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**Chair**

**Mr. Stephen Fuhr**



## Standing Committee on National Defence

Thursday, October 18, 2018

• (1105)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.)):** I call the meeting to order.

Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the defence committee this morning.

**A voice:** The best committee?

**The Chair:** I said, “defence committee”. I know it sounds like “the best committee”. Actually, both of those are true.

It's our first meeting on our study on diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces. We have a couple of witnesses today. I'd like to thank them for appearing. We have Dr. Okros, Professor, Canadian Forces College. We also have Dr. Scoppio, Professor, Dean of Continuing Studies, Royal Military College of Canada.

I think I'll yield the floor to Dr. Okros to start. Sir, I'll give you up to 10 minutes with your opening remarks. Thank you for coming.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC):** I have a point of order.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Would you please read the motion that was passed to commence this study? We have some new people here, and I think they haven't heard what the original motion for this study actually says.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** That's not a point of order.

**The Chair:** That isn't a point of order, actually. Do you have a problem with the rules or the standing orders? That's a point of order.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** No, no, I don't. It's just that the title doesn't encompass the full scope of the study. That's why—

**The Chair:** I just read the title from the order of reference that was distributed to you, which we agreed to. We can change the title, as in any other study.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Okay. That's fine, just so long as we can address all the points in the motion.

**The Chair:** Fair enough.

Doctor, the floor is yours.

**Dr. Alan Okros (Professor, Canadian Forces College, As an Individual):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's my pleasure to provide comments to the committee on the important topic of diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces.

[Translation]

I will make my comments in English.

[English]

As background, while serving in the CAF, I started doing research and contributing to policy related to diversity in the early 1980s, and I have continued to conduct diversity research as well as teaching on leadership and diversity at the Canadian Forces College.

Over this period, I have observed the CAF evolve from reluctant implementation of changes in response to external direction to seeking to proactively lead, based on military requirements and social alignment. I see this having occurred through three phases of philosophy and policy.

The first was tolerance and accommodation. The focus was on removing overt barriers and providing individuals with accommodations based on justified needs, and generally, as required under law. This was done, however, with the caveat that it have minimal impact on operational effectiveness. This was best illustrated in the actions taken following the 1989 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision on women in combat occupations, to which I contributed.

The second phase was a shift to acceptance and integration. The shift here was the CAF's recognition that those who didn't fit the dominant norm—specifically women and those from differing cultures, religious beliefs, sexual orientations and gendered identities—deserved the right to serve and the opportunity to progress in a career. These efforts were visible in the evolution of the CAF employment equity plans, updates to military personnel policies and publication of CAF doctrine on the profession of arms and leadership, to which I also contributed.

The challenge in this phase was the fact that efforts to achieve integration were more often experienced by these individuals as assimilation. To fit in and advance, they had to adopt the norms of the dominant group, which was male, straight, Judeo-Christian, culturally white and generally anglophone. Simply put, the others had to adjust to blend in, while the majority did not have to make substantive changes to who they were or how they performed their military duties.

I see the current phase as intended to move to understanding and inclusion. The objective is to enable the CAF to enhance operational effectiveness by drawing on the differing perspectives, world views, cultural knowledge and personal perspectives contained in the rich diversity of Canadian society. I would offer that this intent is admirable and valuable and should be supported. I would also offer that I have not found a private sector organization or a military internationally that is seeking to achieve comparable goals. Amongst NATO nations, Canada serves as the exemplar.

Achieving this objective, however, will not be simple, easy or quick. It represents four significant shifts in military thought and military practice. I'll describe each with comments on the challenges the CAF faces.

The first is an expansion from the narrow consideration of employment equity-designated groups to a broader recognition of all aspects of diversity. While easy to describe, and supported by Status of Women Canada materials on "GBA+", or gender-based analysis-plus diversity, it's not easy to live. How do I, as an older, privileged, white male fully understand the perspectives of a young, marginalized woman of colour? Fortunately, there are a host of academics, community organizations and indigenous leaders who are prepared to assist the CAF in coming to fully appreciate what diversity really means and how it is really lived. Efforts to facilitate these dialogues should be encouraged.

The second is to move from an emphasis on conformity to valuing differences. The challenge is that the CAF necessarily engages in formal processes to convert the civilian to the soldier, sailor or aviator. Entry-level socialization is intended to instill the military values, beliefs and identity that the CAF has chosen to impart to all who join, so the question now becomes this: how can diverse Canadians retain the very perspective that the CAF now says it values when they are subject to rather intense pressures to adopt a new military identity and a particular military world view?

The third requires a shift from how the CAF recruits to how the CAF conducts operations. A common statement in the military is the importance of unity of thought, purpose and action. The CAF diversity strategy suggests the retention of unity of purpose—a common end goal that all are committed to achieving—but also to allow different ways of thinking about it and different ways of achieving it. A key issue is consideration of what happens when one of the members of the team says, "Boss, my moral compass is pointing in a different direction."

The fourth—and, I would suggest, the most important—is the need to shift from a focus on understanding these diverse "others" to understanding "us". By this, I mean the construction of the ideal service member—the image of the prototype desired and rewarded soldier, sailor, aviator, general, or flag officer. This has implications for military leadership and criteria for promotions, but also requires individuals to reflect on who they are and who they have become.

With these comments on the current context and challenges, I would like to address some specific issues the committee has identified, starting with Operation Honour.

As the committee is aware, General Vance has made his intent very clear, along with his offer to assist those unable to meet CAF

standards to find another line of work. His leadership is an essential element of addressing the issues that the CAF—and I would offer, many other organizations across Canada—are facing.

I'll provide two comments. First, as I discussed with Justice Deschamps when she conducted her review, the fact that those who are on the receiving end of inappropriate behaviour do not formally report it does not mean they do nothing about it. Women in particular have learned how to use CAF informal social systems to send strong messages to others about what is and is not acceptable or welcomed.

Second, I would restate her characterization of the CAF having a sexualized culture to having a masculinist culture. Both men and women can perform their military duties in a masculine manner but, to return to the diversity strategy, the CAF needs to recognize and enable alternate ways of performing military duties and conducting military activities. To be clear, my call is for men in particular to be willing and able to expand their military world view and practices of leadership to embrace what are commonly seen as feminine approaches. This touches on the issue of mission success. Achieving the United Nations' women, peace and security agenda, the Prime Minister's international assistance policy objectives, the goals under "Strong, Secure, Engaged" and related directives from NATO and the chief of defence staff will require military members to deliver human security at the level of the individual, their family and their community. This starts with empathy and understanding—facets that are typically seen as the strengths of feminists' perspectives.

This is broader than addressing internal dynamics. The link is that the critical analysis of masculinist practices and perspectives will assist all to be able to better recognize and prevent certain inappropriate behaviours internally within the CAF while also contributing to military mission success when deployed.

I'll offer three observations on best practices for recruitment and retention.

The first is that we should be talking about belonging and advancement. Those who have been marginalized are not simply asking to be admitted to the military. They're seeking to be recognized as valued members of the team with the opportunity to contribute fully to military success. They wish to advance in rank and responsibility while being recognized for who they are. Doing so requires a comprehensive GBA+ analysis to remove implicit barriers to progression.

