

RESERVES 2000

Prudent Defence

COMMUNIQUÉ

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MILITIA STRENGTH

Militia strength continues to fall. At a briefing by the Commander Canadian Army (CCA) to the Executive of the Council of Army Honorary Colonels in November the overall strength was reported to be 17,855. In May the figure reported was 18,135. The authorized paid strength of the Militia, for which the Army is funded, is 19,500.

Bearing in mind there could be at least 3,000 of those soldiers on Class B service and that most of those do not serve in units, and that at one point earlier in the year a further 4,000 of the total were considered to be untrained, the actual number of deployable Class A Militia soldiers could be as low as 10,000. And that does not take into account the perennial number of non-effectives, who may or may not turn out if called upon.

We suggested in the last Communiqué there are two underlying causes of falling strength. The first is an inadequate recruit quota (the Strategic Intake Plan) which has been too low to offset the shortfall accumulated over the last two years plus the higher attrition recently experienced. The second is a dysfunctional enrollment process. Nothing in the intervening months has changed that opinion.

Reserves 2000 conducted a survey of units across Canada in the late summer and found that almost all surveyed were lower in strength this year than last. Units in smaller communities, especially

where recruiting offices were closed, are suffering most.

Certainly the shortfall in the strength of all reserves, and the regular force, is on the radar screen. An article by Lee Berthiaume of Post Media is attached which claims total primary reserve strength (that is Navy, Army, Air and medical reserves) is only 22,500 instead of the authorized strength of 27,000. Mr Berthiaume appears to put the blame for this situation on the Government for underfunding the Armed Forces and for closing 12 recruiting offices, a point of view no doubt favoured by defence planners. Reserves 2000 argues, however, that how the funding envelope is spent is decided within the Department. It is very unlikely the Government directed the number and location of recruiting offices to be closed. It perhaps should also be noted that while recruiting offices across Canada were being shuttered the Canadian Forces Recruiting Group received a new \$14.7 million dollar headquarters building.

CCA MESSAGE OF 9 OCTOBER

Also attached is an email from the CCA intended for all Militia Honoraries, Militia Brigade Commanders and unit Commanding Officers. This email appeal is an interesting approach to reaching all Honoraries and could be very useful but this first time it suffered from poor execution. Honoraries in

at least two Provinces did not receive it from the chain-of-command but as the “external agency” referred to in the email, Reserves 2000 was pleased to step in and provide it to those who were missed.

Reserves 2000 notes that the top problems identified at the Reserves 2000 seminar in November of 2014, and briefed to the Minister of National Defence, are now recognized by the Army and were touched on in the email. Unfortunately the problems are well entrenched and will now require a determined and steadfast effort to overcome. We encourage the Army to persevere.

EMPLOYER COMPENSATION

In late November the Government announced a welcome programme to monetarily compensate the employers of reservists who deploy on operations, both international and domestic, for a minimum period of 30 days. Reserves 2000 has always advocated this positive incentive for employers rather than punitive measures such as contained in job protection legislation – although that legislation is better than the total lack of measures of the past. This additional programme will provide approximately \$403 per week to the employer for the duration of the absence of the employee. For a full explanation see the attached Government backgrounder.

Reserves 2000 welcomes this initiative and would like to see it extended to include **training** over 30 days as well. That further step could help to ease the chronic shortage of junior leaders in units by allowing more reservists who are not students to qualify in one block of time. As that block usually occurs in the summer months and student replacement workers are available at that time

it could be a win-win-win, for the reservist, the replacement and the economy.

Interestingly, it appears the suggestion to create the policy may have come from outside the Department of National Defence. A paper from the C.D. Howe Institute in 2010 argued for just such policy, as explained in the attached op ed article by the author.

2015 GENERAL ELECTION

The next federal election is only months away and Reserves 2000 is preparing a campaign plan to carry our message to all candidates. We look forward to this opportunity to explain to a receptive audience why Canada needs a larger Militia, the advantages expansion will bring to Canadians and Canadian communities, the fiscal advantage of doing more with reservists and how we propose to get from here to there.

