

# **HANSARD**

**NOVA SCOTIA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

**COMMITTEE**

**ON**

**VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**Thursday, February 18, 2010**

**Committee Room 1**

**Reservists**

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## **VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Clarrie MacKinnon (Chair)  
Gary Burrill  
Trevor Zinck  
Michele Raymond  
Sidney Prest  
Hon. Wayne Gaudet  
Harold Theriault  
Alfie MacLeod  
Allan MacMaster

### In Attendance:

Kim Langille  
Legislative Committee Clerk

## **WITNESSES**

Captain (Navy) Craig Walkington  
Naval Reserve Director of Strategic Management/  
Regional Advisor Atlantic

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Grant  
Team Leader, Contingency Planning Team Nova Scotia,  
36 Canadian Brigade Group Headquarters

Lieutenant Colonel Don McLeod  
A1 Air Reserve Coordinator East  
1 Canadian Air Division, Headquarters Detachment Halifax



House of Assembly  
Nova Scotia

**HALIFAX, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2010**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**9:00 A.M.**

CHAIR  
Clarrie MacKinnon

THE CHAIR: I apologize for the false start. We'll call the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs to order.

We know that we have some other members who will be coming along. The member for Inverness has indicated that he will be about 20 minutes late and he will be joining us then - that's Mr. MacMaster. We will begin with Mr. Gaudet and we will do the introductions around the table.

[The committee members introduced themselves.]

THE CHAIR: Perhaps we could call on whoever is going to be doing the initial speaking to introduce the members of those appearing before the committee this morning.

CAPT. CRAIG WALKINGTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am Capt. (Navy) Craig Walkington and my position is the Naval Reserve Director of Strategic Management and the Naval Reserve Regional Advisor for the Atlantic Region.

With me, on my right-hand side, is Lt.-Col. Bob Grant, who is the Team Leader, Contingency Planning, Team Nova Scotia, with 36 Canadian Brigade Group Headquarters; on my left is Lt.-Col. Don McLeod, who is the Air Reserve Coordinator East for 1 Canadian Air Division Headquarters, Detachment Halifax; and in the back we have Capt. Rick Comeau, who is G1 Personnel with 36 Canadian Brigade Group Headquarters.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. This is a very informal committee and we do not divide the question time into segments, as most committees do. We operate this without prepared questions by staff in advance or people slipping us pieces of paper with questions to ask. This is a non-political committee, I would say, and I'm very proud of that committee, the way it operates.

Having said that we'll begin with the presentation and we will have a lot of questions for you when you've finished. Thank you very much.

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, we appreciate the opportunity to present before the Nova Scotia Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs. The purpose of this morning's brief when asked is to give you an overview of the Reserve Force in Canada and to provide information on the Reserve Force in Nova Scotia. The order of presentations will be the Naval Reserve, the Army Reserve, and then lastly - but certainly not least - the Air Reserve. We are not permitted to comment on the adequacy of federal government policy and I'd like to lay that on the table at the beginning. Those are clearly areas of federal government policy domain and we are not permitted to comment on it in this committee.

I will start my briefing on the Naval Reserve. No presentation from the military is complete unless it has an organization chart or, as we call them, a wiring diagram. The chart that you see on the slide before you illustrates the Canadian Navy which is commanded by the Commander of Maritime Command. There are three formations within Maritime Command: the East Coast, Maritime Forces Atlantic; the West Coast, Maritime Forces Pacific; and the area that is our focus today which is the Naval Reserve, of which there are 24 Naval Reserve divisions across the country, as illustrated on the slide here. You can see they are spread out throughout the country covering virtually every major city. Our headquarters are in Quebec City.

The mission of the Naval Reserve is to provide Maritime Command, that is the Navy, with trained personnel for the manning of combat and support elements within the total force concept framework, to meet Canada's naval defence objectives in times of peace, crisis or war. The Naval Reserve authorized establishment is 5,130, but as of January this year our actual strength was 4,163. Of that 4,163, approximately 3,000 are trained personnel and the remainder are considered to be under training. Of that 3,000 personnel, approximately one-third are working on a full-time basis on our ships, our headquarters, or in training billets throughout Canada.

The slide that you see before you illustrates our gender breakdown; approximately two-thirds are male, one-third are female. On a language breakdown, approximately one-quarter are Francophones and three-quarters are Anglophones.

The Naval Reserve is unique from our other reserve counterparts in that we have our own operational roles assigned to us by the regular force Navy. What I mean by that is we execute and train for roles that the regular force do not do, so they are unique unto the Naval Reserve and I'll be describing those in my subsequent slides.

The slide in front of you shows the roles which have been assigned to the Naval Reserve, and I'll go through them. The first one is the manning of the Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels, otherwise known as MCDVs, and these are the Kingston-class vessels; naval co-operation and guidance for shipping; port security; port inspection diving; we also have other roles of establishing a naval presence across Canada; and participating in community and public relations outreach activities.

The next few slides will break down discussions of the specific tasks. The first one, which is the manning of the Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels, there are 12 Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels in Canada, six on each coast. At any given time there are five manned on each coast, the sixth being in a cycled refit. These vessels are manned primarily by naval reservists. The core crew is 29 and of that core crew, 25 are full-time naval reservists. The four remaining are regular force personnel who are filling billets in trades that the Naval Reserve does not recruit nor train in.

The roles that the MCDVs do include surveillance and coastal operations, controlling Canada's maritime areas on the East and West Coasts. We have gone up into the Arctic, however, we don't have the ice hull capability to do operations up there on any sort of a long-term basis. We also provide support to other government departments, such as the RCMP and Fisheries and Oceans.

Other tasks which the MCDVs do is seabed operations and that includes mapping and doing route surveys of our ocean beds so that we know that the routes into key ports in Canada are clear. We do search and rescue, humanitarian operations and a large role is actually spent on training personnel and, in particular, regular force officers undergo their core training on the Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels. Of course, we have a public outreach role too.

[9:15 a.m.]

Given the broad range of activities that we do, it's not surprising that the Maritime Coastal Defence Vessels in fact spend more time at sea than the major warships. This is for practical reasons - it's more economic to send a smaller vessel out to do coastal operations than to send out a frigate.

The next slide is naval co-operation and guidance to shipping. This essentially is the guidance to merchant shipping in areas of conflict. At its simplest level, we collect information from the merchant ships on their movements and provide them information on the potential threats. At its most extreme level it would be actual convoying, which we have not done in many, many years.

Essentially NCAGS - the acronym - is still one of the NATO missions that the Navy is obliged to fulfill. Our personnel have merchant shipping expertise which the regular force Navy does not have training in. So we provide information to the regular force Navy, to the commander of the task group, on what we call the surface picture, what the merchant ships are doing in the crisis area and potentially de-conflicting them from any operations that may bring them into harm.

Over the last six years this trade or this task has also evolved into maritime intelligence and our Naval Reserve officers who are trained in this area fulfill a significant intelligence role for the Navy.

The next area is port security. Essentially this is providing waterside security and surveillance and vessel control of major ports and ports of significance, be they economic or military. Essentially the units that fulfill this role are not standing units, they are notional and when they are required, we bring personnel in to fill the billets in the units and stand them up and operate them. An example of that is we have port security units now deployed on the West Coast during the Olympics in what we are calling Operation Podium. During the International Fleet Review that will occur in June of this year in Halifax, we will be standing up a port security unit to provide security around the various ships that will be in harbour.

The next area is port inspection diving. Essentially they cover such areas as underwater searches, inspection of jetties and ships, search and rescue, identification of explosives, and we have a standing unit in Halifax and a standing unit in Esquimalt, which is where the West Coast Navy is based.

The next area I'd like to cover is Nova Scotia's Naval Reserve Division, HMCS Scotian. There is only one in Nova Scotia and you may be familiar with it if you drive nearby the casino along Upper Water Street. Essentially this is one of the largest, but not the largest Naval Reserve Division in Canada. We are at the south end of the Dockyard and our proximity to the East Coast fleet means that this unit spends a lot of time and personnel in supporting the East Coast Navy.