The second is that the CAF, along with the public service, needs to shift from a paternalistic approach of deciding to offer a millennial a job, to providing the compelling rationale for why an enthusiastic young Canadian should invest their skills in our enterprise.

Third, drawing on the observations of a talented major who examined this issue, I would offer that the CAF leaders need to shift from speaking about women in the military to talking to women in the military.

Together, these three observations lead to the suggestion that the CAF likely needs to review four key functions.

The first is assessments at recruiting. Of the various factors used to select individuals for enrolment, does the CAF have the right balance?

Second is entry-level socialization: Is the military using the right processes to communicate the right messages to diverse young Canadians about how the profession serves Canada and how they serve in the profession?

Third is leadership. Does the CAF leadership model need to be updated to facilitate more inclusive approaches?

Fourth is education. Is current professional military education delivering the types of learning to achieve understanding and inclusion?

I hope that this important study will assist in enabling the CAF to achieve the desired goals.

Thank you

• (1110)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Dr. Scoppio.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio (Professor, Dean of Continuing Studies, Royal Military College of Canada, As an Individual):** Thank you.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. Thank you for inviting me.

I am Grace Scoppio, Professor at the Royal Military College of Canada, dean of continuing studies, and I teach with the department of defence studies. Among other courses, one is a course on diversity, which is actually a very well-attended course.

Over the past several years, I've been conducting research in Canada and elsewhere on diversity in the military, including in the Canadian Armed Forces. Therefore, I was invited here based on my research and expertise. I will speak on my own behalf and not on behalf of RMC or the Department of National Defence.

Research conducted over the years shows that there have been efforts in the Canadian Armed Forces to comply with employment equity legislation and enhance diversity within the organization, through different recruiting strategies, accommodation policies and various training programs. Although many steps forward have been taken, there are still gaps and challenges that need to be addressed.

Although employment equity policies are important tools to level the playing field, compliance with legislation is only the first step toward attaining a more diverse workforce and a more diverse military. The next step is seeing diversity as a strength and as value added for the organization, and ultimately changing the organizational culture.

In Canada, all military occupations are open to women. It's been so since the eighties, including combat-related occupations, so in that respect we were leaders, and we still are. Having said that, Canada does not fare better, say, in comparison with the U.S., where the combat occupations were only recently opened to women. When we look at female representation, for example, in 2016 women represented 14.4% of the regular force in the Canadian Armed

Forces. In 2017, this has increased to 15.5% of the regular force. In the U.S. military, women are 17%, so despite the fact that we opened occupations well ahead of the U.S., we're not faring better in terms of female representation in the regular force.

These findings suggest that other possible barriers to women exist that go beyond legal barriers, such as requirement for mobility in the military profession—the fact that many occupations are non-traditional for women—and an organizational culture that, in fact, is not open enough toward women and other minority groups.

That brings me to visible minorities. I've spoken about this at a presentation to the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, at the House of Commons, regarding Bill C-425, an act to amend the Citizenship Act. That was in March 2013.

One of the barriers to increasing the visible minority population within the military is citizenship. Again, in the U.S., many occupations are open to non-citizens, and in fact, their citizenship is expedited once they join. The Canadian Armed Forces has talked about this, but today if you look at the website for recruiting, you'll see the priority is Canadian citizens.

The CAF has established ambitious 10-year employment equity goals. Again, progress has been made, but the goals are still far from being reached. Most recently, the chief of defence staff directed an increase in the representation of women by 1% per year for the next 10 years, to achieve 25%.

I'll talk to you briefly about my research. My largest study was in 2007. I compared the Canadian Armed Forces with the U.S. as well as the U.K. and the Australian defence forces. That study made several recommendations. I'm happy to say that in 2016, the number one recommendation pointed out that the CAF did not have a strategic vision for diversity, a strategic document for diversity, and my colleague Dr. Okros mentioned that we now do have that document. I was happy to contribute to it.

• (1115)

The essence of the document is that it goes beyond employment equity and it is a value-based diversity strategy. I'm happy, almost 10 years after my study, to see that come to light.

I've also looked at the integration of indigenous members within the military. A well-known best practice comes to us from New Zealand. I was very fortunate to actually see it with my own eyes in a trip to New Zealand, where they have succeeded in successfully integrating Maori members, and not just as a token number. In fact, they have a significant representation, in particular in the New Zealand army, and they've integrated cultural practices within their military. Again, I've written about this.

There are differences, clearly. We have a much more diverse indigenous population. The Maori population is a lot more cohesive, as well as their language, but nonetheless it is a best practice that would be important for Canada to look at.

My recent research concerns diversity in the Canadian military colleges. Currently, I'm leading a three-year project with a four-member research team investigating possible gender bias in the recruiting for the military colleges, as well as the overall experience of officer cadets at the colleges.

I am happy to answer any questions. I will stop here. Thank you.

• (1120)

**The Chair:** Thank you for your opening remarks.

We'll go to seven-minute questions.

If anyone sees this, if you haven't been to this committee before, which I don't think you have, this is just a 30-second warning. Could you then wind down what you're saying so I can move along to the next question so everyone will get their amount of time.

Having said that, I'll go to my first seven-minute question. It will be MP Robillard.

The floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank the witnesses for their excellent presentations. My questions will be in French, and they will not be for a specific witness.

What can the Canadian Armed Forces do to eliminate the barriers to the recruitment and retention of members of the LGBTQ2 community?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I forgot to say that I can answer all your questions in English or French, but I will let my colleague answer because he has more experience with that group.

[*English*]

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I will, if I can, respond in English.

The first comment I would make is that although we use acronyms that have several letters to them I think it is important to differentiate between sexual orientation and gendered identity. The military has been addressing issues of sexual orientation since 1992. I would suggest internally within the military there certainly is a level of understanding of differences around sexual orientation and, consistent with Canadian society, a strong degree of acceptance. Those internally within the military recognize individuals have the right to serve and they recognize the differentiation between their professional life and their private life.

For gendered identity, again I have done research with trans members of the Canadian military, as well as other militaries. I would suggest there is work that needs to be done. Again, it's reflective of Canadian society. There is not yet the understanding of gender and gender expression. I think as young people start joining the military, with some of the research referring to the youth cohort as being more gender fluid, that, I think, is going to be a challenge for the military because we are used to people presenting themselves one way. I assume you are a man, you are going to behave in masculine ways, and I get confused when you start presenting yourself in feminine ways, so there are going to be challenges within the military on that group.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Robillard:** What cultural programs and services are offered specifically to indigenous members of the Canadian Armed Forces?

What else could be done to enhance their experience?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** There are indigenous recruitment programs that are quite successful. Bold Eagle, an army program, was the first, but there are also programs such as Raven, in the Royal Canadian Navy. The Air Force also has a program, but I forget what it is called. The Royal Military College of Canada also has ALOY, the aboriginal leadership opportunities year.

These programs are specifically designed to give indigenous persons an idea of military life. After doing these programs, participants often go to a recruitment centre.

The organization does not, however, have a specific aboriginal culture program for all members. Some programs are more specific, and there are certainly various programs to educate recruiters about different populations.

I would like to comment on your previous question. In our study, we had a question about gender, but there were not enough people who answered "other" for us to do a full analysis. That is why I let Mr. Okros answer because, in our study, we were not able to study that population for a lack of data.

