

**12DOMINION COMMAND
DEFENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE
27 September 2023
MEETING MINUTES**

File: 82-27

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andrea Siew	-	Chair
Brendan Heffernan	-	Vice-Chair
Dean Young	-	Coordinator
	-	
ABSENT:		
Brian Sauvé	-	Member
Mindy Pearson	-	Member
Mike Smith	-	Assistant Coordinator
Carolyn Hughes	-	Observer

1. OPENING REMARKS

The Chair advised the Committee of the new ministers which were announced by the Prime Minister on 26 July:

- Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence – Ginette Pettipas-Taylor
- Minister of National Defence – Bill Blair
- Minister of Public Safety – Dominic Leblanc

The Chair was sad to report that Private Jess Larochelle passed away on 30 August. The Royal Canadian Legion had supported the Valour in the Presence of the Enemy initiative to have an independent review of Private Larochelle's heroic actions to repel an enemy attack with a view to awarding him the Victoria Cross.

2. ADMINISTRATION POINTS

The Committee reviewed the Minutes from the previous meeting on 10 July. There were no changes.

3. UPDATES:

CAF UPDATE – Andrea

Comrade Andrea provided an overview of CAF operations. She highlighted that despite the shortage of CAF personnel, both Regular and Reserve Force, the CAF continues to provide unprecedented support to operations both domestic and global:

- a. Personnel were deployed to support the unprecedented number of wildfires across the country – Nova Scotia, Quebec, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon and the Northwest Territories.
- b. Op Reassurance is the CAF's largest overseas mission, through which the CAF contributes to NATO assurance and deterrence measures in Central and Eastern Europe and is part of the biggest reinforcement of Alliance collective defence in a generation. This includes 1,100 personnel deployed as part of the Battle Group in Latvia (to evolve to a Brigade Group by 2025), a forward naval presence and a tactical airlift detachment in Scotland.
- c. Op Neon is Canada's forward presence in the Indo Pacific region which is in response to Canada's recently released Indo Pacific Strategy. HMCS Vancouver, HMCS Ottawa, HMCS Montreal and the Naval Supply Vessel Asterix are currently deployed in the region.
- d. Op Presence in Mali is the CAF's contribution to the Government of Canada's peace operations strategy. Currently deployed are 250 personnel providing aeromedical and transport aviation support.
- e. Op Nanook is Canada's maritime presence in the North. HMCS Harry de Wolfe is currently deployed until 29 September.
- f. **RCMP – Update** – Please see **Annex A** – Comrade Brendan
- g. **VSS – Update** – Please see **Annex B** – Comrade Carolyn

4. **ADVOCACY ISSUES:**

- a. **RCMP Definition of Veteran for Commemoration Purposes** - Comrade Andrea advised that The Legion has not received a response to the letter The Legion sent to the Minister of Veterans Affairs in February 2023. The Committee agreed to draft a follow up letter to the new Minister. Action – Comrade Andrea
- b. **RCMP – VAC Clawback Merlo Davidson Lawsuit** – Comrade Dean to advise the Committee if The Legion has received a response to the May 2023 letter that the Dominion President sent to the Minister of Veterans Affairs. If a letter has not been received the Committee will draft a follow up letter. Action – Comrade Dean
- c. **CAF Sexual Misconduct and Cultural Change** – Comrade Andrea provided an update on the CAF progress to implement the recommendations of Independent External Comprehensive Report (IECR) by the Honourable Louise Arbour. She advised that while significant progress is being made there are concerns:

On October 24, 2022, the Government announced the appointment of Madame Jocelyne Therrien as the External Monitor to oversee the DND/CAF efforts to address sexual misconduct and harassment in the CAF and monitor the implementation of the 48 recommendations of the IECR. While the appointment is initially for one year, the Committee is optimistic that the Government will do the right thing and extend the appointment.

- The external review of the two military colleges, as required by recommendations 28 and 29 in the IECR has not yet been launched. The May progress report by the independent monitor, Jocelyn Therrien, stated that the panel would be operational by June 2023. There is no indication for the delay.
 - The next progress report of the independent external monitor is due October/November. Action – Committee members to monitor.
- d. **CAF Housing Differential Benefit** – Comrade Andrea briefed that in July the CAF announced a phased approach to implement the CAF Housing Differential Benefit, the new housing benefit for CAF members. With the introduction of the new housing benefit, approximately 7,700 personnel currently in receipt of the old benefit (Post Living Differential) would be ineligible for the new benefit and thousands of others would see their monthly payments reduced. Hearing feedback from CAF members who were set to lose the payments, the CAF created a new program, to gradually phase out its old housing benefit. Under this new program those who would have seen their monthly housing benefit end or decrease will receive decreasing payments until July 2026.
- e. **Defence Policy Update** – The update to Strong, Secure, and Engaged (the current defence policy), which was announced in the 2022 Budget, has still not been promulgated. The Committee discussed the concerns with the impact on personnel, equipment and procurement as well as the need for the modernization of the CAF. Action – Committee members to monitor.