The current composition of the unit is approximately 120 personnel. We train on a weekly basis, one Saturday per month, and also frequently on other weekends. Of course, typically there are full-time courses which are running in the summertime, but they also run throughout the year if the reservists are available.

I want to briefly go over the three types of employment that reservists do. There's part-time which we call Class A, and that's typically when a reservist is either studying or employed in their civilian jobs. There's full-time Class B which is doing a full-time job, 365 days a year, and that typically is in headquarters and training billets. Then there's Class C which is onboard ships doing operational billets and they get paid the same as a regular force member.

Currently, Scotian has personnel deployed in Op Hestia which is down in Haiti; we have personnel in Op Podium; and in the past we've sent personnel to Afghanistan, assisting in the Red River floods in 1997, the Swiss Air crash in 1998, Hurricane Juan cleanup in 2003, and also following Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005.

This concludes the briefing on the Naval Reserve.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Do committee members want to go with questions now or would you like to hear all three presentations first? Mr. Prest.

SIDNEY PREST: I've got a question now, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIR: Okay, if you don't mind, could we go with some questions now?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Certainly.

THE CHAIR: I'll start a speakers list then. Mr. Prest.

SIDNEY PREST: The policy of the reserves - is it the same for the Navy, the Air or the Army as far as members?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: We have pan-reserve policies that cover such areas as benefits and compensation. There may be minor differences between the three elements - the Army, Navy or Air Force - as it comes to employment policies, but generally speaking, to answer your question, the policies are reserve-wide.

SIDNEY PREST: I have one more question. For part-time reservists employed civilians, if you request their leave does the employer have to maintain that position when that reservist is finished on the . . .

CRAIG WALKINGTON: In Nova Scotia, I believe it was in 2006, the government passed Bill No. 80, which was a bill to support student reservists as well as reservists in civilian jobs. Under that current legislation the employer is obliged to keep the job when the reservist is serving on Class C operations, so that is fulfilling an operational role. If it's just for a two-week training billet then there is no obligation on the part of the employer at this stage.

SIDNEY PREST: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Are there other questions before we move on? Mr. Theriault.

HAROLD THERIAULT: Just one. You said your boats weren't equipped for ice, so you couldn't patrol the Northwest Territories area if that came about that you had to do that. What Navy ships are equipped for ice in the North?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: This is falling outside my area of expertise, sir, but at this stage there are no naval vessels that are capable of that function. You may be aware of the Arctic/Offshore Patrol Ship that is currently in concept, and that is obviously a government policy decision in ship procurement so I can't really comment beyond that.

HAROLD THERIAULT: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Just as a follow-up to that, if I may, there is so much emphasis now on the North and controlling the North. Is there any presence in Nunavut itself, for example, with reservists actually there in Iqaluit or somewhere else?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: We have a branch of the reserve force called the Rangers, which you may be familiar with. Essentially they are largely Inuit who have a role to provide surveillance and report anything which they see. That is the current role that's occurring up there, and certainly it's my understanding that the government is looking at what military role can occur up there. Once again, I can't really comment beyond that, sir.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. I'm sure there will be many more questions for you. Maybe we'll move on at this time to the presentation on the Army Reserve and if there are some questions after that, we'll have a few and then we'll save most of our questions until after all three have presented.

LT.-COL. ROBERT GRANT: Thank you, sir. I'd like to start by making the comment that the Army Reserve is not only the oldest, but the largest component of the reserves in Canada and that the numbers bear the same here in Nova Scotia, we have the largest component. With the start of the reserves some 250 years ago, actually, we've seen quite a number of changes and I'm going to focus primarily on here in Atlantic Canada and Nova Scotia.

The map depicts the Land Forces Atlantic area of which the headquarters is here in the Dockyard, but they have three formation headquarters. One of them is here in Nova Scotia, in Halifax, at RA Park, it's the 36 Canadian Brigade Group Headquarters. The other reserve headquarters is in Moncton, the 37 Brigade, and 3 Area Support Group is in Gagetown and it provides support both to the regular force schools in Gagetown but also to the reserves in New Brunswick.

This map with all the locations depicts where the Army Reserves are here in Nova Scotia. You might note that P.E.I. is shown there, as well; 36 Brigade Headquarters commands the Army Reserve both in Nova Scotia and P.E.I. As we move on with the description of the units, I'll give a little more detail on where they are and what they do.

The 36 Brigade Group is the largest employer of Army Reserves in Nova Scotia and as I get on to the other units, we'll detail which ones belong to area headquarters. The



36 Brigade is comprised of about 1,466 soldiers total, of which there is 1,429 primary reserve, most of us are on Class A service, which is part-time service, which is what I do. There are about 120 on Class B service, which is full-time contracts. Assisting us or supporting us is 37 regular force people who fill positions, some in the units out in the Armories and some here at headquarters.

This is just a sample of the number of people that we've had deployed over the last number of years. Task Force 1-07, of course, was the biggest one. There was 122 personnel from 36 Brigade serving in Afghanistan and currently there are 42 who are undergoing the predeployment training to leave for Afghanistan a little later this year.

In addition to the Afghanistan Task Force, we've had people who have served and continue to serve in places like Sierra Leone, Darfur and the Balkans. There's a major who works for me, who just got back from Sarajevo - he spent six or seven months at the U.N. headquarters there. So there's continuous support to the regular force by our people.

I'll move into the units. Armoured reconnaissance, the Halifax Rifles, is a brand-new unit here in Halifax, it was only stood up last year. It has a strength currently of 12 people and it's undergoing a building phase. The primary role of armoured reconnaissance is obtaining accurate information on the enemy ground for the commander in all phases of war, which means they primarily practise out ahead of the lines of the main body of troops. We call them kind of the "sneak and peek" guys. As their name denotes - "armoured" - they have vehicles as opposed to the infantry, like me, who walk most places.

The next is the field artillery. There are two units: there's 1<sup>st</sup> (Halifax Dartmouth) Field Artillery Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, located here in Halifax; and also 84<sup>th</sup> Battery down in Yarmouth. The main role of the artillery is to provide close artillery support with 105-millimetre towed howitzers. They train to do that and also the training they receive on these weapons, it's pretty common for them to take that training and build onto the next level and go with the regular force and serve with the weapons that they use. Their established strength is 252 and lately the actual strength is 117.

[9:30 a.m.]

The engineers. The 45 Engineer Squadron is located in Sydney. Combat engineers focus on the use of demolitions and clearing of land mines. A number of their folks have been on numerous deployments to the area of the Balkans and other areas where they've done a lot of mine clearing. They also design, build and maintain defensive works and fortifications, lines of communications, and bridges. They are the guys who provide water purification. Down in Haiti right at the moment, there's DART - the Disaster Assistance Response Team - which has been deployed. Part of what they do is water purification with the reverse osmosis water purification units and the reserve engineers are also trained in that. They can also provide power and other utilities.

Currently there's a move underway to expand the engineers here in Nova Scotia. There's a plan afoot to create a new engineer squadron here in Halifax and create a regimental headquarters so it will, in effect, double the size of the engineers. That's a long-term project and we probably won't see it for a number of years, but it has started.

The infantry, of which I am most familiar. The role of the infantry is pretty much the same as it has been for generations, to close with and destroy the enemy, day and night, all weather conditions. The infantry soldier is what most people refer to as your basic foot soldier. Infantry can be mechanized or light.

The regular force. Two-thirds of the regular force infantry units are mechanized, which means they are equipped with and travel in the LAVs, the light armoured vehicles that you see a lot of nights in the news in Afghanistan. Also, one-third of the units are light infantry which means they're dismounted and the dismounted infantry does a number of tasks, specializing - they have parachute capability, mountain ops, air mobile ops, drops out of helicopters and amphibious ops.

I might note that there are times here in Nova Scotia where the units, both the Naval Reserve and the Air Reserve, have co-operated with us on exercises and we've actually done air mobile ops in several parts of the province and also amphibious ops where Captain Walkington referred to the MCDVs where our troops departed from the MCDVs and came ashore in different areas to practice that kind of role.