• (1125)

**Mr. Yves Robillard:** To what extent do certain recent initiatives, such as the appointment of the diversity champion and the diversity strategy and action plan, make the Canadian Armed Forces more attractive to members of visible minorities?

[*English*]

**Dr. Alan Okros:** You start, and I will follow.

[*Translation*]

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Unless individuals are part of the organization, they would not necessarily know that the forces now have a diversity strategy. As I said earlier, one of the key strategies to increase the representation of visible minorities is extending recruitment to non-citizens. You have to understand that, even if a person is a Canadian citizen today, a security check has to go back several years. If that person was in another country five years ago, the security check can take a long time. In some cases, it can take two years. In the meantime, a member of a visible minority might find another job.

This diversity strategy is broader than the current one because it is part of the organization, which is not necessarily well understood by someone finishing high school who goes to a recruitment centre.

[*English*]

**Dr. Alan Okros:** The other observation I would make, of course, is the issue of urbanization. A large portion of the population of visible minorities live in major urban centres. There are a number of factors that influence whether they are interested in joining the regular force, and this is particularly one of the areas where the experiences, the policies and the success of the reserve force are leading the regular force. The number is much higher in the reserve forces, and the regular force is learning from them.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MP Gallant is next.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your presentations.

First of all, how conducive to setting a good example for our troops, given the need for Operation Honour, is the rationale the Prime Minister gave for groping a member of the media while at the Kokanee beer festival?

Just as a reminder, when he was asked about his behaviour, his answer was that he did not realize she was a reporter for the national media.

Here's the leader of our country supposedly setting an example. How is that going to help the behaviour or what's expected of our soldiers serving in the forces?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I would like to return to my opening comments. General Vance has been very clear internally within the Canadian Armed Forces in terms of the expectations of those who are serving in uniform. There is a significant effort being addressed across all levels of the chain of command within the military to ensure that everyone in uniform has an understanding of what the professional standards are and the methods to deal with those who are unable to meet those standards.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** When CAF members are told that they face unlimited liability as soldiers, are they told that this unlimited liability includes sexual assault, specifically rape?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I would suggest that they are very specifically told the opposite.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Okay.

Professor Scoppio, could you provide an answer to the first question I asked?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Sorry, can you go back to it?

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Yes.

How conducive to setting a good example is it when the leader of our country responds to a question about his behaviour when he groped a member of the media by saying that he didn't realize she was working for a national media source?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I have to be honest; I'm not comfortable speaking specifically to that instance.

However, I think that what hit the media the hardest was the Deschamps report. That was an inquiry by an external retired judge, who was looking inward into the military specifically at that kind of sexually inappropriate behaviour.

I think that had a big impact. As a mother, if your daughter wants to join the military and this report has just hit the media, I would argue that this would have a bigger impact potentially than something that may have occurred from a politician who is external to the organization. That report may still be fresh in a lot of parents' minds when their kids are making a career choice.

The Operation Honour response to the report was a good response from the chief of defence staff, and the implementation is across the force.

Have we found in our research that there are no more disrespectful types of behaviour? I would argue no. I can't say that. I think there are still instances, and I think it takes a long time to change a culture.

• (1130)

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Women who are sexually assaulted are not always believed, or they're told they remember experiencing the incident differently than the perpetrator.

Is that attitude any way to promote a safe and diverse environment for women?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Probably not.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** If I could, I think, as my colleague has said, the report by Justice Deschamps provided the Canadian Armed Forces with some strong information in terms of areas that needed to be attended to.

Your comments speak to one of those areas that was clearly highlighted in the report. I believe that there have been updates to the committee with regard to the steps that have been taken in order to address these issues.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Committee members also hear from members of the armed forces, which is why I'm bringing these questions forward.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I understand.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Female soldiers know that coming forward with claims of sexual assault or rape is a career-ending move, which will see them ostracized, transferred or even discharged. How are we supposed to promote diversity in the Canadian Armed Forces if the environment is so set against any woman trying to report a crime?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** If I may, I think one of the things that needs...

Although it's not just a question of bean-counting, that is an important step. As long as we don't have a critical mass of women or visible minorities or indigenous members, it's very hard to change a culture. If I am the only female dean at RMC, it's very hard for me to sit at that table. If you were the only female member on this committee, it would be very hard for you as well.

I think that the numbers are important in order to achieve that critical mass. Once that critical mass is achieved, I think it will be a lot easier to change the culture of the organization.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** In a previous Parliament, this committee was told that not a single woman leaves RMC without having been sexually assaulted.

Has a survey been conducted among people in the college and graduates, or people who left because they didn't graduate, perhaps because of these types of incidents? Has a survey been done specifically for people who have attended RMC?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** The RMC conducts an exit survey of their graduates. I am not sure how they report on it. I've only seen partial results specific to the academic wing, but I know it's something that they've been doing for a few years. I have not personally seen the full results of these exit surveys.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Thank you.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** You're welcome.

**The Chair:** MP Blaney is next.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Thank you, and thank you both so much for being here today.

I'm going to leave it open to whoever wants to answer at this point. We see that the statistics are improving very slowly, but when you look at them in full, you see how much work there is to do around this issue in the military. Could you tell us a little bit about what barriers must be eliminated to ensure there is an increased representation from these diverse groups within the CAF?

• (1135)

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Our study focused on the ROTP, which is the recruiting program for the military colleges. That recruits about 25% of the officers. We could not determine through our study, which was statistically representative, that there's a gender bias in the recruiting system.

Are there problems in the recruiting system? For sure: There are delays, sometimes even lost files, and slow and unfriendly use of the website, but we couldn't determine that there was a systemic gender bias preventing women from having the same access to recruiting.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** How about other populations, like the indigenous population, visible minorities and the LGBTQ2?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I would suggest that there are specific issues for different communities and different groups. I don't think there are simple, easy solutions that are going to address all of the groups that are currently under-represented.

I think at a broader level that one of the issues is the expectation that young people have of how they would be treated and what they would be able to contribute, which goes to what the Canadian Armed Forces does in delivering security for Canadians. I think that image is evolving. I referred to things like the women, peace and security agenda, the Prime Minister's policies, and the internal directions that the chief of defence staff has given on these perspectives. I would offer that this suggests to individuals a different way in which the CAF is contributing to security, and I would suggest that there are going to be more Canadians who can see themselves contributing to that. It expands the number of Canadians who will consider the military as a career.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** The other question here is about retention. One thing I've heard from multiple women who have left the armed forces is that part of their challenge with retention was that they were not given opportunities to be promoted, even though they felt that they were working just as hard as the men, if not harder, in some cases. I'm curious about the retention aspect.

Diversity is broad. If you have any specifics on any of those different communities, I think it's important to have it on the record.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** Certainly there are issues of geographic mobility. The requirements for individuals to move from one location to another can have different impacts on men and women serving in the military. I think that is an issue, and I think it's one that needs to be considered.

The challenge here is that those who prefer to have geographic stability are not getting the breadth of experience needed to prepare them for future ranks and roles. These are internal challenges that

people have, and on some occasions it leads to individuals self-selecting out of career advancement and career promotion.