Supporters will be provided with information packages tailored to your units and ridings. Current Parliamentarians will also receive our recommendations and we are, of course, open to any request from a Parliamentarian or staff to meet or be briefed in any fashion most convenient to them.

Hopefully a re-write of the Canada First Defence Strategy will come out in the near future. That document should provide some insight as to where the Conservative Party of Canada wishes to take the Militia. It would be very useful if the other Parties shared their vision for the Militia too.

Supporters are requested to please contact Reserves 2000 with any thoughts or initiatives you believe will be helpful.

EDITORIAL

Reserves 2000 welcomes the commitment to the Militia expressed by the Commander Canadian Army in his email of October 9th, 2014. As he points out so well, the Militia has provided Canada with an enormous increase in defence capacity in the recent past. This was capability that would have been ill-afforded if it had been maintained at heightened states of readiness at all times, as many full-time forces are.

He is also aware that all is not well in the current institution. Falling strength is a serious situation, both for the immediate future when Canada may need every soldier that can be mustered and for the long term health of units who must recruit now to grow the leadership needed for tomorrow. The facts are, however, that none of the problems that require redress popped up overnight and all have been reported by units over and over again.

Recruit attraction is not the problem. Enrollment, however, can only be described as a disaster when it takes over 160 days (now reported to be “only” 140 days) to process a file.

At the same time attrition is rising, but is it all due to the “post-Afghanistan environment”? The reduction in training O&M funding seen in the last two years means Commanding Officers have had less opportunity to motivate soldiers with interesting training. The ceiling of 37.5 days local training and one week of summer training for 50% of the force also means that many young Canadians who are trying to fund their education can no longer afford to remain in the Militia.

Addressing the work/life balance will pay dividends for retention, but Militia leaders must still advance if units are to become healthy again. The initiative to re-create a COTC-like programme again in Canadian Universities will hopefully assist in providing and qualifying more leaders, but it has to be remarked that as this initiative did not originate within the Department of National Defence it seems to be facing enormous challenges in implementation.

Some of the changes are beyond the terms of reference of the Commander Canadian Army himself, but it is most encouraging to note the support for part-time reserves from the Government. Hopefully that will give him a fighting chance to achieve the real reform so desperately needed.

Reserves 2000 is a coalition of Canadians concerned with the security and defence of our country, now and in the future. Among its constituents, **Reserves 2000** includes Honorary Appointments from Reserve and Militia units across Canada, along with responsible citizens from all walks of life.

The purpose of **Reserves 2000** is to ensure the perpetuation and contribution of Canada's Reserves and Militia as a viable and important component of Canada's Forces in the context of present and future challenges.

Early retirements and weak recruitment has the Canadian military facing a shortfall of personnel

Lee Berthiaume, Postmedia News | December 16, 2014 1:54 PM ET
More from Postmedia News



The Canadian Forces is short hundreds of full-time members and thousands of reservists, due in part to an unexpected spike in the number of personnel hanging up their uniforms and difficulties attracting and training new recruits.

The shortfall, expected to last years thanks to recent cuts to military recruitment and training, threatens to undermine the Conservative government's longstanding promise not to cut the size of the military despite billions of dollars in spending reductions since 2012.

The federal Conservative government has publicly promised to keep 68,000 full-time military members and 27,000 reservists in uniform, even as defence spending has fallen by about \$5.5 billion since 2012.

The pledge was part of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's demand that the Canadian Forces provide "more teeth and less tail," though some believed the promise was more about politics than protecting the military.

But a Defence Department report recently tabled in the House of Commons showed a shortfall of nearly 900 regular force members and 4,500 part-time reservists at the end of March “due to higher than forecasted attrition and other factors.”

The report doesn't provide any explanation for why military personnel were leaving at an unexpected rate, but it does note the Canadian Army has been hit particularly hard.

Senior military officers, including former army commander lieutenant-general Peter Devlin, had previously warned that the Afghan mission's end, as well as deep cuts to training, would prompt many soldiers to head for the exit.

The army's failure to meet its recruitment goals further contributed to the shortfall. Officials have previously said the military needs more than 4,000 new recruits each year to offset attrition and keep 68,000 full-time troops in uniform.