Just as in the regular force army, or part of the army, the infantry and the reserves is also the biggest portion. Here in Nova Scotia we have four battalions: Princess Louise Fusiliers here in Halifax and the strengths are listed, establishment of 229, they are actually parading about 184; the West Nova Scotia Regiment which has armouries in Aldershot, Middleton and Windsor, established strength is 161 and they are parading about 113. My home regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Nova Scotia Highlanders (North) - we've got armouries in Truro, Pictou, New Glasgow, Springhill and Amherst, established for 304 and a strength of 272. That includes our pipes and drums. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Nova Scotia Highlanders (Cape Breton), they are in Sydney and Glace Bay. Over the last couple of years they have been trying to establish a presence in Port Hawkesbury. They've got a small, rented facility there and they are hoping, if they can build up some numbers, to actually get a facility of some description there. Established strength is 209 and their actual strength lately is about 125.

Combat Service Support, CSS. They specialize in supplying and maintaining the combat arms. They specialize in supply, transport, mechanical repair, vehicle recovery, food services. They also focus on basic soldier skills. If they are doing a convoy or something they usually protect themselves. There are two units: 33 Service Battalion here in Halifax, 161 personnel; and 35 Sydney Service Battalion with 160. On the first of April, as one of the reserve restructure plans, they are going to amalgamate. There is going to be one service battalion and it is going to be called 36 Service, in line with 36 Brigade Group.

Now we get to the units that don't actually belong to 36 Brigade. We consider them army reserves but the medical units actually belong to the Health Services Command. Here in Halifax there is 33 Field Ambulance, 81 personnel, and in Sydney it is 35 Field Ambulance. Those units are what we would think of on television as MASH units. They are not maybe quite as big as a MASH unit that you've seen on TV but they can provide clinic service and a little more than first aid, like we would provide for ourselves to our soldiers. Primarily they support us in the field but, as you've seen on TV, they've gone to Haiti. I'm not sure if some of their personnel are with them but they can deploy, like the field ambulance that has gone to Haiti.

Next is Communications. Communications, until about a year ago, was under their own command, Communications Command but they've now come back under the army. The headquarters for the group is here in Halifax, 72 Communications Group is in Bedford, 16 people; 723 Squadron is in Halifax, 65 persons and 725 Squadron Glace Bay is 32. Coms Reserve specialize in tactical and strategic communications, deploying voice, electronic and telecommunications. When the soldiers are deployed in the field, the combat arms soldiers, or the CSS, some of us carry a radio on our back or have it in the vehicle but these are the guys who have the radio vans or vehicles and can do satellite uplink or whatever, provide communications on a wider scale.

Military Police - 3 Military Police Unit is in Lower Sackville. There are about 140 personnel. It primarily provides field support to army units including route planning and traffic control, and they establish landing zones for aircraft, care and control of prisoners of war. The reserve military police, unlike the regular force ones, are not accorded peace officer status under the Criminal Code. The regular force ones are but these ones primarily support us in the field.

Intelligence - 3 Intelligence Company exists here in Halifax, 115 personnel and they provide the commander with information on weather, our adversary or enemy terrain in order to accomplish the mission. They basically put together all the information about an existing situation and analyze it and help the commander make a decision on how he's going to act.

CIMIC, the Civilian Military Co-operation, they also come under LFAA, the Land Force Atlantic Headquarters. It's in Bedford with 10 personnel and is one of the new capabilities that came about through land reserve restructure and it's primarily a reserve capability, the regular force don't have these units. They support the commanders mission to establish coordination and co-operation between the military force and civil authorities. They can do that at either deployed operations or here at home during a domestic operation.

The very newest one we have is Psychological Operations Company - it's in Bedford with an establishment for 20 persons. I don't claim to know very much about it, it's a very new capability. Planned psychological activities, methods of communications

to approved audiences - it's something that would only be used in an operation in a foreign country.

To sum up my presentation, I'll reiterate the fact that our members are engaged on a part-time basis but may volunteer for full-time duty. There is no obligation to go full time anywhere. Our members include professionals, students, civil servants, labourers, business people, academics and former members of the regular force. When you add those numbers together that I provided, here in Nova Scotia we have approximately 1,850 army reservists serving in Nova Scotia. Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much for the presentation. Are there any questions? I know we will have a number when we go to general questioning after all three presentations, but are there any now that are in the fore? Mr. Theriault.

HAROLD THERIAULT: What is a 105mm towed howitzer? A big gun.

ROBERT GRANT: It's a cannon towed behind the truck. It's not quite as big as the ones you see them firing in Afghanistan, the newer ones. When the Legislature opens they'll fire a salute up on Citadel Hill, it makes a pretty big bang.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Gaudet.

HON. WAYNE GAUDET: I have a quick question. You made reference to the 84<sup>th</sup> Field Battery in Yarmouth. I was just wondering in terms of - and it probably applies right across the whole system - recruiting, how does one go about applying? I'm looking at the unit in Yarmouth, it's basically reserves from people in the southwestern part of the province?

ROBERT GRANT: The recruiting for the reserves is done by Canadian Forces Recruiting System. The attraction is there are ads in the paper, the telephone numbers are in the phone books and in ads and whatever. Plus they do recruiting drives and sessions where either they'll set up in a mall or - probably plastered on the front door of the armoury in Yarmouth, there is probably a contact number. They go out to high schools, universities, the same recruiters recruit for everybody, the regular force and the reserves. When they're approached, if it's the reserves they want to go to, then they'll funnel them toward the reserve program.

WAYNE GAUDET: Is there an age limit?

ROBERT GRANT: You can start the process at 16, but the youngest they really want to take is you have to be turning 17 by July of the year you are joining. Just lately, DND has put the age at 60, you can stay until you're 60 so long as you still meet the physical and PT requirements and health.

THE CHAIR: With so many diverse components that you're dealing with within

the army reserves, coordination must be a difficult aspect. What is the coordination responsibilities there to bring all of those together?

ROBERT GRANT: As I mentioned, 36<sup>th</sup> Brigade at RA Park has responsibility for the units that were shown on the slide and the map. Land Force Atlantic Area, of course, which is down in the dockyard, has the overall responsibility. Each of these units also has a command and control function, their own little headquarters with admin people for personnel admin and operational sides. So each unit has a small command cell, as well as the headquarters at RA Park and the one at the dockyard.

The Army, itself, controls the training system. For training, for example, it is run out of the Land Force Doctrine and Training System out of Kingston. There is quite a bit of cross-regulation, we don't just run ourselves, we have to follow policies nationally as well. I'm not sure if that answers your question, sir.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. Although she has been here for some time, I would like to welcome Ms. Michele Raymond - she is the MLA for Halifax Atlantic. We're still awaiting the MLA for Inverness, but I think we can appreciate that if he is coming in from Inverness this morning, he could very well be a little bit later than now even.

[9:45 a.m.]

I should have mentioned in the very beginning that we have a new committee member - Mr. Alfie MacLeod, MLA for Cape Breton West, who is replacing Hon. Richard Hurlburt, former MLA for Yarmouth. We will move on to the presentation of the Air Force Reserve.

LT.-COL. DON MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee members. Initially I would just like to present an overall view, the Air Reserve is quite distinct from the other reserve components of the Canadian Forces. In generic terms, our primary role is to augment, sustain and support deployed forces and we also provide support to the Air Force in ongoing peacetime tasks as well as deployed operations.

The main difference is shown in the next point where we are integrated into our total Air Force units across the country and our reservists are built into those units following the operational chain of command where they are employed, as opposed to being within a distinct reserve unit. Fundamentally, we are also a basis for national mobilization. The link to the community, I think that's a generic reserve tenet that the CF operates under for reserve personnel.

We do have a mission and vision, it's not split into specific roles as say the Army and the Navy would be. The total Air Reserve vision is to be integral to the capability of our Air Force, ready to serve at home and abroad. The mission is basically to provide a flexible, responsive, reliable contribution to the Air Force capabilities.

Inasmuch as we are integrated into the units, you can see on the map where Air Reserve personnel are located is actually overlaid with where all our regular Air Force units are across the country. There are a few exceptions, those being a squadron in Winnipeg that helps with navigator training, a couple of tactical helicopter squadrons in Ontario and Québec, the 400 Squadron and 438 Squadron, and on the East Coast the Engineering Squadrons in Pictou County and Lunenburg, those are the only reserve heavy squadrons. Every other location there reflects a regular force unit where reservists are employed, so this is essentially an Air Force map as opposed to an Air Reserve map. I'll focus on Nova Scotia in an upcoming slide.