5. OTHER ITMES:

- a. **Budgets Cuts** - The Committee discussed the Government's proposed spending cuts to find \$15B in savings over the next three years and the impact on the CAF and the RCMP. All agreed that this will have an impact on personnel, equipment and operations for both organizations which are already stretched and over committed. Action – Committee members to monitor.
<https://nationalpost.com/news/national/defence-watch/national-defence-to-roll-out-spending-cuts-over-next-three-years-officials-say-extent-of-impact-yet-to-be-confirmed/wcm/0673dabd-1125-489a-bb21-cfb6ef63efbe>
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/department-national-defence-budget-billion-1.6981974>

- b. **Domestic Operations and Call for a Dedicated Response Capability** - The Committee discussed that the support provided by the CAF and the RCMP for unprecedented climate emergencies and other domestic operations is not sustainable. There have been calls for the creation of a dedicated emergency response force. The Minister of Emergency Preparedness stated in September that they are looking at options. While the wildfire season is coming to an end the Government should have at least an interim coordinated national response capability for summer 2024. Action – Committee members to monitor.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-wildfires-winter-1.6959781>
- c. **RCMP and Impact of Proposed Changes to Recruiting for Federal Policing** - Comrade Brendan provided an update on the changes that are being made in the RCMP with regards to recruiting and training to support Federal Policing.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/rcmp-federal-policing-frontline-flynn-1.6950735>
- d. **ACVA - Experience of Women Veterans and RCMP Veterans representation** - Comrade Andrea briefed that Jane Hall from the RCMP Veterans Association has requested to present to ACVA. Her presentation date has not yet been confirmed. We will share the date with Committee members once it is confirmed. Action – Comrade Andrea
- e. **Women Veterans Monument** – The Committee discussed that they would staff this issue secretarially for all Committee members' input. Action – Comrade Andrea
- f. **Indigenous Youth Programs and Legion Support** - Comrade Dean advised that The Royal Canadian Legion is providing recognition for the RCMP Youth Indigenous Programs. He continues to reach out to the CAF to offer Legion support to the CAFs Indigenous Youth Programs. Action – Comrade Dean
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-canadian-armed-forced-bold-eagle-indigenous/>
- g. **Nijmegen March Postponement** – As the Nijmegen March is postponed until 2026, The Legion has offered support to the Maple Leaf March, which is being held in the Ottawa area, 13 - 15 October.
<http://www.marchemapleleafmarch.ca/>

6. **NEW ITEMS:**

- a. **Korean War Veterans Entitlement to Wound Stripe** – Comrade Andrea advised that the Committee received a request for support for the awarding of the Wound Stripe to a Korean War Veteran who was wounded by hostile action.

We followed up with the CAF Directorate of Casualty Support Management (DCSM) and were advised that the Commander CAF Transition Group/Director General Military Transition is now the approving authority for Wound Stripe applications. Veterans of the Korean conflict who meet the criteria for the Wound Stripe are indeed eligible to receive it. This recognition is awarded to any member of the CAF that was wounded under honourable circumstances as a direct result of hostile action before 7 October 2001 and required more than local first aid to treat the injury. The Sacrifice Medal was created for those who die as a result of military service or are wounded by hostile action post 2001.

Applications should be submitted to the Formation Chief, or the Defence and Security Committee can assist the Veteran with their application. To submit an application to the Formation Chief please contact:

CPO1 Matt Boniface
Formation Chief Petty Officer
Canadian Armed Forces Transition Group
matt.boniface@forces.gc.ca | Tel: 613-971-0059

- b. **Nuclear Test Medal** – The Committee received information that the UK Government has created a Nuclear Test Medal to recognize the British personnel who took part in the testing of atomic and hydrogen bombs in the 1950s and 1960s and whether Canada would create a similar medal.

