

**DOMINION COMMAND
DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE
30 January 2023
MEETING MINUTES**

File 82-27

In Attendance:	Andrea Siew	-	Chair
	Brendan Heffernan	-	Deputy Chair
	Dean Young	-	Coordinator
	Mindy Pearson	-	Member
	Bruce Julian	-	Guest
	Carolyn Hughes	-	Observer

Absent:	Brian Sauvé	-	Member
	Mike Smith	-	A/Coordinator

1. OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed everyone and introduced the Royal Canadian Legion President, Bruce Julian. Comrade Bruce thanked the Committee members for their work and attention on defence and security issues.

The Chair provided an overview of the Defence and Security landscape:

- The illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia continues. It will be one year on 24 February with no end in sight. Support provided by NATO and the EU is unprecedented. Since the start of the war Canada has provided more than \$5B in direct assistance to Ukraine including \$1B in military aid. Recent support includes:
 - 4 Leopard 2 tanks plus ammunition and parts
 - 200 light armored vehicles (\$90M)
 - National Advanced SAM system from the US (\$406M)
 - 2 Frigates, HMCS Montreal and Fredericton and a supply ship, deployed in January as part of OP REASSURANCE in the Mediterranean in support of NATO's collective defence
- 1,375 CAF members are deployed on OP REASSURANCE (700 as part of the Enhanced Presence Battle Group in Latvia).
- HMCS Glace Bay and Moncton deployed in the Pacific on 9 January on OP PROJECTION to provide a forward presence and promote peace and stability of the rules base international order.

- November 2022, the Government released the long-awaited Indo-Pacific strategy which represents an increase in military and cyber security in the region to deal with a challenging China.
- October 2022, OP RECONSTITUTION was launched to focus on recruiting and training to address the 10,000 shortages of personnel to an authorized strength of 65,000.
- The contract for the purchase of 80 F35 fight aircraft was finalized and announced
- Implications for the RCMP and CAF for increasing calls to support a UN security mission in Haiti.
- Last weekend was the one-year anniversary for the convoy protest in Ottawa. We are now waiting for implementation of Emergency Act Inquiry final report which is due 20 February.
- Hearings for the Mass Shooting Inquiry in Nova Scotia concluded their hearings, and we are now waiting for the report.
- Comrade Brendan also advised that a global conference on climate change was held in December 2022 in Montreal.

2. ADMINISTRATION POINTS

The previous minutes were reviewed and approved by the Committee.

3. RCMP UPDATE – Comrade Brendan provided the following updates:

- a. **Commissioner of the RCMP** – The term of Commissioner expires at the end of March. We will be monitoring if the Commissioner will be extended. An announcement should be made in the coming weeks.
- b. **Appointment of EDI Designated Senior Official** – Ms. Tahanee McKnight has been appointed the Designated Senior Official (DSO) for Employment Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The DSO collaborates with the National Council for Diversity and Inclusion, bargaining agents and other RCMP employee networks that represent equity-seeking groups.
- c. **RCMP 2021 – 2024 Employee Well-Being Strategy Annual Report** – This report covers the period from April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022 – the first year of the 2021 – 2023 Action Plan. This report outlines the activities carried out during the unique year.

d. Updates on RCMP Programs and Initiatives:

Key Tools to Safeguard Your Well-Being: Practical Strategies for Individuals & Teams.

RCMP has spend time and attention ensuring that they protect the people we serve from harm. They are diligent about safety, strict about confidentiality and mindful about boundaries. However, the RCMP rarely turn that same level of attention towards their own well-being – particularly when it comes to protecting their individual emotional and mental health. Research shows that without adequate emotional protection, they risk their own health, their relationships and – ultimately - their ability to do this difficult work.

This webinar provides practical and easy-to-implement strategies to help staff and organizations protect themselves from the consequence and challenges of high-stress, trauma-exposed work.

- Hot, Walk & Talk Protocol: How to assist a team member following a distressing or disturbing incident.
- Low Impact Debriefing: Strategies for teams to reduce exposure.
- The Window of Tolerance Framework: Learn how to reframe your automatic responses.
- The Power of the Pause: Quick strategies to re-centre and reset.

Child Anxiety, Motivation and Achievement

NHQ Wellness Secretariat invites RCMP employees to a presentation by Dr. Tina Montreuil on strategies to assist children in better managing performance stress and anxiety.

Employees will gain knowledge on the predisposing factors associated to stress, anxiety, sensitivity and how to develop tools and strategies to address them.

Anxiety in youth is reported as being an increasingly growing issue in the school setting. As demands and expectations appear to be on the rise, it appears that this may have resulted not only in greater reports of anxiety, but also in a reduction of motivation among students. During this presentation, Dr. Montreuil will explore the interplay between child anxiety, motivation and achievement and provide tools to participants on how to manage child anxiety but more importantly, on how to increase child achievement by targeting motivation.

