 as applicants are steadily on the rise.
6. **Election Campaigns** - The NPF has numerous ongoing campaigns from an apolitical perspective:
  - i. BC Provincial election ongoing
  - ii. SK Provincial election upcoming
  - iii. NB Provincial election later in the fall
  - iv. Possible NS Provincial election this fall or early spring.
  - v. Federal election anytime, most probably in spring 2025
7. **Federal pre-Budget Submission** - As we do each year, the NPF has submitted its Federal pre-budget submission for 2025. The 3 key asks we are making:
  - i. Increase the Cadet training allowance from \$525/week to \$1200/week.
  - ii. Begin the process for the creation and implementation of a Canadian Broadband Public Safety Network
  - iii. Bolster Federal Policing resources with a sustained, multi-year investment through fenced funding to avoid resource attrition through Federal austerity measures.

## ANNEX C

### VETERANS SERVICES AND SENIORS

CAROLYN HUGHES

### DEFENCE & SECURITY COMMITTEE

26 SEPTEMBER 2024

#### 4. UPDATES

1. A new initiative to reach out to Rangers is being put into place by Darren Reid and Carolyn Hughes. Given their remote locations, their Command that visits each of the five Canadian Ranger Patrol Groups (CRPGs), will assist with having our Claim Application consent form and any applications for disabilities to VAC. As this is in its infancy, they will mail them to Dominion Command for the time being and eventually will be disseminated to the appropriate Provincial Command for action.
2. The Military Veteran Wellness Program – a program which enables police officers to contact Dominion Command to assist homeless veterans by verifying service and forwarding to the application Provincial Commands for support on the ground. The number of police forces coming on board is almost 80 and continues to grow. Additionally, the CAF Military Police and RCMP have now agreed to participate in the program and become a part of this initiative.

In just over two years, 270 requests for service verification have come through Dominion Command, although not all have service and some requests come through shelters. More through shelters will also contact us in the future as Built for Zero continues to expand across the country.

3. ACVA – Next month the senate subcommittee will be reviewing Persian Gulf veterans also at this time, nothing has been published online as to what specifically will be investigated. Is it health concerns, that status as a war veteran .... More will follow.
4. Steven Clark, our National Executive Director is retiring and interviews for his position will be held in the next several weeks.
5. VAC has a new website for Women Veteran Research at <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/about-vac/public-engagement/equity-deserving-groups/women-veterans/research>. We look forward to the continued population of this webpage.
6. In Veterans Services office, we have hired Martin Ouellette who formerly worked at SISIP. He is fast becoming a valuable member of our team. Sandra Monaghan who retired a few months ago, was replaced by Will Royle from Membership. He has recently accepted a Service Officer position with Ontario Command. We are saddened that he is leaving but happy for this opportunity for him. We will continue

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to work with him in his new role. We are currently hiring a new Service Officer Assistant and hope to have someone in place in the next few weeks.