Meanwhile, the report notes recent changes to the reserve force have contributed to fewer part-time members in uniform. But recruiters for the air and navy reserves also had a hard time getting new recruits through the door for the third year in a row.

The naval reserve only met 21.3 per cent of its recruitment target over the year, and the air reserves met 9.1 per cent, though the air reserve did have some personnel come in from other parts of the military.

“Maintaining the personnel capabilities of a large organization such as the Canadian Armed Forces requires a constant balance of recruiting new members and retaining trained personnel,” said Defence Department spokesman Zoltan Csepregi.

“The CAF experiences changes in the rate of attrition, or departures, from one year to the next,” he added. “CAF strength will be closely monitored to ensure that the CAF meets its domestic and international defence commitments as assigned by the Government of Canada.”

The Conservative government has been sensitive to reducing the size of the military after criticizing previous Liberal governments for doing exactly that in the 1990s. (The total number of personnel declined by one-third from a high of 120,000 in 1991 to a low of 80,000 in 2001.)

But as part of its efforts to cut costs, the government ordered 12 military recruiting centres across the country closed last year, which auditors had privately warned would hurt reserve units as well as aboriginal recruitment.

Those warnings appear to have been borne out, as the new report notes that “given recruiting and training capacity, it will take some years to recover” from the current shortfall. It adds that the military will try to “limit voluntary attrition” and address the shortfall “as soon as practical.”

David Perry, a defence analyst with the Conference of Defence Associations Institute, believed defence spending reductions are at the heart of the problem.

Cuts to military training and operations are driving people out faster, he said, while the government has axed the recruiting system so it can't keep up with higher than expected attrition.

Some have questioned the wisdom of maintaining the military at its current size given budget cuts of up to \$2.5 billion and with the last Canadian soldiers due to return home from Afghanistan by the end of March.

One former defence chief, retired general Rick Hillier, warned last year that reducing the size of the military was the only way to ensure the force remained strong and stable. He said the number of full-time members should be reduced from 68,000 to about 50,000.

Meanwhile, the report says the Canadian military is hoping a recent spike in the number of Canadian personnel taken off the job to deal with physical and mental injuries will subside in the next few years.

More than 1,400 Canadian Forces members, or about two per cent of the regular force, had been deemed seriously ill or injured and taken off the job at the end of March. That is about double the number from 2011, but largely the same as last year.

Officials have blamed "lag effects" from the Afghan mission for the increase.

"From: Hainse LGen JMM@C Army EXEC@Ottawa-Hull

Sent: October-09-14 12:30 PM

To: Juneau MGen JCG@C Army EXEC@Ottawa-Hull; Milner MGen DJ@1 Cdn Div HQ@Kingston; Thomas BGen LE@4 Cdn Div JTFC HQ@Toronto; Lanthier MGen JM@CADTC HQ@Kingston; Eyre BGen WD@3 Cdn Div HQ@Edmonton; Lafaut BGen JRAS@QG 2 Div CA FOIE@Montréal; Eldaoud BGen N@5 Cdn Div HQ Comd@Halifax; Cadden BGen SM@C Army DGLCD/COS Land Strat@Ottawa-Hull; McQuillan BGen KD@C Army DGLS/COS Land Ops@Ottawa-Hull; Woiden BGen KL@C Army DGL Res/COS Land Res@Ottawa-Hull

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Subject: Army Reserve

Importance: High

Gents,

I ask that you distribute the following message to your Reserve CBG Comds, Unit COs and Honorary Colonels.

It has come to my attention that there have been requests by an external agency for recruiting and attrition information relating to Army Reserve Units. The concerns appear to be related to reduced recruiting targets, the difficulty in processing recruits and to incorporate a stronger role for the Reserves. Any requests for information in this context should be directed to COS Army Reserve, attention Col Foster (Dir Army Reserve) who will ensure an Army level response is provided.