There are also other issues that we recognize. For some individuals, and certainly for some communities, there's a strong desire to be closely connected to their community, and when military service requires them to move long distances away, it becomes a challenge for them. It's part of what I would suggest is the reason the reserves are being much more successful than the regular forces with many of the representatives you're talking about, because the geographic stability issue does not become an impediment for them.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Is there anything you'd like to add?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** A lot of times for promotion you also need to have ticks in the box. In certain occupations, without a deployment overseas it's very hard to go beyond, say, the rank of major. The other factor is specific training, specific professional military qualifications that one might need.

As long as the system is set up so that you need those ticks in the box and it's not easy for every female officer or female NCM to get those ticks in the box, it is going to be more difficult for them to be promoted by a promotion board when it's all about points at the end of the day.

Is the system perfect? Probably not, but if you have no deployments, if you don't have the ticks in the box for your PME, your professional military education and other training, it's going to be very hard for you as a female to be moved upward, in addition to the geographic issues that Dr. Okros talked about.

As a way to offset that, there are some professional military education qualifications that can be obtained through distance learning. That's one way, so that a woman who has young children doesn't have to spend, say, one year at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto to complete a qualification in order to go from major to lieutenant-colonel.

Those kinds of things need to be looked at: What are the criteria for promotion, and do they need to stay like that?

• (1140)

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Yes, and it's important that we always look at ways that doors are closed to people and look at it differently.

I have only a few seconds left, but there's another thing that I have a quick question about. I've heard from indigenous communities in more remote northern communities that they're seeing less and less outreach and recruitment happening in those communities. Some of the communities are actually asking for it. I'm just curious as to whether you could speak to what's changing.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I'll touch briefly on it, and then I'll leave it to Dr. Okros.

Around 2013, there was a strategic review on defence. There was a lot of workforce adjustment as well. To be fair to them, there have been fewer positions and fewer resources for recruiting. They just have fewer people and fewer resources.



In addition, again I don't mean to compare us always to the United States, but their advertising is much more aggressive. Their recruiters are much more aggressive than ours. There are a lot of lessons that we could learn about how they are able to recruit so many African-Americans, for example, and we're not.

**The Chair:** I'm going to have to leave it there for time, but there will be additional questions at the end, and we could maybe continue on that item.

I yield the floor to MP Gerretsen.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Thank you very much, Chair; and thank you to the two of you for coming to speak to the committee today. We have a real opportunity here to make recommendations to the government in relation to diversity, and I want you to know that the comments you make today will be taken with that in mind.

Ms. Scoppio, when I served on Kingston City Council, I served with an individual who was in the first class when females graduated from RMC. She was one of five females in that first year. We used to talk quite a bit about it, and I would ask her, "What was it like? It must have been so challenging." The interesting thing is that her response always was, "Actually, it wasn't, because they were watching over us so closely because they were worried." Her response was, "I would actually be more worried about people who came along years later, because the scrutiny wasn't there." I wonder if you can provide your thoughts on that.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** It would only be anecdotal.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Yes.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I'm not going to go into details, but based on people I have talked to who did come after her, she was right.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I know RMC is currently pursuing an aggressive policy or strategy towards increasing recruitment of females into RMC. The last time I spoke with the principal of RMC was probably about a year ago, and they were talking about where they wanted the percentages to be. Do you have any information that you can provide the committee on that?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** That was a reason for our study. They observed over the last 10 years, up until 2016, that there was a decrease in female recruiting. What was interesting was that this decrease could not be explained by the number of applicants. For all intents and purposes, there were just fewer women being recruited.

As the numbers were trending downwards, the study was requested. It's sponsored by the director general of military personnel research and analysis, and we are in our third year. The first report is available to you, should you wish to look at it, and then you can actually see the statistics we crunched, based on data from the registrar's office of both military colleges.

• (1145)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Do you know what the current enrolment of women at RMC represents as a percentage?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** They are now at about 22% or 23%, so it has definitely gone up. The approach they've used in the last couple of years was what they called a "women first" approach. If you have a male candidate who has a 90% average coming out of high school and a female candidate who has, say, an 85% average, all other things being equal, that female might get an offer before the male.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Roughly 77% or 78% are men, yet in our regular forces 85% are men, and more important or perhaps significant to mention is that 98% of the senior leadership roles are filled by men. Do you see a discrepancy there? Are we seeing women come through RMC, but then more women proportionate to men are choosing not to continue after they have fulfilled their commitment?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I wouldn't have the statistics. Once they're in the college, their academic success is higher than men's, so there is no issue with their being successful academically.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Students or cadets through RMC need to fulfill five years afterwards to have their tuition paid for. Do we have any exit surveys as to what happens after that five years? Are more women proportionately leaving than men? Do we know that?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** The data would suggest that the decisions come at the pension point, and at either 20 years, or now 25 years, there is a higher exit of women at that point when they are eligible to draw a pension. Individuals serve for a period of time, and that, of course, becomes a strong motivator to retain in service, but at that point individuals are making choices about what they want to do.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Dr. Okros, how do you feel about recruitment targets as a policy to encourage diversity? Do you think putting actual numbers, such saying we need to have 30% women in RMC or in the military by such-and-such a date, is an appropriate approach? It seems to be the way we have been doing it, setting targets so that we can quantify it down the road, but is that the best way to be doing it?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** There is a value to setting goals and objectives. It clearly signals the priorities that the Canadian Armed Forces has made. It does have consequences internally.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** What are those consequences?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** One of the levels at which it has consequences is challenging the status quo, as Dr. Scoppio mentioned, the concept of first among equals. When you have individuals who are equally qualified, they have equal chances of success in the future. These kinds of goals cause people to question who, then, of those equally qualified is getting the chance, who is given the opportunity.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I think what you're saying is you want to see as many people as possible apply from as many diverse backgrounds as possible—gender, race, whatever it might be—and then pick the best people from that pool.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** That is correct.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I have 30 seconds left.

What recommendation can we make through our report that would encourage that type of environment?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** My recommendation would be more of the concept of first among equally qualified.

If you have 1,000 applicants, don't rank them from number one to number 1,000; put them into groups. Here is the group of 250 who are excellent, here is the group of 250 who would do well, and down at the bottom, here is the group of 250 who should find another line of work. Once you have them grouped equally, then you can set your priorities. You can decide who you would like to give the offers to first among the equally qualified candidates.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** We're going to move to five-minute questions now, and the first one is going to MP Fisher.

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thanks, folks, for being here.

Professor Scoppio, through Strong, Secure, Engaged, as you are well aware, we have plans to spend an increased amount of money on our defence, and with that increased spending, part of the plan is for increased personnel. Would you feel there would be a direct correlation with that increased spending, possibly through our action plans and our diversity strategies, to increase those diverse roles with increased spending?

• (1150)

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I would suggest the next level of analysis below that is the increased capabilities that the CAF is going to be able to generate as a result of those people. Particularly what I am talking about is that if the expansion is in areas of occupations that do not already have numbers of women serving in them, the increase in the numbers is not going to make much of a difference.

It's recognized, for example, that the numbers of women are there in terms of 14% to 15%, but they tend to be concentrated in a smaller number of occupations. If those particular occupations are not growing, then it's not going to automatically lead to changes, so it would need more proactive policy to use the increase in overall numbers to achieve increased representation.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Professor, would you comment?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** When we're looking at first choice for women, we see a lot of times these are support-related occupations. Other occupations are air operations, which is number one for men as well. Interestingly, sea operations are also there.

