

Dominion Command Defence & Security Committee

Meeting Minutes 04 December 2024

Our Mission is to serve Veterans, which includes serving military and RCMP members and their families, to promote Remembrance and to serve our communities and our country.



**DOMINION COMMAND
DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE
04 December 2024
MEETING MINUTES**

File: 82-27

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andrea Siew	-	Chair
Brendan Heffernan	-	Vice – Chair
Brian Sauvé	-	Member (absent)
Mindy Pearson	-	Member
Jeff McGowen	-	Member
Dean Young	-	Coordinator
Carolyn Hughes	-	VSS Committee Chair (absent)

1. OPENING REMARKS

The Chair provided welcoming comments and thanked everyone for their support as this was the last meeting of the year.

2. REVIEW PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Committee reviewed the previous minutes from the last meeting on 26 September 2024. No changes or concerns were noted.

3. DOMINION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DEC) 23 NOVEMBER 2024

The Chair provided highlights of the DEC meeting. Of note was DEC approval of the Committee's two recommendations – the increase in RCMP Cadet training allowance and the requirement for a national Public Safety Broadcast Network.

4. RCMP COMMISSIONER MEETING 19 NOVEMBER 2024

The Chair provided an overview of the meeting with the RCMP Commissioner, Michel Duheme, and the Dominion President. The agenda items included:

- Overview of the Legion and Legion awareness
Definition of a Veteran to include the RCMP for commemoration purposes
- Increase in the RCMP Cadet Training Allowance
- RCMP support for the OSI program
- RCMP Members access to mental health support

The RCMP Commissioner was very interested in the Legion's programs and

support to RCMP Members especially from Veterans Services. We provided information regarding our advocacy efforts on the definition of a Veteran and Legion membership.

5. CDAI ANNUAL VIMY GALA 06 NOVEMBER 2024

The VIMY gala was held at the National War Museum and the Dominion President attended with the Silver Cross Mother. The 2024 Laureate of the Vimy Award was General (Ret'd) Walt Natynczyk who was recognized for his significant and outstanding contributions to Canadian security and defence and to the promotion and preservation of Canadian democratic values.

6. VETERANS CONSULTATION ASSEMBLY 26 OCTOBER 2024

Comrade Andrea provided an update on the Veterans Consultation Assembly which was held on 26 October 2024 at Legion House.

7. UPDATES

RCMP - Comrade Brendan provided an update on RCMP initiatives and activities. Attached is an overview of items discussed. Please see Annex A.

VSS Committee – No report.

8. ADVOCACY ISSUES

RCMP Cadet Training Allowance

The Dominion President sent a letter to the Minister of Public Safety on 4 December 2024 to urge the Government to increase the RCMP Cadet training allowance to a level competitive with other police services across Canada.

The current RCMP Cadet training allowance of \$525 per week has remained unchanged for over 15 years, despite Cadets undergoing the longest training program in Canada. This allowance is less than half the compensation currently provided to Cadets by municipal and provincial police services, which ranges from \$1,125 to \$1,642 per week. This glaring disparity hinders the RCMP's ability to attract and retain qualified recruits and fails to adequately support Cadets, many of whom face financial obligations like mortgages and family responsibilities.

Canadian Public Safety Broadband Network

The Dominion President sent a letter to the Minister of Public Safety on 4 December 2024 to recommend that the Government of Canada establish a new Canadian Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN).

Such a network is critical to strengthening national security and improving emergency response capabilities within Canada. A PSBN would provide a secure,

high-speed communications platform dedicated to public safety organizations, ensuring seamless and reliable connectivity during crises.

Experience of Women Veterans Study

The Dominion President sent a letter to the Minister of Veterans Affairs on 29 November 2024 to share our positive initial reaction to what seems to be significant progress on several recommendations made in the Report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs: *Invisible No More. The Experiences of Canadian Women Veterans*. The letter highlighted that while The Legion is encouraged by the Government's Response tabled on 10 October 2024, The Legion is concerned by the absence of a defined timeline for the implementation of all recommendations, and there is no confirmation of independent oversight to ensure their enactment will meet the intent of the Report. The Legion is hopeful that once the Women Veterans Council is established, it will be asked to play that critical oversight role.

The Legion will continue to monitor the progress of the Report's full implementation and we ask that the Government be as transparent as possible, as it makes headway on the recommendations, by regularly updating the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Of note, the Women Veterans Council was announced on 2 December 2024. The Legion is hopeful that it will be an independent voice for all Veterans who are women – a voice that will help identify and provide the unique care and support they require.

RCMP Definition of Veteran for Commemoration Purposes

There were no updates from the Government on this issue. The Committee will continue to monitor.

CAF Sexual Misconduct and Cultural Change

The 4th Report from the External Monitor on the oversight of the 48 recommendations stemming from the 2022 Independent External Comprehensive Review by Justice Louise Arbour of the problem of sexual misconduct in the CAF was released. The 4th Report highlighted the significant progress being made towards improving the culture of the CAF.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/external-monitor-report-fourth-status-report.html>

The next key milestone is the release of the Independent Review of the Military Colleges, which is expect in January.

National Women Veterans Monument

There were no updates from the Government on this issue. The Committee will continue to monitor.

9. NEW ITEMS

Comrade Andrea provided an overview of the recommendations in the recently released Parliamentary Committee on National Defence (NDDN) Report - Gaps to Fill – Housing and Other Needed Support for Canadian Armed Forces Members and their Families. The full report is available here:

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/documentviewer/en/44-1/NDDN/report-14/page-60#10>

Comrade Andrea also noted a new study being conducted by the Parliamentary Committee on National Defence (NDDN) on DND and CAF Contamination Sites. This may be of interest to Comrade Carolyn and the VSS Committee because of the relationship to cancer.