Within the Air Reserves, we train all our personnel to regular force standards, meaning they pretty much attend regular force courses. Where a technician is going on training, he will attend a training school that trains regular and reserve members in one course curriculum. We have reservists in all Air Force occupations, we do employ some personnel, I would say, from an Army background because there are no Air Force occupations for things such as a vehicle technician or a signals operator, but the Air Force will employ them as reservists.

Our average employment is based on 12 days per month, that's mitigated by funding of a unit, so a specific unit will have a certain amount of funding to employ reservists and 12 days per month has tended to be our part-time standard. That's pretty much with the five-day work pattern of a regular force unit where our reservists will spend three days of that week working with their squadron.

We do surge personnel to full-time employment for domestic and international deployed operations. We have personnel deployed to the Olympics, we have personnel who go to Afghanistan and surges could also mean that they're working within their home unit at home for a full-time period for increased tempo of operations, training requirements, things like that.

The training courses are typically held away from home because we do that with the regular force. Our training schools are basically where we have our basic recruit schools with the military in Ontario and Quebec. Our courses for the Air Force are typically held in Winnipeg and Borden, Ontario. There are no Air Force training schools in Nova Scotia, actually. Working schedules of the reservists are defined by the employing unit, there is no reserve template; if they belong to a squadron, that squadron will dictate when, how and where they are employed.

Our demographics are quite unique in the reserve component of the military in that 76 per cent of Air Reserve personnel have former service so they may come from another reserve environment. We typically see mostly ex-regular force members joining the Air Reserve, which is why you would see an average age quite elevated; 48 years old might seem extreme but these are personnel with often 20-plus years of service, have transitioned to a reserve capacity, which is much more common across the reserves but it has been almost a standard operating procedure for the Air Reserve.

We capitalize on trained personnel. I would say that is because of our occupations. We have highly technical, highly skilled, whether it is air crew, aircraft technicians, taking personnel who are already skilled. There is a vast economy of effort and cost to bring those personnel and employ them immediately, rather than training them from scratch.

The average enrolment age in 2008-09 was 46, so when you see the average age and the average enrolment age you can see that is pretty much defined by bringing personnel, after a long career, to the Air Reserve. As you can see, the benefits that we accrue - augmenting units, therefore, having trained personnel is being able to provide that true augmentation.

We are part of all units, total force, so the reservists go to work. They're in their units and we've often seen some commanding officers who weren't able to identify who in their unit is a reservist, without knowing them personally. The ab initio recruits - our \$1.50 word in there - it's such a unique thing to have in the Air Reserve. What we often see actually are personnel brought in from the street will end up transferring to the regular force. They go on regular force courses, they find that's, I guess, their taste of the military and the ones who tend to stick around will often transfer to the regular force because they're looking for a full-time career. That's a success story for the Air Force. What we see is our recruits going into the regular force, they spend their career there and we capitalize by taking the long-serving, experienced personnel back into the reserves. So I guess we're sort of a front-end/back-end operation for the Air Force. We do provide a lot of people and then we end up capitalizing on them after their career is pretty much coming to an end.

We do have air reservists on most international and domestic operations. Basically it's a volunteer situation, as it is with all reserves. They cannot be compelled without an Order in Council and that's really just the fancy way of saying they must volunteer. A reservist serving in a unit won't be compelled but we have many, many Air Reserve volunteers deploying as individuals or with a home unit. As I mentioned in the map slide, the home units, there's only three or four Air Reserve heavy units that would deploy and they tend to be the engineering squadrons.

The individual augmentees will not be told that there is a reserve opportunity, there is just an Air Force opportunity. If a reservist puts his hand up and he is picked and he is qualified, he will be selected to deploy. So we don't define our deployments by saying this will be a reserve position or this will be regular, it's just a total Air Force operation.

When they deploy it is the Class C service that Captain Walkington referred to at the beginning. It is equivalent regular force pay and liability of service and we do so internationally with support to Afghanistan, UN missions, NATO and Haiti. As I mentioned, the engineering squadrons tend to be our high-pay deployments, because of

the capability they provide and engineering is a high demand role.

Domestically we've provided support to typical operations within Canada. We currently have some folks out for the Olympics and we have some folks on standby for Haiti, if required, from Nova Scotia.

This is the total strength of the air reserve, quite a bit smaller than our counterparts, but with the strength of 2,249 it does reflect about 20 per cent of the total Air Force strength, which is approximately 11,000, so it's almost a statistic across our units. We tend to see that 20 per cent of each of the regular force units is about - that's the size of the reserve component - I'd say 20 per cent of Shearwater is reserve, 20 per cent of Greenwood are reservists.

The full-time number is a bit misleading because the full-time of 1,246 is actually a snapshot so that's not an ongoing basis. We have 803 personnel serving part-time but the vast majority of our personnel are serving in part-time positions and they may be full-time for various reasons. At the moment, because of Haiti, Afghanistan and the Olympic Operation Podium, we have many full-time reservists.

The full-time status for operations showing 200 basically are reservists who may not be actually deployed but they are preparing to go or returning from an operation. We do have a cadre of reservists who work full-time on an ongoing basis and it's about 10 per cent of our full strength so about 200 positions are full-time, positions such as mine, in a coordination capacity, headquarters in Winnipeg, Ottawa and some of the various units have permanent full-time positions and that's approximately 220 across the Air Force. The statistic of 25 per cent are female, employed at all ranks and in all occupations, is at the bottom.

Now, within Nova Scotia we have several areas of employment for air reservists, the largest being Greenwood, which employs 181 personnel. We have reservists in Shearwater, 96 personnel at 12 Wing and some miscellaneous units I'll identify first. The RACE is actually the Regional Air Control Element. It's a regular force unit here in the Dockyard headquarters. There are two reservists in that unit, which is quite a small unit, about 30 personnel on strength there.

The Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in Halifax has four reserve personnel working in that area, doing actual controlling which is the rescue controlling on a day-to-day basis, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. My office, Air Reserve Coordination, has four personnel. Each one of those miscellaneous units belongs to the air division in Winnipeg, that's our command structure.

The engineering squadrons are probably the most unique, in terms of being an actual reserve unit. We have the headquarters in Bridgewater, which is 14 Construction Engineering Squadron; 31 personnel constitute the headquarters and they are co-located with the engineering flight 143 Construction Engineering Flight. The headquarters there



has three squadrons, the co-located 143. They have a unit in Pictou, 40 personnel and the third unit is actually in Gander, co-located with 9 Wing, the regular unit there, but the engineering squadron in Gander belongs to Bridgewater.

The contributions, as I said, mostly the engineering squadron personnel, they had a technical assistance visit last year to Afghanistan to build hangars that are used for the Chinooks, the uninhabited aerial vehicles and the griffin helicopters, so our reservists were there on a very high-profile mission. They spent two months and erected five hangars for the aircraft there.

We have two members deployed to the Olympics in support roles and the remaining members are deployed in augmentation roles - that's really UN jobs in the Middle East, the task force in Afghanistan and, as I said, we have seven members from the engineering squadron prepared to go to Haiti when and if required.

I guess I would just like to highlight the engineering squadron as a last point because they are unique for the Air Force because we don't have many squadrons operating away from regular units; 14 CES belongs to Greenwood but they operate independently as an engineering capability. They have a presence where there's a community advisory board in each location so they operate very integrally with the communities, the reservists, and the vast majority are part-time reservists. They will move to full-time status for deployments and training but they are probably the only capability in the Air Force that is really Air Reserve so they have some headquarters personnel who are regular force, to help coordinate and run the units, but the reservists themselves are the capability and the engineering squadron program may be expanded. It's one of the areas in the Air Force where we're seeing that we want to have a defined role beyond just integrated with the regular units.