Keeping that in mind, for example, one of the challenges at the military college is that they are recruiting within a certain number of occupations. Once those female-friendly occupation billets are filled, then all they have are the other ones, so what Dr. Okros is saying is exactly right.

It's all driven by the SIP, and part of the issue is the number of occupations that are available that are also friendly towards women, that appeal to women.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Who is out there doing very well on this? What countries can we look at to see what their diversity policies are doing?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** As I said, I think among our allies, in terms of indigenous populations, New Zealand definitely has a lot of best practices.

In the States, again, they have opened most of their occupations to people who are not citizens, so that would open the door to a lot of visible minorities. They are also doing better overall in terms of female representation.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Is New Zealand doing better in that area?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** The States, despite the fact that they only recently—I believe it was in 2016—opened all the combat occupations to women as well.... We opened them in the eighties.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** If our target is to get to 25%, what is the U.S. target?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I don't know, sir. I'm sorry. I'm not sure.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Okay.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I have two comments. The United States doesn't have targets.

The other comment I would make is that I do close work with NATO committees, including the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives. NATO nations are looking to Canada. To answer your question of who is doing the best, who is doing the most, NATO countries are looking at Canada.

Part of the issue with this is because of the breadth of the understanding of diversity. Yes, there are some countries that have focused fairly specifically on an increased number of women. As Dr. Scoppio said, New Zealand, with the Maori population, has focused specifically there, but in terms of the breadth of the diversity of Canadian society and the efforts to try to represent that internally within the Canadian Armed Forces, there is no other NATO country that is attempting to achieve what we are trying to achieve.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thanks.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MP Martel, the floor is yours.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Hello. My questions will be in French.

From what I can see, there is a significant gender gap between non-commissioned officers and officers in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Is it easier to recruit women for officer roles?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I think there is a higher percentage of women among officers. It also depends on the department. As I recall, there are more women in the air force.

It also varies by trade. Logistics is a huge branch, and it includes many trades.

• (1155)

[*English*]

within logistics, within support. Then there are the health-related occupations.

[*Translation*]

These trades attract a lot of women.

[English]

**Dr. Alan Okros:** The other quick observation I'd make there is that there are broader initiatives going across Canadian society, particularly with regard to women in what's referred to as STEM—science, technology, engineering and mathematics. There are a lot of organizations that are looking at this.

One of the challenges there is that the women who are interested in those kinds of areas of employment at the present time tend to have a lot of opportunities. I think the military is looking at some of the STEM initiatives that some universities are applying to determine what can be done, particularly for officers, given the requirement for university degrees.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Martel:** Do you think the 25% target for the recruitment of women and increasing the ratio by 1% per year are appropriate? Will we get there some day? Do you think that is too ambitious in the current context? Could the target you are proposing undermine recruitment in general?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Our goal is to attract women, as I said earlier. In 2016, the forces were 14.4% women, and in 2017, it was 15.7%. So we can get there; I think it is possible. On the other hand, we cannot leave it up to the recruitment offices alone. We also have to use the media, to reach young people in particular.

Recently, we were at the recruitment centre in Borden, the base. They had one or two social media resource people. We recruit thousands of people every year, but we have just two social media resource people. If you have children, as I do, you know that

[English]

that's what they do. Social media is advertising.

[Translation]

We also have to appeal to young people to recruit them. We cannot have this 1% target and think that

[English]

they will just come to our doors.

[Translation]

That won't happen.

[English]

**Dr. Alan Okros:** The 1% per year sends signals both internally and externally. I think it sends a very strong signal to Canadian society in terms of the intent of the military. I think that does cause some young people to reconsider whether the military is the place they want to go. Some, particularly young women, may not have considered the military, but, if they know that they're serious about this, maybe they'll consider it.

It also sends signals internally. As I said, when it comes to things like selection decisions, and you're picking among equally qualified individuals, the leadership has sent a very strong signal, so I think it does set the conditions for the numbers to increase.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Martel:** I do understand what you are saying, but my fear is that these targets will hamper broader recruitment efforts.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Are you afraid that other groups will be neglected if we set a target to recruit a certain percentage of women each year?

**Mr. Richard Martel:** Yes.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** No, I don't think so. Men will always apply. We are simply trying to attract more women.

[English]

**The Chair:** That's your time.

We'll yield the floor to MP Dzerowicz.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for the excellent conversation.

I have tons of questions, so if I can loop back around, I'd love to.

Ms. Scoppio, you mentioned that you need a critical mass to create change. Typically, when we talk about women creating change, we talk about 30%, but 25% falls short of that. We're not going to get to that critical mass, and we're talking about 25% by 2026. Do you think our targets should be higher?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I think it's a good first step that we have this goal. I think once we get there, we should definitely aim higher. I see no reason that very qualified, very intelligent, well-educated young women are not knocking more at the doors of the recruiting centres, except for the reasons that we talked about. I think 25% is a very good first step, but, for sure, you're right: I think we need to aim higher once we get there.

● (1200)

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** I used to be in the business world. Every world I've been in has been a male-dominated world. I feel as if we've gone through all the same questions, and to be honest, I feel we have all of the factors. We have a lot of knowledge that could actually lead us to success much more rapidly, instead of feeling as if we're reinventing the wheel in every single sector. I know there are elements that are special, like some of the elements you were talking about—the travel, being overseas away from family. I know there are some different elements here.

Here's my next question. You also mention, Ms. Scoppio, that we need to have a critical mass of women to change culture. Do you not also think we need significant leadership promoting that change as well? Do we have the right incentives right now for the leaders to actually get to this change as quickly as possible?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** That's a very good question. We talked about the ticks in the box for promotion, for example, but one of the things that would be a great incentive for males and females in uniform to promote diversity would be if it were right there as one of the things they need to do to move further in the organization. That could mean promoting an activity. It can take a lot of different shapes and forms. Right now, there are no such criteria.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** In the business world, we actually tell senior managers, “Within your department, you're low in terms of moving toward equity”, and then we give bonuses and incentives for them to get there. They have to report back up to the most senior levels of the financial institution about why they're not achieving their objectives. Is that a model you think we can adopt within the military?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** As you know, we are public servants, so within a government public service environment, bonuses are very difficult to apply.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Just to be clear, I'm not looking to give bonuses, so I don't want this to be a big debate. It's more to have the incentive structures, with accountability at the different levels and some sort of penalty if you're not achieving your targets, and you're given all the tools you need to achieve your target.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** That's the key right there. I always say vision without resources is hallucination, so we can have a great strategic document, but if there are no resources to achieve that vision, then we're not going to get there.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Dr. Okros, would you comment?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** With the way the military functions—and I'll go back to the 25% to 30% as well—I would suggest the key driver is when we have men internally within the military who say they can't get the job done unless there are women on the team with them. It's when we have men saying they need a female CO. That kind of leadership is what we need. That's where the conversion needs to take place.

