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Chair

Mr. Stephen Fuhr

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• (1530)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Stephen Fuhr (Kelowna—Lake Country, Lib.)): I'd like to welcome everyone to the defence committee to continue our discussion about diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces.

I'd like to welcome Lieutenant-General Lamarre, Lieutenant-General Lanthier, Rear-Admiral Cassivi and Commodore Patterson. Thank you, all, for coming.

Before we get started, I think you probably all know that we just returned from Mali. It was an unbelievable experience. The troops are setting the bar pretty high for the task they've been asked to do within Op Presence in support of MINUSMA. I wanted to let you know personally that we were very, very impressed. Please pass that down the chain. It was really an unbelievable experience.

I'm going to turn the floor over to you, Lieutenant-General Lamarre, for your opening remarks, sir.

Lieutenant-General Charles Lamarre (Defence Champion, Visible Minorities, Department of National Defence): Thank you very much, sir.

Thank you for inviting us here today to discuss a subject that is a priority for the Canadian Armed Forces. As indicated, I am Lieutenant-General Chuck Lamarre. I'm chief of military personnel, and I am champion for visible minorities in the Canadian Armed Forces.

[Translation]

Diversity is of primary importance because the Canadian Armed Forces must reflect the society they serve. In turn, we benefit from a variety of perspectives at home and on operations. At the core, actively seeking diversity in the forces brings us the talent critical in maintaining the defence of Canada and Canadians.

[English]

We're undertaking to achieve this diversity through the combination of sound policy, focused attraction, recruiting and retention as well as culture change.

First, I'd like to introduce those who are here with me today. They too will provide short opening statements, share their perspectives on diversity and answer your questions.

To my right is Lieutenant-General Jean-Marc Lanthier, commander of the Canadian Army and champion for indigenous peoples.

Rear-Admiral Luc Cassivi is to his right, commander of the Canadian Defence Academy responsible for professional military education in the Canadian Armed Forces, and co-champion for gender and diversity in operations. To his right is Commodore Rebecca Patterson, director general of the combined sexual response team and champion for women.

To begin, I will provide an update on the Canadian Armed Forces diversity strategy and action plan. In early 2017, the chief of the defence staff signed the Canadian Armed Forces diversity strategy. As a result of the release of "Strong, Secure, Engaged" later that same year, the diversity strategy is now undergoing a comprehensive review with extensive stakeholder engagement. A revised diversity strategy will be issued in 2019 as a long-term plan for the future to diversify our forces in line with our defence policy, "Strong, Secure, Engaged".

[Translation]

As the champion for visible minorities, my responsibilities include engaging in and supporting the programs and initiatives that encourage the presence and contributions of visible minorities within the Canadian Armed Forces. In collaboration with our defence advisory groups, which act as intermediaries between the members of visible minority groups and organizational leadership, we've implemented a number of positive changes to be inclusive of a diverse workforce.

[English]

For example, the dress manual policy now includes clauses related to religious accommodations for members' hair. Muslim women may wear the hijab in a modified uniform. Jewish members may wear the yarmulke with numerous orders of dress. During some of our events, aboriginal and Métis members proudly wear the aboriginal veterans medallion or the Métis sash. Sikh members may observe the five symbolic aspects of the religion and wear a turban, subject, of course, to safety and operational considerations.

[Translation]

In addition, the policy has been amended to allow members to observe prayer and fasting requirements that align with religious practices. We also offer access to a variety of meals at home and during operations, including kosher and halal preparations for our field rations.

[English]

To ensure that we are truly welcoming towards all applicants, the forces continue to modernize, streamline and standardize recruiting. I would invite all of you to visit our new recruiting website at forces.ca, which was, of course, partially in response to the Auditor General's reports that talked about modernizing the recruiting system.

We have recruiters who are multilingual and from a wide range of ethnic and racial backgrounds. Combined with programs such as the aboriginal awareness and cross-cultural training, designed to sensitize all recruiters to cultural norms that may differ from their own background and beliefs, we have enabled easier communication with potential recruits and alleviated many of the misconceptions that minorities sometimes have regarding the military.

The Canadian Armed Forces' values contribute to positive change. One of those is within our chaplain service, as an example. A tolerance and respect for all faiths is a non-negotiable prerequisite to serve as a chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces, and we employ chaplains, both men and women, who are drawn from all major religions.

• (1535)

[Translation]

We continue to pursue diversity through other means, such as citizenship ceremonies, where our senior officers and senior non-commissioned members address new members of the Canadian family and encourage them to consider us as potential employers.

[English]

I believe our efforts have borne fruit already.

The Canadian Armed Forces' goal for the representation of visible minorities is set at 11.8% and we are currently at 8.7%. I believe we may be higher but cannot truly know beyond doubt because we rely on self-identification. I know of many members who do not self-identify as belonging to any group within visible minorities.