The engineering squadron present in Nova Scotia has been a very true success story and I know right up to the highest levels it has been really lauded as being a valuable part of the Air Force so I guess that's our pride, in terms of Nova Scotia, our reserves support. Otherwise, that concludes my briefing, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. I'm sure we will have a battery of questions. I know that Mr. Burrill has to go to another commitment and he mentioned that a week or two ago. Do you have any comments before you go?

GARY BURRILL: Thanks. I was struck several times at what you were explaining by the numbers of people in the different areas. The number that struck me the most was the Intelligence Unit - I think it was 110, 115, 120 - and you gave an explanation about what that involves overall. I found myself wondering, 115 people, what would they actually be doing? Can you characterize a little bit more of - it doesn't conform to a non-specialist picture of the Army Reserves - what that work would be about?

ROBERT GRANT: As I said, they collect intelligence or information and they get it from different sources and prepare intelligence briefs. For example, at our headquarters at RA Park, each Thursday night, the commander when he comes in, one of our Intelligence members has a brief prepared on any situation in the world that Canadian Forces are involved in or could potentially be involved in. They seem to be one of the capabilities and there are a lot of them who have rotated through Afghanistan. It's not something - like you mentioned, sir - that you hear a lot about, but it's a capability.

[10:00 a.m.]

Part of the reason that it exists here in Halifax is most of the operators are people who have several university degrees, so with all the universities here it attracts people who are analysts, basically. They're able to take the information and analyze potential outcomes or situations where we might be involved. I'm not sure if that fully explains it, sir.

GARY BURRILL: No, it does, thank you. Thank you for the presentation. Sorry, I do need to excuse myself.

THE CHAIR: We will open the meeting to questions from members, I'm sure you have quite a number of them. Mr. Zinck.

TREVOR ZINCK: Thank you, gentlemen, for coming in. A very knowledgeable presentation and a lot of information for us to kind of gather a better understanding. I had just a comment first. I had the opportunity about two years ago, an invite from HMCS Halifax, a number of us elected officials had the opportunity to go out and enjoy some operations. For a civilian it's a wonderful opportunity to actually see what goes on and it's quite amazing, actually.

Out of that trip I received a cap, and unbeknownst to myself it came with a few little decorative wings. I didn't understand it at first, but when I wore it out in public, just having people acknowledge and stand back - not salute, per se, because I found out later that it wasn't proper - but I had somebody who had actually been in the Navy explain to me the significance of that. It's my favourite hat, I wear it with great pride now. But I'm always amazed at how many people take notice and the pride factor of acknowledging somebody with that particular cap on.

I did enjoy that day, actually, there were a number of us who went out, and to really get an understanding of what potential situations you might be involved with on certain missions was definitely one that we would offer up further support to our local soldiers and troops.

A question around missions. When we look at a mission like Haiti, how long would a particular mission like that last? Do we have a timeline as far as commitment that's given to each division from the federal government, or is it each division tends to

put their effort in and see fit when to pull out?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Op Hestia, which is the mission you refer to in Haiti, I'm not aware that there is any timeline on that. Obviously, with an ongoing operation such as what's happening in Afghanistan, we have rotations that move through that because it's lasting several years. We have no indication at this point if there is an end date or what the end date is for our humanitarian relief in Haiti. That's obviously a scenario which is assessed on an ongoing basis to determine what are the immediate requirements, then the medium- and long-term requirements. Of course, that's a government decision.

TREVOR ZINCK: When our troops come back from, let's say somewhat otherwise difficult situations, whether it's Afghanistan or a humanitarian situation like Haiti, is there a process or programs or opportunities for the troops to, let's say, defrag? Coming back from seeing some pretty difficult situations that emotionally they would go through, is there a required process that they have to go through for any length of time once they come back from a mission?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: The Canadian Forces has admittedly improved in this reintegration process. Our organizations, our support mechanisms and units are quite robust now, but in terms of details I'm going to defer to Capt. Comeau, who can talk about reintegration.

CAPT. RICK COMEAU: There is a reintegration process. A soldier comes back when his tour is over and he usually stops in either Dubai or Cypress for a few days before getting shipped back. When he comes back there's series of interviews he has to do of medical exams. Usually they're on leave when they come back, but the very first thing they do is come back to work for three half-days, a return-to-work process to make sure that they're okay. In the past, people were coming back from tours, they'd have a few days off and then they go back to work not realizing the traumatic experience they've dealt with.

Now we're more conscious of that. There's probably about 12 interviews they have to do, social workers, the padres, and the family is involved, too, in the process to make sure everything is going well at home. It's not just you're on tour and then you go back to work, there's a whole mechanism in place to make sure the soldiers coming back are fit and ready to resume normal activities.

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Our chain of command is also certainly better trained at recognizing what we call operational stress injuries. This is part of the process of command and the chain of command, understanding that we have a responsibility to look after our personnel when they return and know how to recognize these operational stress injuries. I believe I can say that we're quite proud of the efforts in this area.

DON MCLEOD: If I can add to that, sir. I can highlight some air reservists who

returned from Afghanistan. There were some operational stress injuries and when it's a reservist involved, there's a mechanism to keep those personnel on full-time service while that process is taking place. So for the reservists specifically, they're not left to integrate in an ad hoc manner, they're just kept in the same process as the regular force and we keep them on full-time service to do so.

TREVOR ZINCK: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Prest.

SIDNEY PREST: Is there a target number for recruitments per year?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Yes, there are targets. Basically every unit, it doesn't matter what element it is, Army, Navy or Air Force, does have recruiting targets and within trades that we're allowed to recruit into. Those are set usually on an annual basis and allocated out.

SIDNEY PREST: For young recruits thinking they may want to go into this, is there a period they could go in, say for six months or a year, and find that's not the path they want to go and then drop out?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Certainly. Any reservist who joins can essentially resign at any time. There is no obligatory service that a reservist has. We actually like to use the reserve force almost as a stepping stone into the regular force and certainly, on the Naval Reserve side, we have a high number of personnel who are interested in serving in our Canadian Forces but they're not sure if they want to make it a full-time commitment. They do their initial training, enjoy it, continue to do more training or perhaps employment and then subsequently decide to transfer in.

To take your scenario, sir, if a reservist found that this was not their cup of tea, then there is absolutely no obligation to serve, they can resign at any time.

SIDNEY PREST: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Mr. Gaudet.

WAYNE GAUDET: I just wanted to continue on that line. I guess in terms of recruiting targets, who determines these targets?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Usually each command determines their targets in consultation with their reserve commanders. For example, in the Naval Reserve we saw that our authorized strength is 5,130; however, our actual strength is below that. Essentially, every year the reserve commanders will look at their current strength, look at each individual trade within their command, look at the shortfalls, look at what the training throughput is and also what the training capacity is.

We cannot get into a scenario where we will recruit so many people but we don't have the training capacity to push them through and that's particularly important on the Navy side, that we only have a certain number of bunks on ships to be able to train personnel, so we can't recruit above that. What we don't want to end up in is a scenario where we have personnel awaiting training for extended periods of time because that's obviously a dissatisfier.

So to answer your question in quite a roundabout way, it's analyzed on an ongoing basis. Recruiting quotas are adjusted on an ongoing basis so that if we see we're overborne in some areas, that there are more applicants, then we can potentially move recruiting billets around from one unit to another across the country.

WAYNE GAUDET: Are your recruiting targets met? Are there years where you don't meet your targets? Are there years where you have people on a waiting list? What happens for those who are not accepted when they apply? Is there part of the process that allows these folks to maybe re-enter or enter the system at some point?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: I'll try to answer your questions in order, sir. Essentially what we try not to do is keep people waiting. If we have a healthy recruit that is interested in joining but their desired trade is not open, then we will give them an opportunity to choose a second or a third option, so we'll put them into that. It's important that we get them in the door and enrolled. If somebody is turned down - it could be several reasons - for health, it could be perhaps one of the tests showed that they're not quite ready, if it's a temporary medical situation then we'll ask them to reapply in the future, but if it's something permanent, then obviously that option is not open to them.

WAYNE GAUDET: Taking into account all three units, do we have more reservists now in 2010, across the country or do we have less?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: We have more. Certainly on the Naval Reserve side our figures have fluctuated and part of that is because we've had a significant number that have transferred to the regular force. The process for transferring to the regular force is a lot easier now and the transfer package - if I can use that term - in terms of their benefits and what rank they'll go in are a lot more equitable than they were a number of years ago, so we do have a high transfer rate. I defer to my environmental colleagues to talk about what it's like on the Army side and then on the Air Reserve side.