Our research indicates that Canada has already considered the recognition of “Atomic Veterans”. Attached is the link to a 2008 Government of Canada statement related to the recognition program of Atomic Veterans following a 2007 investigation into the testing programs.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/news/archive/2008/09/backgrounder-atomic-veterans-recognition-program.html>

The final investigation report titled *Atomic Veterans: A Report to the Minister of National Defence Regarding Canada's Participation in Allied Forces' Nuclear Weapons Trial and Decontamination Work* highlights that approximately 700 former Canadian military personnel participated in 29 US and UK nuclear weapons trials between 1946 and 1963. The report also identified that approximately 200 former CAF personnel participated in clean-up and decontamination activities from a nuclear accident at Chalk River. The Report led to the formal government recognition “of their exceptional service to the nation” and included an ex-gratia payment. It is unlikely that the Government is pursuing a medal.

As the UK medal is available to Canadians who participated in the UK programs, Comrade Carolyn is preparing an article for Legion Magazine advising Veterans of the medal eligibility criteria. Action – Comrade Carolyn

7. VISITS AND MEETINGS:

- a. The Committee will organize a meeting with the Dominion President and the RCMP Commissioner, Michael Duheme, and Chief Human Resources Officer, Nadine Huggins. Action – Comrades Andrea and Brendan to coordinate with Steven Clark
- b. The next Dominion Executive Committee is 25 November.

8. UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Vimy Gala - 08 November 2023
- Remembrance Day - 11 November 2023

9. OTHER ITEMS:

There were no additional items.

Next Meeting will be held in January 2024 with the date TBC.



**Andrea Siew
Chair**



**Dean Young
Coordinator**

Dated this day on 06 October 2023.

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ANNEX A

Defence & Security Committee Meeting

RCMP UPDATE - Brendan Heffernan

27 September 2023,

1. **Commissioner Broadcast - 75 years of peacekeeping worldwide: 150 years of policing in Canada / Communiqué du commissaire - 75 années de maintien de la paix dans différentes régions du monde, 150 années de services policiers au Canada**
 - This year [marks](#) the 75th anniversary of the first United Nations peacekeeping operation. The RCMP is celebrating its 150th anniversary as well. Peacekeeping missions have been part of our storied history since 1989, from our first mission in Namibia to our most recent ongoing mission in Kosovo.
 - Canada is proud to contribute highly skilled police officers and personnel to train and mentor police in fragile and conflict-affected states around the world. Today, over 50 Canadian law enforcement personnel from the RCMP and our 32 provincial, regional, municipal and Indigenous police partner agencies are serving in the West Bank, Mali, Haiti, Kosovo, Democratic Republic of the Congo and other specialized police [postings](#).
 - I served on a Peacekeeping mission in Kosovo in 2000. I know peacekeeping missions are no easy task. Our police officers volunteer to leave their jobs, homes and families. They go through rigorous pre-deployment [training](#), then spend an entire year in a foreign environment unlike anything they knew at home. They sacrifice so much for the ultimate goal of improving safety and security in communities that need it most.
 - In addition to maintaining peace and mentoring local police, our officers also provide specialized training in how to prevent sexual and gender-based violence, advance women's rights and improve gender equality in the countries where they're deployed. The RCMP is actively recruiting more [women police officers](#) to promote gender equality and empowerment on missions.
 - This National Peacekeepers' Day, let's express pride in our peacekeepers, recognize the contributions of those who support them, and offer gratitude for the peace and security we enjoy here in Canada every day. On behalf of the RCMP, I want to thank all of our peacekeepers—past and present—for sacrificing so much to create a safer world for everyone.

Mike Duheme
Commissioner

2. Commissioner Broadcast – Consecration and presentation of the third RCMP Guidon / Communiqué du commissaire – Consécration et présentation du troisième guidon de la GRC

- The consecration and presentation of the RCMP's new Guidon will take place on September 8, 2023 at Depot. The Guidon is the RCMP's regimental flag that displays the Corps Operational Honours related to the RCMP's wartime service, as well as our role in supporting peace operations in conflict zones.
- The new Guidon shows the evolution of the RCMP through our 150 year history. New additions highlight the contribution of Number 1 Provost Company (RCMP) during the Second World War. In addition, the new Corps Operational Honours recognize the RCMP's contributions during the Second World War and the conflict in Afghanistan. We are also honoured to add The Royal Cypher of His Majesty King Charles III, the Commissioner-in-Chief of the RCMP. Finally, for the first time, the abbreviation of GRC, for Gendarmerie royale du Canada has been included, symbolizing 150 years of service to Canadians in both official languages.
- Please take a moment to read more about the [new Guidon](#). The livestream from the ceremony can be viewed on the [RCMP Depot Division YouTube channel](#).