It's not the business structures. I've looked at some of them, particularly the banking sector, the financial sector. It's a different construct in the military, and it's why I made the comment in my opening statement about the need for people to be accepted, to be included and to belong. That's where the military is going to make the change. It's when people look around and say they don't have the right team, the right mix of talent.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** If I may, Mr. Chairman, I just want to add one more thing.

My background is actually in education, so I'm always an advocate for the education piece. I was very lucky. When I was in the U.K., I participated in a training program in which very high-level admirals and generals were sitting right beside very high-level defence executives doing diversity training. It was very well done.

We also need an education piece, as we know, and that education piece cannot be a canned PowerPoint presentation after which everybody says they are trained in diversity. It has to go beyond that, and it has to happen at all levels of the organization, including at the very high levels, so that there is education and training to the generals, admirals and defence executives and everybody is on the same page.

● (1205)

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** MP Bezan is next.

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here.

Let me follow up on that, because I was just trying to think about the work you guys do at CFC. You do all that high-level training of generals and colonels who are hoping to be generals, but to carry out the full strategy throughout the entire organization, you also have to get middle management involved. Are you guys doing anything at all in providing this type of training and reprogramming the thought process within middle management, such as our NCOs?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I have two comments.

As you recognize, some of these are more the responsibility of the individuals responsible for these programs. However, yes, there are definitely programs bringing this forward and trying to ensure that those who are moving up to the middle levels and preparing for the more senior levels are being exposed to these perspectives.

As I said in my opening statement, these different perspectives are not just about dealing with the internal dynamics within the military; this is about setting the military up for success in the kinds of missions the military is undertaking.

As a faculty member at the Canadian Forces College, I know the majors or the colonels and the public service equivalents who are attending programs are definitely having these conversations. There are definitely perspectives they are being exposed to. They have to have this in order to be successful as senior leaders. The same is happening at the Osside Institute for non-commissioned members.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Good. I was wondering what was being done there.

One of the things I am always proud of is that the most decorated indigenous soldier in Canadian history, Sergeant Tommy Prince, comes from Brokenhead Ojibway nation in my riding. He has inspired lots of members of the community to be involved in the armed forces, and not just here in Canada; right now, two are serving in the United States.

We've briefly talked about these youth programs such as Bold Eagle, Raven and Black Bear as part of the aboriginal leadership opportunities program. We have the CAF aboriginal entry program. Can we do more?

When I meet with the first nation communities in my riding, there are youths who have participated in programs like Bold Eagle. You look at participation in the Ranger program, and if you look at the reserves, the reserves are often a great place for people to become full-time soldiers. It bleeds off the reserve force, but it builds up the regular force.

Should we do more work in the Rangers, maybe making them into more of a militia rather than a constable service?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I'm not sure about the Rangers specifically because, as you know, the great majority of the Rangers are indigenous. In terms of whether we can do more, I looked at this in my research, and different organizations do different types of recruiting programs.

The ALOY is a year long. The other ones are a few weeks. Sometimes, as you know, a youth's time is very limited. They might have a summer job or whatever. I think they could do much shorter programs, and they could do different groups. It could be a couple of days, three or four days. One week they could target indigenous youth, and another week they could target visible minorities. They could be very short, just getting out there and getting the youth interested in the organization. If they don't know about it, if they don't try it, they might not buy it.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I was one of the two individuals responsible for developing the ALOY program and putting the ideas forward, and it came from consultations with elders. One of the key things they were talking about is their desire for young people to develop leadership skills. For the military to develop leadership capacity in young indigenous individuals would be a valuable thing.

The second part that goes with that is the recognition that the methods they use to lead are not necessarily the ones the military recognizes. One of the reasons for ALOY is to expose the remainder of the cadets at RMC—and there are some active programs to do so—to understanding indigenous cultures and different ways in which people can lead, ways people can create teams and ways people can bring people to success. It's about learning internally for the remainder of the military as well.

• (1210)

**Mr. James Bezan:** In previous comments, we talked about how the U.S. does very aggressive recruiting. It takes soldiers who have just returned from theatre, puts them in the recruiting office, and they're out there selling the U.S. armed services. We haven't taken that approach of having those master corporals, sergeants and warrant officers sitting there telling their stories and inspiring the next generation to sign up.

**The Chair:** I'm going to have to halt it there. We'll have time to go back, and if you'd like to speak to us again I'll give you some more time.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** I'm going to yield the floor to MP Khalid. Welcome.

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

This is my first time here on the defence committee. I'm really happy to be here and to know about the study.

It's interesting. We spoke today about recruitment in the colleges of diverse individuals, including women, visible minorities, and LGBTQ2 and indigenous people, hiring and then moving into the armed forces and up and beyond. Is there currently some kind of training or mandatory course that is required within the colleges to provide the sensitivity training piece that individuals can carry from the college all the way through their careers?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** If this is your question, there's no single diversity sensitivity training course that all cadets have to take to graduate.

Is diversity part of some of the topics that are touched on in different courses, such as in our military leadership and psychology courses? Yes, these are topics that are touched upon.

In addition, everybody in the public service and in the military has to complete a GBA+ course online. It's a good introduction to issues of gender.

To answer your question, there is no single course, which is what I would like, but these topics are touched upon in different parts of their program.

**Ms. Iqra Khalid:** Unconscious bias is something you can't really train out of somebody. It has a lot to do with interaction with diversity and getting to know and understand people to get over those biases.

For me it's kind of a Catch-22. How do you get more people to stay within this field and develop that culture of acceptance and inclusion without having those people accepted and included in the first place? It's very interesting.

You spoke about the training and education piece of it. In your opinion, how should that education occur?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** It's as you just mentioned. It shouldn't be just for the cadets because, as I said, that's only 25% of the officer corps. The largest population in the forces is actually the non-commissioned members, at 75%. There should be something that is not just a canned PowerPoint for an hour. It should go across the forces and be a bit more encompassing, with all the components you just mentioned.

**Ms. Iqra Khalid:** You said something about professions or areas that are more female-friendly in terms of opportunities. What are those, and why are some more female-friendly than others?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** A lot of it comes back to societal values. The military is just a microcosm of society. In our society a lot of women are gravitating towards nursing. One of my daughters is in a nursing program. There are 90-some students in the program, of whom four are males, so there you have it.

We're not taking people out of space. We're taking them from Canadian society, and these are the kinds of occupations that a lot of young women enjoy. However, if we take nursing as an example, it's a very small proportion of our SIP—our strategic intake plan.

• (1215)

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I have a comment that goes back to the discussion with regard to education and programs. The other important component is practical experience.

The Peace Support Training Centre has programs for those who deploy. They get exposure to perspectives and views outside of the Canadian norm. Those tend to be the individuals who return and start looking internally within the military and asking questions.

It comes through experience as well. Given the range of roles and responsibilities that CAF has been assigned and the objectives under SSE, there are going to be more opportunities for that. That is causing people to start changing their world views and their perspectives.

It goes back to the objective of the diversity strategy, which is the realization that there may be somebody on a team who can share some different views or perspectives that can make the entire team stronger. It's self-education and self-awareness as much as it is formal programs.

**Ms. Iqra Khalid:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MP Blaney is next.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** One of the things I've heard really clearly from both of you during this presentation is that when we look at recruiting, we need to tell these communities that this is a safe place to be. That isn't always the message they're getting.