ROBERT GRANT: I've seen a shift in the last number of years to the number, maybe in the units, the number of reservists across the country, as the captain said, is probably up. On the armoury floor, some of them are less and it's because there are lots of opportunities for full-time employment at some of the training centres like Aldershot, Gagetown, different places.

We have some reserve soldiers working here in security in the dockyard and places where there have been more security positions opened up, after 9/11, for example. There are more employed, but in some of the units it has either remained the same or in some cases a few less. As Lt.-Col. McLeod pointed out, we look at that as a success because part of our reason for being is to funnel people into the regular force.

[10:15 a.m.]

We find in the Army Reserves we're in a constant cycle of people moving on, taking new ones in, training them at certain levels. A certain number of them stay, of course, and some of them move on, but the actual levels have been fairly constant. The actual number that we're allowed to have, for example, has been fairly constant over the last number of years.

DON MCLEOD: I would say from the Air Force side, where we are the smallest component, our strength in our recruiting targets are really mitigated by funding. Because it's a huge Air Force transition, as can be seen across the country, with new aircraft and Shearwater has a transition that has been ongoing to a new helicopter and reservists are in very high demand. When they're put on full-time service, that brings down the capability to bring in new personnel.

Our funding levels haven't changed, but the demands have changed. Let's say there were no high-tempo operations ongoing - units might be able to recruit more with the funding they have. But because many air reservists are serving full time, you say the number, 1,246, the units are really constrained by funding. I would say in our years the intent is to grow the Air Reserve but our ceiling is the funding limit, not so much personnel targets. We're established for 3,000 personnel and we've never really climbed above 2,300 in the Air Reserve and, as I mentioned, that's purely funding. We could go to 3,000 if all we needed were part-time reservists, which isn't the case at the moment.

WAYNE GAUDET: One final question. I've heard some reservists transfer to the regular forces. What kind of percentage are we looking at? I'm just curious, do we have an approximate number?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: I don't have an exact figure at my fingertips, Mr. Gaudet, but do you know what pan-reserve?

RICK COMEAU: I know in the 36 Brigade here in Halifax we had 30 people transferred to the regular force and 23 people the other way back, so we lost a net of seven people to the regular force in 36 Brigade. I'm sure the percentage is probably similar across Canada. The mechanism, the transfer to the regular force is easier, there are Web sites to go on, the soldiers do it on their own and it's an easy process. To transfer back from the reg. force to the reserves, a few messages when a guy is retiring or transferring, I'm sure in the Air Force they do it quite easily, a lot easier than we do, but it's a few messages, e-mails and the guy transfers over.

WAYNE GAUDET: So is it because people are applying for the forces that can't get in so they use the back door through the reservists, so they come in as a reservist and then eventually switch over?

RICK COMEAU: The enrolment process is the same for both. I think from my experience what happens is an individual is not sure if the regular force is for him, he'll join the reserve part time, notice that he likes it and go to reg. force later. There is more of a commitment if you join the reg. force, with the reserves there is none.

WAYNE GAUDET: Okay, thank you very much.

DON MCLEOD: If I can speak from an Air Reserve demographic, we do have the same numbers of personnel, percentage-wise, who will join the reserves as a taste. I would say more than 80 per cent end up going to the regular force; that's a conservative estimate. What we're seeing is personnel have come back at the end, they also go back to the regular force. We'll have personnel with 25 years of service in the reserves who have decided to go back to the regular force, for any number of reasons. It could be an empty-nest scenario, their kids have left the house. We have quite a big surge of folks going back to the regular force, after having been regular reserve, then back to the regular. So the back and forth, reserve to regular, is becoming much more commonplace.

CRAIG WALKINGTON: One of the things which you should be aware of is that there are greater employment opportunities for reservists on a full-time basis, so you may actually see regular force members, certainly on the Navy side we see that they don't wish to be posted and, therefore, decide to release from the regular force but they want to continue their commitment to the Canadian Forces and do it as a full-time reservist, working in the same geographical area. That's certainly one scenario.

The use of reservists right across the border, and this is all elements, has increased significantly over the last decade and certainly on deployed operations. Ten years ago it may have been reservists on operations in ones and twos; now, for example, to Afghanistan it could be that one-quarter of a full deployment of 2,500 people are reservists fully integrated into that operation, totally transparent to anybody walking in and looking at them, that they're reservists.

ROBERT GRANT: If I could add on one of the issues you brought up on the recruiting, since the recruiting is all done by the same organization - Canadian Forces recruiting centre - we found that they're pretty good, that if an individual, the trade maybe that they want in the regular force is full, they'll suggest to them that maybe they do some time in the reserves first and when that trade opens up, that maybe then they'll notify them and then they can move into something that they're looking for, for a lifetime career. They're pretty good about directing people our way if they don't right off get into what they want in the regular force.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. I would like to comment that the MLA for Inverness has been very diligent in calling in on his whereabouts but it could have been part of my constituency that slowed him down, Marshy Hope or perhaps a little further on in Mount Thom, but he is not going to be able to make it here today. Certainly Mr. MacMaster has been diligent in contacting us, so thank you very much. Ms. Raymond.

MICHELE RAYMOND: Thank you very much and forgive me for being late; I had my own digging out to do first. You may have even addressed this - just looking at you, you don't seem to have experienced unification to quite the same degree as some of the regular forces. Is that true?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Well, certainly if you know the history of the Canadian Forces, we integrated in the late 1960s and then, of course, in the 1985, 1986, 1987 time frame, with the election of the Mulroney Government, there was a decision to put us back into our distinctive environmental uniforms.

MICHELE RAYMOND: But have the reserves actually experienced exactly the same kind of thing? I noticed that in your conversation it would appear that there's a very distinct Air Force reserves, in that these people are completely integrated into their squadrons. Otherwise, you have more distinct in the naval and Army, you have more distinct reserve units.

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Well, they're distinct in that we are clearly naval reserve units, however, our personnel are trained up to the same standards and we have the ability to integrate into naval operations quite seamlessly.

MICHELE RAYMOND: One question I did have and again, you may have answered this, because people seem to be able to go fairly freely back and forth between reserve, non-reserve status and so on, do you keep a roster of sort of ex-reservists, people who are, say, under the age of 60? They may not be active reserves at the time, they could be called out in case of need. Do you stay in contact with people?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: We do. Any member who is either retiring from the regular force or even reserve force has the option of going on to what we call the supplementary reserve. Essentially the only obligation is to keep us informed of their whereabouts. Even if they sit on that supplemental list there is the opportunity on an ongoing basis, providing they continue to be medically fit, that they can come and do a period of employment. So to answer your question, yes, we do track that.

MICHELE RAYMOND: That must really expand the number of potential reservists and personnel out there.

CRAIG WALKINGTON: It does, it gives us an option, but once again, it's a voluntary basis, there is no obligation that they oblige to step up.



MICHELE RAYMOND: In a case like that - I don't know and you may have addressed it - can people, particularly with the sort of specialized skills that you were talking about in the Air Force and in the engineering squadrons, are there occasions where they are actually called into civilian forces like police, firefighting types of duties? Not at all, only if a reserve unit was, in fact, being deployed.

CRAIG WALKINGTON: There is what's known as aid to the civil power, there is that option. However, it is something that has to be permitted by the government, for example, Op Splinter after Hurricane Juan. There were Army reservists involved in helping clean up after that. The ice storm in Quebec and Ontario, that's a classic example of reservists stepping in and helping civilian agencies.

MICHELE RAYMOND: But they're called in as an entire unit, rather than on an individual basis?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Not necessarily so. Unless there's a declared emergency where there is an Order in Council requiring reservists to serve, essentially in that scenario, what would happen is they will say we need reservists to volunteer, are you available, and they would step forward. So it wouldn't necessarily be a unit - they will go to a unit and ask how many people can you provide, and then the numbers will come up from there.

MICHELE RAYMOND: Great, thank you.