Date: Friday, September 8, 2023

Time: 2:00 pm CST

- Our new Guidon truly embodies the honour and service of all our members – past and present, and is a symbol of our great pride in today's RCMP.

Mike Duheme
Commissioner

3. Commissioner Broadcast – Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day / Communiqué du commissaire – Jour commémoratif national des policiers et des agents de la paix

- Coming together to pay respect for the lives lost in the line of duty, reminds us that what we do is important. Sunday September 24th is the 46th annual Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day and I encourage you to take a moment to remember and honour all Canadian police and peace officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice serving our country. It is an opportunity to recognize the families, friends and colleagues who have suffered tragic loss. I'm so grateful to all of you who dedicate your careers and lives to serving our communities, it is an honour to work with so many brave individuals who choose a life of servitude to the greater good.

- Earlier this month we honoured our fallen colleagues at the RCMP National Memorial Service. On September 24th, we will pay tribute to Constable Shaelyn Yang and Constable Harvinder Singh Dhani, as they will be added to the National Cenotaph. RCMP Constable Vernon Myles Genaille was the historical admission for 2023.
- If you wish to attend or tune in live, see the event details:
 - The Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day Service will be held on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Sunday September 24th at 11 a.m. EST.
 - You will be able to livestream the Canadian Police and Peace Officers' Memorial or tune in later on Youtube, Facebook and Twitter. Links are posted at: <https://cppom.ca/live/>
- The loss of a loved one, friend or colleague is a life altering event. It is important for us to take the opportunity to recognize their service and sacrifice and honour them together.

Mike Duheme
Commissioner



Families Matter Research Group Interactive Series: Exploring the experiences and perspectives of parents of defence and PSP

Wed. Sep 27, 2023 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

Guidon



Quick facts

- Historically, special flags known as "Colours" marked and provided a rallying point for army regiments in the line of battle. Today, they are no longer carried in action or held by a unit in a theatre of war. They continue, however, as visible symbols of pride, honour and devotion to Sovereign and country. As such they are an organization's most prized possession.
- Unique among police organizations, the RCMP possesses its own Colour. Following the traditions of light cavalry, the RCMP's Colour is known as the "Guidon".
- The term "Guidon" comes from an old French word, "*guy-d'homme*", which refers to the flag carried by a cavalry leader.
- The first Guidon was presented to the RCMP by His Excellency, the Earl of Bessborough, Governor General of Canada in Regina, Saskatchewan, in April 1935.

Overview

The RCMP's Guidon is its regimental colour and is based on the tradition of British Army light cavalry regiments.

The first RCMP Guidon was consecrated in 1935. It was retired in 1973, when Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the then-Honorary Commissioner of the RCMP, consecrated the second Guidon in Regina, Saskatchewan on the occasion of our 100th anniversary.

Following the coronation of King Charles III, a new Guidon was approved. It will be consecrated and presented on September 8, 2023 at Depot in Saskatchewan. The

Guidon is emblazoned with the Royal Cypher of His Majesty King Charles III, King of Canada and Commissioner-in-Chief of the RCMP. It also bears the Corps Operational Honours that attest to the service of the RCMP in wartime, as well as the RCMP's role in support of peace-support operations in conflict zones. The abbreviation "GRC" appears for the first time symbolizing 150 years of service to Canadians in both Official Languages.

Transportation and escort

The Guidon Party is a small unit, consisting of a bearer, armed escorts and an orderly, that carries the Guidon on parade. Following tradition and decree by His Majesty King George IV in 1822, the bearer is always a warrant officer.

During transport, the Guidon must be safely stored and personally escorted by a warrant officer of the RCMP.

Parade

The Guidon is always paraded by itself or with other military colours only. It may not be paraded with other flags or ensigns.

The Guidon may be paraded:

- on the Sovereign's birthday
- at the funeral of a dignitary entitled to a 100-member guard of honour
- at a change of command ceremony for a new commissioner
- at a ceremonial commissioner's inspection parade
- at an RCMP memorial church service and parade honouring members who have died in the line of duty
- at other mounted/dismounted ceremonial parades as approved by the Commissioner

Features

The Guidon features the RCMP's regimental badge, the King's Royal Cypher and the abbreviations of the name at various times:

- NWMP (North-West Mounted Police)
- RNWMP (Royal North-west Mounted Police)
- RCMP GRC (Royal Canadian Mounted Police - *Gendarmerie royale du Canada*)

The Guidon also bears the RCMP's Corps Operational Honours indicating the theatres of military and civilian operations in which members served:

- North West Canada 1885
- South Africa 1900-2
- France and Flanders 1918
- Siberia 1918-19
- Second World War – *Guerre Mondiale* 1939-45

- Canadian Provost Corps 1939-45 Honorary Distinction
- Afghanistan 2003-14

The first and second Guidons are laid up in the RCMP Chapel in Regina, Saskatchewan, while the current one is displayed at the RCMP's National Headquarters in Ottawa, Ontario.