As a result of these inquiries I believe it is a good time to reinforce the Canadian Army Narrative with respect to the Reserves. In the last 25 years an operational transformation of the Army Reserve occurred, which led to the integration of Reservists in significant numbers (up to 20% of total deployed forces) with deployed CA Reg F. These deployments spanned locations and operating theatres as diverse as Afghanistan, Bosnia, Haiti, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Sudan. The Army Reserve also conducted, in conjunction with the Reg Force, domestic operations including the Vancouver Olympics (2010), the G8/G20 Summit (2010), and the response to a number of natural disasters such as the flooding in Newfoundland (2010), Calgary (2013) and Manitoba (2011 & 2014), the forest fires in British Columbia (2003) and the Ice Storm of Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec (1998). For domestic disaster response, baseline training and organization were sufficient to allow for effective conduct of operations. For specific security operations such as the Olympics, additional training was provided to ensure readiness, while for deployed operations such as Afghanistan full time, intense training of six months or more was provided to ensure readiness. Throughout this period, the ARes has performed with courage, honour and professionalism.

The Canadian Army is onboard with the Chief of Defence Staff's Vision for the Primary Reserves, outlined in his Strategic Guidance, is of predominantly part-time professional Canadian Armed Forces members who are a vital link to Canadian communities, and who contribute to the defence and security of Canada. Currently the Army Reserve is funded to a level of approximately 19,471 personnel including full and part-time personnel. The part-time reservist is funded to train 37.5 days per year and fifty percent of the part-time force are funded to attend an annual 7-day Reserve collective training event. The focus of the training allows for the ARes to contribute significantly to the current Canada First Defence Strategy through the provision of 10 Territorial Battalion Groups (400-600 pers each), 4 Arctic Response Company Groups (115 pers each) and integration to our deployed forces on sustained operations of approximately 500-600 personnel per rotation. Should the Canadian Army deploy on a major expeditionary operation, the intent is to potentially task the Army Reserve to force generate capabilities such as: a Force Protection company, a Convoy Escort troop, an Influence Activities element, an Influence Activities coordination centre, a Persistent Surveillance troop and individual augmentation to the Battle Group and Task Force headquarters. The Canadian Army is considering several areas where an expanded Army Reserve role could be conducted; including the domains of cyber operations, specialization in Nuclear, Biological and Chemical environments, and a greater affiliated role with Reg F units. In order to do all of this a viable, relevant and sustainable Army reserve is required.

I recently signed off on the Canadian Army Renewal Strategic Implementation Directive which outlines our approach to maintaining acceptable personnel levels within the Army. I have directed that a similar focused effort on ARes regeneration be undertaken to look at all aspects of attrition and retention. There has already been some significant work done to address the work/life balance by looking at the Reserve Individual and collective Training demands as part of the Army Training Review; however, there is still more to do. From a sustainability perspective the Army certainly recognizes the major challenges of recruiting and retaining the Reserve Force in the post-Afghanistan environment. Reduction of full-time CL B personnel as a result of PRECS and the Reg Force annuitant policy has also contributed to increased attrition over the past 2 years.

Although it is true that the existing recruiting process is not meeting the demand regardless of SIP targets and the Army Reserve Strength is continuing to decrease, the Canadian Army is currently working closely with Chief Military Personnel to address this important issue. Indeed, we have agreed to have CFRG enter into negotiations to allow the Army to take on greater responsibilities and authorities with respect to recruit processing, testing and enrollment. This will be done asymmetrically across the country with more autonomous processing to be carried out at the Unit/CBG level. Dedicated Unit recruiters who are singularly focussed on year round recruiting of the Army Reserve will have access to processing capabilities across the country, especially in Rural areas, that will result in increased output. The National Service Level Agreement (SLA) with CFRG is being negotiated presently with the intent to have it signed off by the end of Oct/early Nov of this year. Regional SLAs with Divs/CBGs are targeted to be signed off prior to the end of the year. While the SLAs are being worked on concurrent initiatives are being rolled out. The new e-recruiting system is now live as of 1 April 2014 with

dedicated laptops being issued to each Unit recruiter who will have read access to the Canadian Forces Recruit Information Management System (CFRIMS). This will allow them to track the status of all their applicants and to follow up or make inquiries to ensure the files continue to be processed in a timely manner. The annual Canadian Army Reserve Recruiting Directive will be issued by Dec 2014 and it will contain the implementation plan for incorporating the SLA changes. Intent is to have all of the changes in place by 1 Apr 2015.