[Translation]

These individuals don't want to be known for being a minority. They want to be known for being part of the Canadian Armed Forces. As a senior leader within this institution, I'm proud of this sentiment.

[English]

As chief of military personnel, one of my primary responsibilities is to ensure that the Canadian Armed Forces are able to generate an effective and responsive fighting force ready to deliver on the direction given to us by the government. This force must represent the Canadians it serves and must avail itself of the great talent in every part of our population.

Our approach of sound policy development, focused attraction, recruiting and retention, as well as cultural change, will enable us to do this.

[Translation]

Thank you.

[English]

I will now turn to Lieutenant-General Lanthier for his opening statement.

Lieutenant-General Jean-Marc Lanthier (Defence Champion, Indigenous Peoples, Department of National Defence): Mr. Chair, and committee members, good afternoon.

It is my pleasure to be here today in my capacity as the defence team champion for indigenous peoples. My role is to encourage the promotion of the history, heritage and contributions of our first nations, Inuit and Métis peoples as part of our activities at home and abroad and to cultivate a shared understanding between indigenous and non-indigenous members of the defence team.

There are approximately 2,800 indigenous members serving in the Canadian Armed Forces, in both the regular force and the reserves, amounting to a representation of 2.8%. We aim to reach a goal of 3.5% by 2026. I would note that those numbers do not include the Canadian Rangers. There are 5,200 Canadian Rangers, and about 26% of them self-identify as indigenous.

Recognizing the challenges faced by indigenous people wanting to join the forces, many educational and training opportunities have been developed to inform and stimulate interest in the service. These include the aboriginal leadership opportunity year, whereby young indigenous members attend the Royal Military College for a year; the Canadian Forces aboriginal entry program, a three-week course for indigenous people considering a military career; and our summer primary reserve training programs known as Bold Eagle, Black Bear, Carcajou, Grey Wolf and raven.

These activities offer a window into what it is to be a part of the Canadian Armed Forces team and enable indigenous men and women to become leaders in every field of the Canadian Armed Forces. Conversely, they allow the Canadian Armed Forces to learn from the indigenous communities.

In 2017, the government released a set of 10 guiding principles, called the "Principles respecting the Government of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples". As part of the defence team's commitment to support the Government of Canada's reconciliation efforts with indigenous peoples, we have established a working group to look at our policies and practices to inform how we engage and partner with indigenous peoples in accordance with these guiding principles. We must endeavour to continue to gain a better understanding of indigenous culture, acknowledge historical wrongs and build trust.

[Translation]

The Canadian Armed Forces acknowledge that the practice of Indigenous spirituality, traditions and customs is extremely important for its Indigenous members. Policies have been revised to provide opportunities for such practice. In 2017, the first Indigenous advisor to the chaplain general was appointed. He provides training and advice, and has undertaken the writing of a policy for chaplains that reflects the needs of Indigenous personnel.

Multiple activities and commemorations are conducted throughout the year to celebrate the contributions of Indigenous peoples to military service. The flagship activity is the Indigenous awareness week. It was introduced in 1992 and is held every May.

Such initiatives and efforts are informed by the defence aboriginal advisory group. This group helps ensure that the unique voices of our Indigenous members are heard on a multitude of platforms. It advises commanders on issues such as recruitment and retention, and other issues affecting the lives of Indigenous members. It also provides a forum for Indigenous peoples.

Finally, the defence team's relationship with Canada's Indigenous communities must offer benefits to both parties. We're focused on ensuring that our efforts serve to strengthen these uniquely important communities, not only to support the broader purpose of reconciliation, but equally with a view to fostering a work culture that attracts future soldiers, sailors and aviators of all backgrounds. This will make the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces a true employer of choice for future generations, reflective of the diversity and values of the Canadian population.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I look forward to answering your questions.

I'll now leave the floor to Rear-Admiral Luc Cassivi.

• (1540)

Rear-Admiral Luc Cassivi (Defence Champion, Gender and Diversity for Operations, Department of National Defence): Thank you, Mr. Chair and committee members.

My name is Rear-Admiral Luc Cassivi, and I'm the commander of the Canadian Defence Academy. However, I'm here today in my capacity as the defence team champion for gender and diversity for operations.

It's my pleasure to appear before this committee today to provide you with some background on the work being done within the defence team on diversity and inclusion.

As you all know, in June 2017, the government released a new defence policy entitled "Strong, Secure, Engaged," which set out a clear commitment, on the part of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, to reflect the Canadian ideals of diversity, respect and inclusion.

[*English*]

This is not a new concept for National Defence, but we are bringing new energy to our efforts to build a workforce that values the depth and richness of the experiences, perspectives and human capabilities which exist through diversity. The strength of diversity in Canadian society is a strategic asset that makes us unique. We believe that a defence team composed of members of diverse backgrounds, languages, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender and so on is an operational and institutional advantage. It provides the defence team with more depth to plan and conduct operations around the globe and to develop more comprehensive policies and provide better institutional leadership.