ROBERT GRANT: If I could, I wanted to go back and put the Army perspective on the integration type. Say in the last decade or a little longer, even though we have separate units there has been a lot of training of each, what we call in the Army, the corps, the infantry corps, the armored corps, whatever. Each of the reserves has the opportunity to go in the regular force courses to a certain extent. Something that we didn't see 20 years ago was reserve instructors working in Gaagetown at the schools like the infantry school, the arty school or whatever. There's kind of cross-pollination there where just because we wear a different cap badge, we have the same color uniform. There's a lot of economies of scale, for example, where we don't have to set up a separate course if we can get some people who are available on a regular force course, for example, so it has worked pretty good.

DON MCLEOD: Maybe I could just add one point. I think when you mentioned about the integration side, we operate within our environment, so the Air Reserves operate with the Air Force, the Navy Reserves operate within the Navy, but we are unified in Ottawa through a chief of reserves who is, I would say, the highest level of coordination for all reservists - Army, Navy, Air Force - across the country.

MICHELE RAYMOND: You probably addressed that at the beginning of the presentation, I'm sorry. Thank you.

THE CHAIR: I would like to jump in on the gender issue. As the only male in some women's studies courses at Mount Saint Vincent years ago, I have always been concerned about gender. Certainly, there is no great shakes when it comes to the Legislature; we are celebrating an all-time high of 12 out of 52 in the Legislature. We do have a Cabinet now that is one-third female. We have heard that the Air Force, from a gender perspective, has 25 per cent female, I think was the right figure, was it not?

DON MCLEOD: On the reserve side.

THE CHAIR: And from the Navy Reserve the figure was 33 per cent, I believe. I don't think we heard one - and it may not be at hand at the moment but perhaps even a guesstimate - from the Army Reserve.

ROBERT GRANT: I'm not sure if we even keep that anymore. Probably 15 or 20 years ago when that was more of an issue we used to keep a statistic and if we attended anything we gave those kinds of statistics. Since our trades are all fully integrated now, we don't keep - a soldier is a soldier, I guess is the way we've looked at it for a number of years now.

THE CHAIR: And that should be the case. But having said that, is there a reaching out to a gender that is clearly in a minority in all three reserves and probably in all three forces as well?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Absolutely, Mr. Chairman. I would say that the Canadian Forces has been the vanguard of addressing social issues. Typically combat trades were closed to women and women can serve in all combat trades, including serving on submarines, which was the last male bastion of operations on the Navy side. Females are totally integrated, certainly on the Navy side, to the point where the Commanding Officer of HMCS Halifax down in Haiti is Commander Josée Kurtz.

The commander of the Naval Reserve, who is a commodore - the equivalent of a brigadier general - is a female, Commodore Jennifer Bennett. I understand she is the first female commander of a large formation in Canada of over 4,000 people. This is an area which the Canadian Forces keeps an eye on constantly, as we also address the issues of ensuring that we are culturally representative.

[10:30 a.m.]

THE CHAIR: Thank you. I have no others on the speakers list, so that's why I'm going to continue here if I may. On May 4<sup>th</sup>, we have Maj.-Gen. Tabbernor - is that the correct pronunciation?

DON MCLEOD: Yes.

THE CHAIR: He's coming in and he would like to speak to the chairman of the committee at that time, we won't have a meeting. Where does he fit in the overall system within the country? I understand he's a fairly high-ranking person within the system.

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Maj.-Gen. Dennis Tabernor is the senior reservist in the country and he happens to be an Army officer of considerable experience. He has done a recent deployment to Afghanistan as a brigadier general and his title is Chief of Reserves and Cadets for Canada and his office is in Ottawa. He is fully integrated into the Armed Forces Council so that essentially the chief of defence staff utilizes General Tabernor as a resource because he represents all reservists in Canada.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Mr. Zinck.

TREVOR ZINCK: Lt.-Col. Grant, what would be the extent of our involvement in areas like Sierra Leone and Darfur currently?

ROBERT GRANT: Sierra Leone, over the past number of years we've had a number of people from Nova Scotia who have gone there. There were two separate missions there. One was a UN observer mission, there were two members of the Nova Scotia Highlanders there at the same time about five years ago and one of them was the senior Canadian in Sierra Leone for the UN at that time, a reservist from Truro. I can't remember exactly how many other UN members he had working for him, but he was the senior Canadian. Where we've had more participation in Sierra Leone has been an ongoing mission where they're training the new Sierra Leonean army. There have been quite a number of both officers and senior NCOs who have gone there in that capacity.

Darfur I'm not as familiar with, I'm not just sure how many we've had there, but it has been primarily a UN support mission. Canada lent quite a number of armored vehicles to the UN and also, I believe, the African mission there as well. It was primarily maintenance and upkeep of those vehicles and I can't speak to how many people we had there.

TREVOR ZINCK: Thank you. With the number of troops we have deployed around the world currently, there has always been a question of our status here at home. Are the three of you confident that if there was ever a crisis here that we do have enough reservists, enough people at home here who could take care of a situation?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: The only way that I can really comment on that, because that's really sort of commenting on the adequacy of the Canadian Forces to meet its mission and that's really outside of our collective mandate here today, but I will answer it by saying that the Canada First Defence Strategy does focus on ensuring that Canada's domestic security is foremost, before anything else.

ROBERT GRANT: I might add a personal note; I've been a reservist for over 30 years and each time that there has been a call for our reservists here, be it for the

aftermath of Swissair or during the ice storm in Ontario and Quebec, it has been my experience that there are more of our guys showing up at the armoury volunteering to go than usually there's a requirement for. That being said, as the captain said, it's hard to predict what kind of an emergency and how many we would be looking for but we've always had more people kind of belly up to the bar, willing to go, than have been required.

TREVOR ZINCK: And would you say that with as many missions as we're currently on now, Canadian pride here at home, but abroad, in countries that our troops frequently find themselves in and on certain missions, is that factor that we've always enjoyed in years past and in wars past still being received by our troops when they do go overseas on missions from other countries?

I know we hear about some of the successes and acknowledgements in Afghanistan currently, is that true in other areas that we're involved in as well, the response that our soldiers are getting?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Certainly without question the support from the Canadian public for its Canadian Forces has dramatically increased in the last number of years. The Canadian public have a better understanding - because of the media and because of government openness on our operations - they have a better understanding of what we're doing overseas. They have a clear picture of the type of relief that we provide, for example, in Haiti. Without question, my experience, and I think I speak for everybody, is that the public support for the Canadian Forces is very strong, very good and it is greatly appreciated.

TREVOR ZINCK: I know, seeing some of the current footage of Haiti, some of the responses that our folks are getting over there from the people, it has been well received, so it's good to see that we're carrying on that tradition.

DON MCLEOD: If you're speaking to a reception while they are deployed, I had a chance to meet up with reservists who just returned from Afghanistan, at Christmastime they were in Bridgewater, and 15 of those personnel were there, working in the villages they were part of the construction management to the local population so they came back with very positive stories of their deployment. As Colonel Grant mentioned, they are all very eager to go to future deployments, they are very happy they went on that deployment so their operational experience has been very positive and that's partly due to the reception they receive when they do their work overseas. When they come home they're quite happy that they were there and anxious to go again.

THE CHAIR: I'm wondering what kind of infrastructure support there is. I know the air cadets in Westville, in my home town, certainly used to be based in Stellarton and Pictou Centre, but the facility that has been the squadron base for a long time is no longer suitable for use. That squadron is basically homeless or gypsy in its present condition. I'm wondering if there are any monies anywhere to actually support a local squadron?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: That area, I guess, as we all probably are aware, infrastructure funding particularly for capital projects, is a government decision. Certainly the process for identifying those requirements is in place, so that they can be identified up the chain of command, so that it does fall into a priority list but whether it is funded and completed is obviously a government decision.

DON MCLEOD: I can speak to the air cadet example. The Canadian Forces supports the air cadet movement, in terms of personnel helping with staff but we see many air cadet squadrons have private sponsorship - we have Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs and they provide that kind of support - so the Canadian Forces, we provide personnel to help those units and help them get through those kinds of issues. So I guess from an Air Force perspective, we're limited to helping the squadron, where possible, but as the captain mentioned, in terms of infrastructure support, that's a much higher level on the Air Force side, for sure.