All of the initiatives and associated effects I have mentioned are instrumental to ensure the Army Reserve remains a fully integrated and valuable component of the Canadian Army. Let me close by saying that during the latest Speech from the Throne our Government has clearly recognized the valuable contribution of the Canadian Armed Forces Reservists towards the service of the Canadian population at home or abroad. As such, the Canadian Army remains committed to stay in lock step with the current and any future Government direction in this regard.

STRONG, PROUD, READY

J.M.M. Hainse

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Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program

BG – November 25, 2014

Reservists are essential to the Canadian Armed Forces' ability to successfully execute international and domestic operations.

The Primary Reserve consists of predominantly part-time professional Canadian Armed Forces members who contribute to the defence and security of Canada. The mission of the Primary Reserve is to provide the Canadian Armed Forces with professional personnel at directed levels of readiness who contribute to the Forces' capability to achieve its roles and missions. Primary Reservists have made up a significant portion of our deployed forces over the past two decades. They have the unique challenge of balancing the demands of civilian careers with their military duties and rely on the goodwill and support of their civilian employers to allow them to take periods of leave for military training and deployment.

As greater numbers of Primary Reservists have deployed on operations over the past two decades, Canadian employers have been tremendously supportive. The Government of Canada also recognizes that there can be a significant strain on businesses when employers release reservist-employees for military duties, in particular when it may be necessary to hire and train replacements. The Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program is designed to assist employers in supporting their reservist employees as they make important contributions to Canada through their service on operations.

Canada's reservists make an extraordinary commitment and many personal sacrifices to keep Canadians safe. The Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program will provide compensation in the form of a grant to eligible employers of reservists and eligible self-employed reservists who are selected to serve on a designated Canadian Armed Forces operation for a minimum of 30 days to a maximum of 18 months.

Through the Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program, the Government of Canada is fulfilling its commitment to provide financial support to employers of reservists, to help offset costs incurred when reservists deploy on operational duty.

This compensation program complements and enhances the existing suite of employer support programs currently in place to ensure that the Canadian Armed Forces maintains a sustainable, robust, and effective Reserve Force and that reservists are able to balance the demands of two concurrent careers – one with the military and the other with civilian employers.

Employer support programs

The Canadian approach to employer support has evolved significantly as the role, integration and use of our Reserve Force has changed. During the past decade as greater numbers of Primary Reservists have been employed on operations; the Federal Government, the three Territorial Governments and all ten Provincial Governments have passed Job Protection Legislation for Reservists. However, most arrangements between reservists and their civilian employers to deploy on operations continue to be made on an individual and voluntary basis.

Canada has had a formal Reserve Force employer support program since 1978, and it has operated under the organization known as the Canadian Forces Liaison Council since 1993. The Council encourages civilian employers and educational institutions to grant reservists military leave on a voluntary basis, without penalty, to allow them to participate in their military activities, duties and training.

For more than 35 years, Canadian Forces Liaison Council members have worked with the Department of National Defence to develop and deliver a wide range of highly effective employer support programs. These programs inform, engage, educate, and recognize employers as well as provide information and support to reservists.

The program

In 2012, the Government committed to “provide financial support for civilian employers of Canada’s reservists to offset the costs incurred when reservists sign up for full time duty”. The program was highlighted in the 2013 Speech from the Throne, indicating that the Government will, “assist employers of reservists who are required to deploy on missions vital to the security of all Canadians.”

As Canada increased the use of Reservists on operations in the mid-late 2000s during the mission in Afghanistan, there was an increased burden placed on employers, due to the prolonged absence, and increased demands of their reserve employees. Employers typically absorb operational costs, such as hiring contract or temporary workers, training new or existing employees or paying overtime while their Reservist employee is away.

The Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program was designed based upon proposals for employer compensation, a review of employer compensation models of Canada’s Allies, in addition to research and consultation with the private sector, and input from Canada Company, which developed a template for funding included in the 2012 Budget.

The program will provide approximately \$403 per week for the duration of the absence of their reservist-employee on operations in the form of a grant to be paid to employers at the end of the Reservists deployment period. The program has been developed in a manner that balances fair compensation with fiscal prudence and Department of National Defence is partnering with Employment and Social Development Canada for delivery of the program.