I also heard you talk a lot about more proactive recruitment happening in other countries, where people were actively recruiting these groups.

Could you talk a bit about the communication strategy? What is the impact of what we have today and where do we need to go if we're actually going to do the work we need to do and make our Canadian Armed Forces more reflective of the diversity of Canada?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** As I said, we surveyed officer cadets in the colleges and also applicants to the ROTP, the regular officer training plan.

In the first group, some of the comments we heard were that advertising shouldn't be kinetic, because that is not necessarily appealing to a lot of groups. Looking at males and females, for example, on reasons for joining, we saw that yes, some reasons were similar, but surprisingly, more females joined because of the travel, which kind of goes against the whole issue of geographic mobility once you have a family.

As a mother of two young women, I'm going to tell you that travelling is big for them. Look at what is attractive to these diverse groups and how we can advertise so it's targeting what they are looking for in a career and package that so it's appealing to them. It's not necessarily somebody in combat; that might appeal to some youth, but not all.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** The other comment I would make is that when we compare Canada to other countries, it's important to recognize that different militaries put their emphasis, resources, time and effort into different facets of eventually generating the effective team that deploys. Everybody has that as the objective.

I've served with colleagues in the U.S. Marine Corps. I have a lot of respect for them. They put a lot of effort into recruiting because they have a very high turnover. They don't put as much effort into preparing their individuals subsequent to that, in terms of their entry-level professional development. The CAF tends to put more emphasis on making sure that when troops actually deploy, they're fully effective. Canada has a great reputation for that, but that comes with emphasis on where resources, time, effort and money get spent.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** May I add one thing, Mr. Chairman?

**The Chair:** Yes, very quickly.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** As I said, a lot of youth look for information on the website, and right now it's not working very well. There's a multi-pronged approach. One of the members of the committee was mentioning the ability of recruiters to speak about the different opportunities out there. If there is no officer from RMC talking to potential recruits about RMC, they don't get that interaction.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We do have committee business for the last 15 minutes, but we still have time available. Members have indicated they want to continue with their questions on this very important topic, so I'll go for three minutes per question for members.

I'll start with MP Gallant. The floor is yours.

• (1220)

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Professor Scoppio, in your piece looking at recruiting and selection for the Canadian military college through the lens of gender-based analysis plus, you note that the majority of women in the Canadian Armed Forces are clustered into six occupations. In my discussions with female members of our armed forces, most have said that they joined the Canadian Armed Forces for the same reasons men do, yet they're placed in support or traditionally female positions. Why is this the case?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Right now, the way the system works is that you select three preferences of occupation. The majority of people who were recruited in the military colleges—again, our study focused on the military colleges' recruiting—were placed in their first choice of occupation. However, we also found that of the minority of folks who did not get their first choice, there were more women than men.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Okay.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Why that happened is a million-dollar question.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Could this trend of placing female recruits in support-operation positions be having a negative effect on female recruitment—women want to join the Canadian Armed Forces, but not knowing they would be placed in a support role? They join, but they don't realize they're just going to be in a support role.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I agree.

One of the questions we asked was about what was more important, the degree or the career, the occupation. By and large, it's the occupation.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Is the current diversity policy at DND set up to reverse this trend of clustering women in support occupations, or are we just adding to the current issues?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I'm not sure. I know that an action plan goes with the strategy. I don't know exactly what they're doing in the action plan in this area. I don't want to speak to it, to be honest. I'm not sure.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Mr. Okros, would you comment?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I'm in the same position. Work is being done under the chief of military personnel looking into some of these areas, but I'm not sure what the specific status is.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Okay.

Over the past several years there have been a number of suspicious or unexplained deaths at RMC. Is it known whether or not any of the possible contributing factors had anything to do with diversity?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Part of the reason for the SSAV—the special staff assistive visit—directed by the chief of defence staff was that he had concerns about the suicides. The SSAV report is public. I don't know that they linked it necessarily to that. I think it was more the climate and leadership that were issues. A lot of them have been corrected.

There is an action plan that goes with the SSAV. I can tell you, for example, that they have upped the rank of some positions and added more military leadership to strengthen the military leadership pillar at RMC.

That's all I can tell you. I don't think there was a specific correlation. It was more about the climate and leadership.

**Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MP Gerretsen is next.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Thank you.

I want to go back to the conversation we were having earlier when I was asking about the pool of candidates and making sure that we select from the best of the pool of candidates, as opposed to trying to put quotas on individual segments of the population. That was Mr. Okros's position.

Ms. Scoppio, would you agree that this is the best way to do it?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** As we know, the Employment Equity Act talks about targets. They're not necessarily quotas, which is more of an affirmative action type of measure. I don't think right now they have quotas set up, but they certainly have targets.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Sorry; that was my error.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I think the legislation is there to allow for these special measures. In order to achieve a goal and correct a situation that is historical, we need to use those special measures allowed under the employment equity legislation.

I am in favour of using special measures when needed, remembering that somebody must still be qualified to do the job. We're never, ever going to recruit anybody who's not qualified.

•(1225)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** But will we recruit somebody who is slightly less qualified because they check a couple more boxes than somebody who is more qualified but doesn't check those boxes?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** You know, a lot of people say to me, "If you have a Ph.D., you're smart." Academic intelligence is just one intelligence. If we're letting in a woman who has an 85% average, but all other things are equal, over a male who has an 89% or 90% average, I don't know that the woman is going to be less successful as an officer.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I will go to you, Mr. Okros.

Can you comment a little on how we grow that pool of candidates so that by default it become more diverse and we don't have to worry about the targets because the pool itself represents the targets?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I agree.

Some of this is about making sure that more Canadians are aware of their Canadian Armed Forces. It goes back to the question from

the previous member. One of the challenges of recruiting in Canada is that a lot of people don't understand what the CAF offers.

The other quick comment I would make is that unlike, for example, the public service, with hirings and promotions, what is being assessed at the CAF recruiting centre is potential for the future. Nobody comes in who is qualified to do the job. It's an issue of indicators of optimum potential. That was why in my opening statement I suggested maybe there's a question about the mix of all the indicators. Is the balance right? Is the emphasis right, given what the career requires?

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Thank you.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** If I may just add one point—

**The Chair:** Add it very briefly, please.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** With regard to the way that some universities recruit, they look at the whole package. If you apply for a master's degree, a lot of times universities are not just looking at your GPA.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Right. It's life experiences—

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Absolutely. They're looking at your volunteerism. They're looking at the whole individual and not just the academic results.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

MP Bezan is next.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Quickly following up on my discussion about recruiting, the Canadian Armed Forces just finished running a bunch of ads showcasing women in the Canadian Armed Forces.

What was your opinion of that ad? Was it successful? Did we do it enough? What type of advertising approach should we be taking?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I think it's a very good start. I saw them, and I think they're great.

Again, we need to be more aggressive. If, at the end of the day, there are too many young people coming out of high school who do not even know that the CAF is an option, then we're not doing enough.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I have a quick comment on that one.

I think we need to recognize the multiple platforms and the multiple different ways that young people are acquiring information. It needs to get out through the right mechanisms. Traditional advertising is probably not the right way to do it.

**Mr. James Bezan:** I'd say that the Canadian Armed Forces is pretty active on Twitter in particular, and to some degree on Facebook, but we need to see more of that out there.