The Guidon embodies the honour and sacrifice made of all members of the RCMP, and is treated with extreme reverence. It is paid compliments (saluted) by all who enter its presence, or when it passes by on a parade. The only exception is when it is paraded at a funeral, where compliments are reserved for the deceased.

ANNEX B

Defence & Security Committee Meeting

VSS UPDATE - Carolyn Hughes

27 September 2023,

1. CIMVHR - Legion Master's Scholarship

- A student has been selected to receive the Legion's Master Scholarship. Their research involves the Intergenerational Impacts of Military Service-Related Moral Injury which will address a significant gap in research focusing on a military veteran and their family. The President will announce the selection in the near future.

2. Class Action regarding various VAC benefits

- This Class Action is about Veterans or their survivors between the 1st of April 2006 to the 1st of October 2016 who were in receipt of various benefits.
- It is alleged that VAC was negligent in informing Class members about the Earnings Loss Benefit and the Supplementary Retirement Benefit. VAC is accused that this may have led to a breach of the standard of care and may have caused damages to the Class members.
- No one needs to opt in as VAC will review all from that period of time but if anyone wishes to opt out, they will need to contact the legal firm of Murphy Battista at 1-888-683-9621 to take appropriate steps.

3. Canada Life – New PSHCP – Switch from SunLife

- The majority of problems appear to be those who had problems during the positive enrolment phase and/or in trying to call in initially. There was a shortage of people available to take calls. Comrade Carolyn has heard that more people were hired and did a few test calls in the office and was able to get through in 6 minutes for one and 15 for the other.
- She is impressed/shocked with the digital service as she putting two claims in and received her portion of the money back in less than 24 hours. Two others have had the same results.
- We will continue to monitor as Canada Life will be administering the Pensioners Dental Plan next year also.

4. Homeless Veterans / TPS Program

- This is a program developed between the Toronto Polices Services and Ontario Command.
- This program is now fanning out across the country and when an officer comes across a homeless veteran or one is found in a shelter, service is verified by Veterans Services at Dominion Command and then the appropriate Service Officer across the country is notified and offers assistance (claims to VAC, poppy fund, to help them find accommodation, obtain Mental Health treatment, etc....

- We will continue to engage with the RCMP given some areas of Canada do not have local police departments.

5. Minister Blair Announces Changes to the Canadian Armed Forces Grievance and Harassment Process

- CAF members who have experienced sexual harassment, sexual misconduct or any other form of discrimination while performing their duties have a new path to justice available to them. This was one of the recommendations of the Arbour report.
- In the past, members had no option other than to file a complaint through the existing grievance and harassment processes and now they can choose to file directly through this process or directly to the Canadian Human Rights Commission of Canada, who has decades of experience in this area.
- No matter which way a member decides is the best option for them, an effective complaint system needs to be transparent and fair. This is crucial to ensure the best support possible and to hold people accountable for their actions.

6. Veterans Services Events – not a complete list

1. 21 September - Care and Support Advisory Group
2. 25-26 September - Policy Advisory Group meeting in Ottawa
3. 28-29 September – TryCon/The Burns Way in Ottawa
4. 14 October – Veterans Consultation Assembly
5. 16 – 18 October – CIMVHR Forum
6. 24 to 25 October - Service Excellence and Transition Advisory Group meeting in Charlottetown
7. 8 November – Vimy Gala
8. 11 November – Remembrance Day
9. 25 November – DEC
10. Monthly meetings with VAC, Veterans Review and Appeal Board, PEDs, VAC's Canadian Health Needs Assessment, Centre of Excellence for PTSD, Built for Zero, the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness and more.

7. Addendum

- Comrade Carolyn has confirmed that the definition of RCMP as Veterans for commemorative purposes has been brought up in several of the Minister's Advisory Groups and in various meetings with the new Minister of VAC.
- Comrade Carolyn has drafted and submitted an article regarding the Nuclear Test Medal that will appear in Serving You section of the in the Legion Magazine in the next edition.