To be eligible, the employer must have an employee who is a reservist serving on a designated Canadian Armed Forces operation (international or domestic) for a minimum period of 30 days up to a maximum of 18 months. This captures the vast majority of international deployments, as well as major planned domestic operations. Employers whose reservists served on designated operations will be eligible; this is normally restricted to members of the Primary Reserve and Canadian Rangers. To be eligible, the reservist must have worked with their employer for a minimum of 30 hours per week, for three consecutive months. Applicants from the private sector, provincial, municipal or territorial governments may apply and be considered eligible but federal government employers are not.

The introduction of the Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program ensures Canada remains at the leading edge in delivering world-class employer support programs. Employer support is a force enabler, and is key to the generation of skilled forces. By increasing the pool of trained and available reservists for operations, our employer support programs directly contribute to the operational readiness of the Canadian Armed Forces, while also fostering a culture of national support to the Canadian Armed Forces as a whole.

The Government of Canada is working to ensure that reservists receive the best care, widest possible support, and public recognition they deserve for the vital contributions they make to Canada.

Colin Busby: Building a stronger military reserve

Colin Busby, National Post | December 2, 2014 7:00 AM ET



Canadians' wellbeing improved last week when the federal government took steps to solidify the future for Canada's citizen soldiers. Reservists play key roles in meeting Canada's growing international and domestic security needs, and Ottawa, last Tuesday, announced a low-cost plan to financially support employers of reservists when he or she volunteers for full-time military duty.

Canadian reservists usually participate full-time in the civilian workforce and train part-time as members of the reserve force. But every so often, be it after a natural disaster or during a major international event, crisis or operation, a reservist will have the choice to activate for full-time military service and work alongside Canada's regular forces.

Reservists play a key role in the operational plans of the Canadian Forces. The Canada First Defence Strategy plans for reservists to make up 30% of total military personnel.

The increasing demand for Canadian reservists was particularly acute in the mid-2000s, when large numbers of reservists were necessary to complete the operational duties of Canada's Afghanistan mission. This led to a number of federal and provincial job protection laws requiring employers of reservists to protect the latter's jobs should they choose to deploy on a domestic or international mission. These laws were instated to protect a reservist's decision to deploy without fear of repercussion in civilian life.

But there were unintended consequences from the legislation. The most important consequence was that these laws shifted the costs of military activities onto individual employers. After losing an employee, an employer would need to hire a temporary replacement, ask remaining workers to work overtime or perhaps turn away potential clients without the capacity to deliver on new contracts. The long-term concern was that the employer-employee relationship may erode, and employers might discriminate in hiring reservists in the future.

In a 2010 C.D. Howe Institute paper, I argued that, to protect the strength of employer and reservist relationships, the government of Canada should cover a portion of the costs borne by employers when a reservist takes a military leave of absence.

After Tuesday's announcement, Canada is now one of three Commonwealth countries, alongside the United Kingdom and Australia, to offer financial compensation to employers of reservists while they deploy. The new Compensation for Employers of Reservists Program will offer cash benefits of around \$403 per week, much like the Australian plan, payable at the end of a reservist's deployment. Eligible employers include those in the private sector, provincial, municipal or territorial governments, whose employees are on a designated operation from a period of 30 days to 18 months.

A strong reserve force has a number of advantages for all Canadians. It allows for a cost-effective use of resources during peacetime and the rapid augmentation of capacity during times of war and heightened military readiness. It also enables a number of military personnel to bring unique skills into sometimes hard-to-fill positions in the forces, such as engineers, medical officers, water filtration specialists and so on. Likewise, many Canadian employers can benefit from the operational skills reservists learn from military training. Perhaps as importantly, a strong reserve force exposes more communities to the realities of Canadian military engagements in ways not possible when we rely solely on regular forces whose families often live on geographically isolated military bases.

Maintaining a balance between civilian and military life is complicated. A reservist's relationship with his or her employer is central to transitioning into, and out of, civilian life. With this week's news, the prospects for reservist-employer relationships have never been better. Employers now have one more reason to hire citizen soldiers, and all Canadians gain from a resilient reserve force staffed by those among our bravest and best.

National Post