With respect to chaplaincy services, have they kept up with being able to deal with the diversity issues? Are the diversity targets represented within the chaplaincy itself, especially if we look at religious backgrounds, and also in the human resource component that chaplaincy services and counselling provide to all members regardless of religion?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** By comment, I would suggest that this is a question that the chaplain general could answer.

I have done work with the chaplain corps, and I would suggest that they are very proactive. They are very much paying attention to evolutions in Canadian society around both religion and spirituality, and are making sure that they are providing the right services. That means they have been looking at who they are bringing in. The range of different perspectives that are contained within the chaplain corps has expanded significantly.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Professor Okros, you mentioned earlier about NATO members looking to Canada on how we deal with the diversity piece.

I understand that the Dutch, in particular the Dutch navy, have done a great job, especially on the women in their service. Can you speak to that?

Also, Scandinavian countries may not have as diverse a population as we have, but definitely with women in the military, my impression is they have done a better job than we have.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** They certainly put some focus and emphasis on women in particular.

The conditions of naval service vary. We get into these issues about how long you are going to spend away, where the ships get deployed, the demands. Those who are employed in more coastal defence roles don't have as much time at sea away from home port, which gets into family issues.

**Mr. James Bezan:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, MP Dzerowicz.

• (1230)

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** I have too many questions, but not enough time.

As a comment, one of the things, as someone who has hired a lot of people in my lifetime, is that women tend to undersell themselves and men tend to oversell themselves. I would say that you would also want an interpretation and understanding of that as we are trying to recruit.

I think we have a lot more people who could automatically be part of that eligible pool. It's just that you have to make sure that you understand...and are able to ask those questions.

I actually joined the navy for five days over the summer. I met a couple of women on the boat who joined when they were over 45 years old. They had already raised their kids. They loved it. They never knew it was an opportunity for them. They wanted adventure. They found it exciting. They found the exact roles that they wanted, and they could not have been happier.

Just keep in mind that I will ask the question in a minute.

One of the other things is that I represent the largest Portuguese community in the country. Most of the Portuguese in my riding are from the islands. All of their ancestors are boat people. I don't honestly think that anybody has ever come to recruit at any of the

high schools in my community. I can assure you that they would be very successful, because it's in their blood.

What I'm trying to ask is, to your knowledge, have there been any efforts to try to...? When you're looking for diversity, you kind of have to understand the people you're trying to go after. You go after boat people. In the navy, if you see who's on the boats, they tend to come from either of the coasts.

Do you have any comments around that, about our active recruitment for those who might be at mid-career, and then also whether we're targeting certain cultures because we know there might be a higher-than-average chance that they would want to enter this field?

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** To your first comment, I would not have applied as a dean if I hadn't been encouraged to do so by somebody who was working in that division. I totally agree with you that a lot of women who would be perfectly capable to be in certain positions or to do certain careers would hesitate. As to why we hesitate, it goes back to what you just said: Women tend to undersell themselves.

How do we fix that? I agree with you, certainly, about having more outreach at different ages. I know for a fact that right here in Kingston, for example, where one of my kids went through high school, no recruiters came to talk to them, yet we know how successful the recruiters from various universities are. A lot of times, kids pick a certain university because the recruiter who went to their school did an awesome job.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Do you have anything to add, Mr. Okros?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I would make a quick comment. I think you can appreciate in terms of resources the issues about tailored and targeted recruiting campaigns. Again, we're back into the diversity of Canadian society, which makes it hard to be able to do that for every specific community. I think this is a struggle the CAF has in terms of figuring out differential messaging and not wanting to make it appear that it's favouring one group or community over another. There are challenges there in terms of trying to do targeted advertising, messaging, and recruiting in communities.

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz:** Just to that—

**The Chair:** I have to stop you there. I'm sorry.

Go ahead, MP Blaney.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** One of the things you said earlier in your speech, Ms. Scoppio, is that diversity should equal value added. I represent 19 Wing Comox in my riding, and I've had numerous conversations with people on base around how we promote this and what we do to become more diversity-oriented. I think it's something that's growing in the community, and I want to recognize that.

First, to both of you, in what ways does diversity really enhance military operational effectiveness? I think we need to see it as an asset, and I want you to talk about that.

The other thing is that I have looked through the material I have, and there's very little statistical information about the LGBTQ2 community. I'm wondering if that is something we need to do better.



**Dr. Alan Okros:** I'll go back to one of the reasons for the CAF diversity strategy and some of the CDS directives, and that's the recognition that these diverse world views and experiences are critical for mission success in deployed operations. The Canadian Armed Forces is recognizing that. Trying to facilitate how we do that is a bit of a challenge.

The second part, I think, is this recognition that if you're going to get good at doing that abroad, you should start practising at home. A key thing I use frequently is that the primary job of leaders is to build cohesive, effective teams that work together under arduous circumstances. How do you bring together people from different backgrounds and build that cohesive team? That's the challenge. You need those diverse perspectives to assist in building the team. The military is recognizing that. They're still working their way through figuring out how to do it. It's a leadership issue.

• (1235)

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** Perhaps I can add to that.

I've done some research about soft skills in comprehensive operations. A lot of the operations that the military, especially the Canadian military, are involved with are not necessarily war missions, or only war missions, or only combat operations, so you need to have a very diverse set of skills. Cultural skills would be one of them, with the ability to communicate with diverse people. There are all sorts of skills that are not necessarily all found in one type of person.

As Dr. Okros said, those multiple perspectives on a team will actually be an advantage when you're deployed to an operation and you're trying to build consensus and trying to win the hearts and minds of the people. It's not necessarily just combat.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Do you have anything with regard to the resources on statistics about the LGBTQ2 community? I'm just not seeing a lot. Is it just a lack that we have?

**Dr. Alan Okros:** In terms of the statistical representation, that's not something I can speak to.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Just before we suspend for committee business and send you on your way, Mark Gerretsen wants a quick follow-up.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** I have just one quick follow-up to the question you were answering for Ms. Dzerowicz.

Regarding recruiting in high schools—your children may have gone to the same high school in Kingston that I went to, for all I know—I'm curious how you feel the general population would feel if CAF started recruiting in high schools, and whether that needs to be part of the strategy in communications. My sense, from having been a municipal politician and a federal politician in my riding, is that there would be a lot of parents who would be pretty upset about that.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I think you may be right that there might be issues with that. At the same time, that is a large group of the people who we want to recruit, and the military, in Canada anyway, is not a machine of oppression. Maybe there's an educational piece that needs to happen so that we're not portrayed that way, and then maybe there would be more buy-in from some of the parents.

**Dr. Alan Okros:** I'd like to make a quick comment, if I could. I'd also recommend that we consider the influencers, the people who influence young people. Young people who join when they are coming out of high school are not making that decision on their own, so I think it's a matter of educating parents, coaches, community leaders, and so on. That's the context we need to address.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Thank you.

**Dr. Grazia Scoppio:** I have just one more point. In the states, the recruiting happens directly by contacting mothers, for example.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Very good. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you both very much for coming today. We appreciate your input into this very important topic.

I'm going to suspend so that we can say our goodbyes and then get back to committee business.

*[Proceedings continue in camera]*

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