THE CHAIR: I have to say certainly the pride that we all have in our forces is second to none. I have been moved on a number of occasions with the air cadet squadron. At one point we had Everett Baudoux, a very famous former squadron leader who passed away not that long ago, and wrote an excellent book before he did pass on, it was, *Wedge in the Door*. He and I presented, through Democracy 250, one of his books to each one in the squadron; we had about 40 books. He was so proud that night that he was moved to a few teardrops, I think, with that squadron and I commend you for that.

From a local perspective, I know how proud we are of Lt.-Col. Grant and his father and others who have served so well over the years in the Nova Scotia Highlanders. I'm a little bit removed from the water but I do have a fond regard and have many friends who have served in the Naval Reserve and also in the regular Navy as well.

In this committee we don't try to fill the two full hours. When we run out of steam and questions, we are quite disciplined and we call it quits at an appropriate time. Are there any further questions before we thank our guests for coming in this morning and the presentations you have made have been really good and have given us a good understanding of the reserves. We just want to say how proud we are of all of you and how proud we are of those who have served in the past and are presently serving.

CRAIG WALKINGTON: Thank you, Mr. MacKinnon. Certainly we appreciate this opportunity to speak today and brief you. I guess if I could leave you with one message it is that the reserve force, be it Army, Navy or Air Reserve, in Nova Scotia is robust, it's ready, it's keen to participate in operations and I think you can be proud of your reservist Nova Scotians.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. Do we have other closing comments as well?

TREVOR ZINCK: When can I get on the ship again?

CRAIG WALKINGTON: I can bring that issue to the admiral, that if there is a legislative body that wishes to do another day at sea, we're quite happy to organize something. Obviously this sort of weather is not the best but as the weather improves, we'd be happy to look at how we can arrange that, absolutely.

THE CHAIR: Certainly other members of the committee, including the chairman, would be most interested as well.

We have a number of items of business that we do have to deal with and you're welcome to stay for that, but you probably have other commitments. So perhaps we'll take a three-minute break and have a replenish of the caffeine. We'll come back in three minutes, if that's okay, to deal with our business. We thank you profusely for coming in.

[10:43 a.m. The committee recessed.]

[10:46 a.m. The committee reconvened.]

THE CHAIR: Committee members, I wonder if we could come back to the table. We have a number of items we have to deal with, thank you very much for coming here today.

We had some documents provided to us by Rev. Ronald Griffis and those have been circulated. I personally would like to commend Mr. Griffis for his continuous interest in this committee. We have heard from him on a number of occasions. It's great that people do follow us on the Parliamentary Channel or through Hansard or whatever forms there are for dealing with our meetings. To have someone out there who is showing that kind of interest is really commendable. I think we will be using some of the suggestions made by Mr. Griffis in the future, for sure.

The Postcard of Thanks - we have some information in relation to this postcard. We have a sample postcard that is here. In fact, I was going to circulate it but I see you all have one. The situation is that we have some ideas that we could, in fact, zero in on. The ideas are, in fact - and Kim has done a very good job of putting some things together for us. Both Kims, actually.

The committee do a press release to increase awareness of the Postcards program, which is something that we can do down the road, and encourage participation, that the committee write to school boards encouraging participation in the program. We also have the Valentines for Vets program, which is something else as well.

I think what we're gearing up for here is doing something in advance of Remembrance Day in 2010. I don't know how much time you want to spend in discussing this at the moment. It's something that we're going to be clued in on as we go along. Kim, do you have any suggestions that we should come to the fore with today?

KIM LANGILLE: Well, not really. I guess we need to look at whether or not you folks will be sitting over the summer, because a lot of stuff should probably get organized over the summer, if there's any big undertaking that's going to be done. If it's just press releases and that sort of thing, I don't think that takes a whole long time to organize, but if you're planning on doing any bigger event, the sooner we decide on that the better.

THE CHAIR: Is there something we can look at in the next couple of meetings or do you want to offer some suggestions today on how we should proceed with that? Mr. Gaudet.

WAYNE GAUDET: Mr. Chairman, I guess the obvious question that comes to mind is, number one, are the postcards available before we go about a press release, contacting school boards, contacting students in getting ready for Remembrance Day? Then obviously the next question is, who's going to pick up the postage? If we had answers to those questions then certainly the layout, the spin afterwards can be looked after. Maybe we could call upon the chairman to explore those questions and maybe report to us at a later date.

THE CHAIR: The postcards are, in fact, available. We have, in fact, from past meetings already indicated that we would try to do something in that regard, but we can check things out somewhat further.

WAYNE GAUDET: Just maybe a clarification. We have to determine what grade level we're going to be targeting here - it's not every student that's in our public school system, so if we target the Grade 6 level or whatever it may be. We have to determine what level, how many cards are needed and then, obviously, who's going to pick up the postage afterwards. I leave it to the . . .

THE CHAIR: Is there further discussion? Ms. Raymond.

MICHELE RAYMOND: How many veterans do we have in Nova Scotia? Do we know that? No, okay.

THE CHAIR: Certainly with the age of existing World War II veterans, we have lost considerable numbers in recent years and continue to do so. So it's a figure that we should be able to obtain and perhaps we can agree to do the research on how many there are in the province presently.

MICHELE RAYMOND: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Excellent points being raised. Any others? Mr. Prest.

SIDNEY PREST: In the past has there been a focus on bringing, say, World War II vets in as witnesses to speak on some of the past, as they see it, in the present? Is that

something that the committee would be entertained . . .

THE CHAIR: That's probably something of interest. I know that is done in some jurisdictions. I happened to be in Hawaii when there was a Remembrance aboard the Arizona and it was such a moving experience with veterans actually giving testimony of their experiences and so on. It was one of the most moving experiences that I could remember in that kind of a forum. It is something that we could consider.

SIDNEY PREST: I guess why I bring it up, I'm the youngest of 10 in a family, it was basically a military family. The only thing I have ever known is what I have read and some discussion, but very little, from the actual vets. I don't know if anybody else here would be in a similar position but my children know very little about what went on. I think it's history that shouldn't just be lost. If you could hear it from a vet who has been there and witnessed it and appreciates what is here today because of what he - you know it would be just, it could be very . . .

THE CHAIR: Would it be something that perhaps an October meeting we could, in fact, before November 11<sup>th</sup> of this year, have a - there are some vets out there who are from the Second World War. Certainly one that I can think of from the Red Devils and there are a number of them who have come together recently, very famous during the Second World War. It would be most interesting to have all three aspects of service represented here at that time as well.

Is there general agreement that we look at the possibility of doing that? I mean it is an aside from our postcard that we're talking about. I think what we can, in fact, do, rather than spending too much time today because we do have quite a bit of lead time and Kim is working on this issue and has brought us along further, perhaps it can be put on each agenda as we go forward in the next couple of meetings as well. Is that agreeable? It is agreed.

Okay. We've done a number of follow-up letters that I have just signed and they will be going out. You will recall that there was a huge batch of letters that we sent to various ministers, federal and provincial. Certainly we did get a response from the new Minister of Veterans Affairs, Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn. Basically he was just indicating that he had taken over from the Honourable Greg Thompson and that the re-examination of the proposals set out in Bill C-201 have, in fact, been referred to the Honourable Peter MacKay and an indication that that falls under the Minister of Defence's responsibilities and that the Building Canada Fund is the responsibility of the Honourable John Baird, Minister of Transportation, Infrastructure and Communities. So it's basically saying I trust that Minister MacKay and Minister Baird will consider your requests, so it's really not an answer so we'll have to follow up on that as well. That's just an information point.

Other business - is there anything else that we should be dealing with today? Our next meeting is on March 11<sup>th</sup>. I am going to be away at that time but Mr. Burrill is the



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vice-chairman and will be looking after that meeting. Is there anything else, Kim, that we should be looking at today, or have we followed the full spectrum? If not, a motion to adjourn.

TREVOR ZINCK: I so move.

THE CHAIR: Okay, thank you very much, the meeting is adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 10:58 a.m.]