4. **VSS UPDATE** – Comrade Carolyn advised that the Service Officer Professional Development seminar, held in Charlottetown, which had been postponed in September due to hurricane Fiona, is now being rescheduled to the end of March.

5. D&S 2023 BUDGET

Comrade Dean briefed that the Committee's budget is healthy for this year.

6. UPDATES

- a. **D&S Report to DEC follow up** – Comrade Carolyn provided an update on the November 2022 DEC.
- b. **CDA Update** – The Chair advised the Committee that the CDA AGM is 8 March and suggested that Comrade Brendan may wish to attend. The Chair will provide an update on the Legion at the AGM. Comrade Dean will discuss with Dion if there is a prepared brief. TBC.

The annual Defence and Security Conference is 9 and 10 March in Ottawa.

The Chair also advised that both Dion Edmonds and Stephen Thorne are judges for the CDA Ross Monro Media Award which will be presented on 8 March. Stephen Thorne was a previous recipient as well the late Adam Day (Legion Magazine). For more information: <https://cdainstitute.ca/awards/ross-munro-award-2023/>

- c. **150th Anniversary of the RCMP and Definition of a Veteran – Next Steps**
The Minister of Veterans Affairs responded in November to the Legion's request to formally add RCMP Members to the definition of a Veteran for commemoration purposes. The Minister responded that they would continue to provide RCMP with informal recognition. The President is sending a follow-up letter to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. The Committee will continue to monitor.
- d. **High cost of Housing – Updates – Andrea**
The Legion received a response from the RCMP stating that the issue is important but there was no commitment to address the high cost of housing. However, the CAF Chief of Defence Staff's end of year message indicated that the CAF was working across the Government to create a new benefit tentatively called the CAF Housing Differential. Additionally, CAF announced the construction of new on-base housing units and other measures to mitigate the high cost of housing for junior members undergoing training. The Chair suggested that Comrade Brian could provide an update on initiatives to junior RCMP members especially at Depot during initial training. The Committee will continue to monitor.

e. Chief Justice Louise Arbour Report on Sexual Misconduct in the CAF – What's next?

The Chair advised that the Government appointed the independent advisor on 24 October, Mme Jocelyn Therrien (this was recommendation 48 in the Report). Her first report to Parliament on the status of the recommendations and road to implementation is due in April. The Committee will continue to monitor.

f. VAC Clawback from the Merlo Davidson Class Action

As Comrade Brian was absent this item will be carried forward to the next meeting.

ACTION: Comrade Brian

g. Defence Policy Refresh - Budget 2022 announced that the Defence Policy, Strong, Secure Engage (SSE) would be updated this year. We are eagerly awaiting its release and will continue to monitor.

h. Implementation of Emergency Act Parliamentary Inquiry

The Chair advised that the Inquiry Report is due 20 February. The Committee will continue to monitor.

i. Mass Shooting Inquiry

Comrade Brendan advised that the Final Report is due the end of April 2023. The Committee will continue to monitor.

j. OP HARMONY Initiative – CAF and RCMP Indigenous Youth Summer Programs – Carolyn and Dean

Committee Coordinator advised that the Legion Comradeship Awards Program for the RCMP Indigenous Youth programs have been implemented. They are continuing to reach out to the CAF for their Indigenous Youth Programs.

ACTION: Comrade Dean

k. Visit Updates for 2023 – The Committee discussed Legion visits/engagement for 2023. The following were proposed:

- CAF Chief Of Defence Staff – General Eyre –
- RCMP Chief Human Resource Officer – Nadine Higgins
- Chief Operations Officer CAF Morale and Welfare Services – Ian Poulter
- CAF Chief Military Personnel – MGen Lise Bourgon

Comrade Dean to discuss with Dominion Command Executive Director.

ACTION: Comrade Dean

7. NEW ITEMS

The Committee discussed their priorities for 2023 and will continue to monitor and engage as required including:

- a. Security related recommendations from the upcoming Inquiry Reports
- b. Operation capabilities and modernization of the CAF and the new Defence Policy
- c. CAF Cultural Change and Op Reconstitution
- d. RCMP Cultural Change

8. UPCOMING EVENTS

- a. Women in Defence (WiDS) Breakfast - 02 March 2023
- b. Conference of Defence Associations (CDA) Annual General Meeting – 08 March 2023
- c. CDA Defence and Security Ottawa Conference – 09 – 10 March 2023

Comrade Dean to confirm attendees at the events.

ACTION: Comrade Dean

9. NEXT MEETING – The next meeting will be held the first week in April 2023. Comrade Dean will send out a Doodle to determine availability.

10. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 hours.



Andrea Siew
Chair



Dean Young
Coordinator

Dated this day of 14 February 2023.

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