10. SPONSORSHIP

CAF and RCMP Indigenous Youth Programs

Comrade Dean provided an update on the Legion's support of the Indigenous Youth Programs and that he is engaging with the Army OPI for the two remaining programs.

Victory March sponsorship

Comrade Dean advised that The Legion has not received any requests for support.

WIDs Awards Breakfast sponsorship –

Comrade Dean confirmed approval for Legion sponsorship.

11. VISITS AND MEETINGS

Meeting with the Chief of Defence Staff – General Carignan – Comrade Dean will follow up to confirm the date with Dominion Executive Director staff.

12. UPCOMING EVENTS

- a. CDA AGM – 04 March 2025
- b. CDA Security Conference – 05 – 06 March 2025
- c. WiDS Breakfast – 06 March 2025
- d. Women's Forum 05 - 06 March 2025

13. OTHER ITEMS

The Committee chair advised that the 2025 Public sector pension plans and Veterans benefits indexing rate has been published and is 2.7%.

The Committee chair briefed that the First National Indigenous Conference was held last week in Ottawa. Comrade Dean will reach out to conference organizers for more details on the background.

<https://nidc.onehoop.ca/>

14. NEXT MEETING AND CLOSING

Date for next meeting will be confirmed in January 2025.

Meeting was closed at 1115hrs.

**Andrea Siew
Chair**

**Dean Young
Coordinator**

Dated this day on 09 December 2024.

DISTRIBUTION LIST

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

ANNEX A

RCMP UPDATE

DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

04 DECEMBER 2024

BRENDAN HEFFERMAN

RCMP Launches Its New Public Consultation Tool

On 05 November 2024, the RCMP's Open Government Office launched its online public consultation platform. This public consultation pilot is aimed at increasing engagement on RCMP policies, programs and services which will enhance trust and transparency with Canadian communities.

For this public consultation, the RCMP is leveraging an online tool that specializes in public consultations. The Open Government office, within the Information Management and Information Technology Program, will first seek out feedback on the RCMP's draft Transparency Policy. This policy provides direction to the RCMP on increasing transparency in policing.

Through the [RCMP Transparency and Trust Strategy](#), it is committed to develop a policy that will provide direction on increasing transparency in policing and contribute to its vision of becoming an inherently open RCMP. In addition, the RCMP is committed to establishing an RCMP Multi-Stakeholder Forum within [Canada's 5th National Action Plan on Open Government](#). Bringing together the RCMP, academia and civil society, and enabling open discussions around priorities and areas of focus for transparency in the RCMP.

The consultation period for the draft Transparency policy was until November 22, 2024, while the public consultation for the Multi-Stakeholder Forum Strategic Plan will be held in early 2025. With the help of the online tool, the RCMP is able to receive and consider opinions and ideas from citizens living across Canada.

The public consultation online tool ensures secure and confidential participation by verifying that participants are real individuals and safeguards anonymity throughout the process. It guarantees secure and credible public engagement, vital for informed policy decisions. All participants should be assured that only opinions and ideas will be collected throughout the consultation process and not personal information, to maintain confidentiality.

07 November 2024

Body-worn Camera Initiative Update

The RCMP has started the national deployment of body-worn cameras and the digital evidence management system.

Commencing in December 2024, approximately 1,000 frontline members per month will begin using body-worn cameras across Canada. By this time next year, over 90 per cent of frontline members will be using body-worn cameras and the deployment will continue until all frontline members have received a body-worn camera, approximately 18 months from now.

This is a pivotal step towards modernizing the RCMP's policing efforts to better protect its employees and the communities it serves. The camera and supporting evidence system will not only increase transparency and trust in the eyes of the public but also lead to improved evidence gathering and more timely resolution of complaints.

29 November 2024

Commissioner Broadcast: Surrey Change of Police of Jurisdiction

Message from the Commissioner

Today, I want to recognize the proud service the RCMP has provided the city of Surrey since 1951. Over the years we have expanded and evolved to reflect the unique and dynamic needs of one's of Canada's fastest growing communities. Surrey RCMP has been an important post for many within our organization; it has also been a leader in innovation and creating many best practises that are now shared across the organization and internationally. I thank all those that have served with the Surrey RCMP and those that continue to deliver policing throughout this transition.

This morning, the Surrey Police Service (SPS) officially assumed responsibility as police of jurisdiction (POJ) for the City of Surrey, taking on this role from the RCMP. Today's change marks the latest phase in this police transition, which began in 2018, and there are still more milestones ahead.

While SPS is now POJ for Surrey, we will continue to play a vital role in serving this community via the Surrey Provincial Operations Support Unit (SPOSU), as SPS increases its staffing. SPS and the RCMP will be working in separate command structures and, for the most part, will be responsible for different geographic areas of the city. However, and most importantly, there is no change to the way residents contact the police or to the locations of police stations, nor is there a change in the RCMP's willingness to respond where needed to maintain public safety in the City of Surrey.

Maintaining public and officer safety and delivering top-notch policing services to the people we serve, remain our top priorities throughout this transition. Our ongoing cooperation with the SPS will help us achieve these priorities and ensure there is continuity of service for the residents of Surrey.

While preparations for this first-of-its-kind transition for the RCMP have been in the works for several years, change can bring about uncertainty and questions. Deputy Commissioner Dwayne McDonald and I recognize this, which is why we've been sharing information with employees throughout the process, and we will continue to offer you as much detail and support as possible through this next step and beyond.

I encourage you to visit E Division's [transition page](#) for the latest information and resources. If there are any major developments that could affect you or the services we provide to Canadians, please know that you'll hear it from me.

Thank you for your constant efforts to keep Canadians safe and secure, in Surrey, and across the country.

Mike Duheme
Commissioner