"Strong, Secure, Engaged" contains five diversity- and inclusiveness-related initiatives, of which the appointment of a champion for

diversity is one. Last summer, the deputy minister and the chief of the defence staff appointed a team of six dedicated executives to fill this commitment. Three of us form an executive team as co-champions for gender diversity for operations, including me as the lead champion, Chief Warrant Officer Colleen Halpin, who represents the non-commissioned members, and Ms. Isabelle Daoust, who represents our defence team civilians. Additionally, we have two champions for gender-based analysis, Commodore Josée Kurtz and Ms. Lisa Vandehei, as well as one champion, Brigadier-General Lise Bourgon, focused on women, peace and security issues.

The mission we have set for ourselves is to support a culture of inclusion within the defence team. That means encouraging an environment where defence team members see our differences as strengths, recognizing that individuals of different backgrounds, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation and culture will all contribute in different yet equally valuable ways, because those differences make us stronger and more effective both in the boardroom and on the battlefield.

This will require a sustained commitment to cultural change so that we can move beyond needing directives and training that tell us to accept diversity and instead help us to arrive at a point where diversity is understood and embraced as a core institutional value. As a starting point, we need to refocus on our core values and ethics, especially our commitment to respect the dignity of all persons.

My work as champion is focused on how we can achieve or advance these efforts. In my position as commander of the Canadian Defence Academy, I am able to have a direct impact on the culture of the Canadian Armed Forces through our education system. As such, we are conducting a review of "Duty with Honour", our foundational leadership manual that outlines our values, ethics and military ethos. I am also focused on how I can reinforce and complement the roles played by the defence team employment equity champions through engaged leadership, coaching, mentoring, accountability and strategic engagement with both internal and external audiences.

[*Translation*]

As you'll hear from my colleagues, there's much more work being done to champion the contributions of our women, Indigenous Canadians and members of visible minority groups to the defence team, while also giving voice to their concerns and challenges so we can adapt and improve our policies and processes where needed.

I'm proud to support these efforts to help improve our understanding of how we can address systemic challenges and barriers across all groups, while also providing a voice for those communities that aren't currently represented.

Lastly, I want to thank you again for the opportunity to speak to you today, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Mr. Chair, with your permission, I'll give the floor to my colleague, Commodore Patterson.

● (1545)

[English]

Commodore Rebecca Patterson (Defence Champion, Women, Department of National Defence): Mr. Chairman and committee members, thank you very much for inviting me to participate in your study on diversity in the Canadian Armed Forces.

[Translation]

As the defence champion for women, I'm responsible for working with defence advisory committees and ensuring that the cause of women's equality in National Defence remains a well-supported priority. I also help commemorate and celebrate the achievements of women in defence while increasing awareness of the challenges still facing many women within this organization.

[English]

Women have played a significant role in the defence of our country for more than 100 years. For almost 20 years, women have been fully integrated in all occupations and roles within the Canadian Armed Forces. Today, women can enrol in any occupation and can serve with distinction in any environment.

Men and women are considered equals in our organization. In all trades, CAF men and women are selected for training, promotions, postings, and any career opportunity in exactly the same way: based on rank, qualifications and merit.

As of January 2019, there were 15,116 women in the Canadian Armed Forces, which represents 15.7% of our total force. Of these women, 13 are general officers and flag officers, and 57 are chief warrant officers or chief petty officers, first class, in other words, the senior leadership cadre within the Canadian Armed Forces.

Fundamentally, we recognize the importance of building a defence team that reflects the society we serve, but we have also learned through experience that gender diversity is essential for achieving operational effectiveness and tackling complex operational challenges.

This is why Canada's defence policy, "Strong, Secure, Engaged", puts diversity and gender equality among its top priorities for the Canadian Armed Forces. This is also why we're taking steps to increase the percentage of women in the military from 15% to 25% by 2026.

To succeed at attracting and retaining women, the CAF has undertaken a number of initiatives. For example, we have established a "tiger team" composed of representatives from across the Canadian Armed Forces, the federal government and the private sector to examine recruiting strategies for women joining the military. In 2017 we launched a pilot program, women in force, to give women looking to join the military an opportunity to learn about the different facets of military life prior to enrolling. We've also introduced policies and practices that promote a healthy family and work-life balance.

We acknowledge that we need to do more to create a safer and more welcoming environment for women.

The Defence Women's Advisory Organization provides a forum for members of the defence team to be heard, and it assists us in identifying and resolving any systemic issues that may be adversely affecting the full contribution of women within defence.

Career management and progression, in particular, has been identified as a key issue for women in the Canadian Armed Forces. We are working to address this, in part by facilitating more mentorship and coaching from women leaders.

[Translation]

Sexual misconduct also continues to be a problem in the Canadian Armed Forces. Women are disproportionately affected, and this can be a barrier to retention.

In my substantive role, I'm the Director General of the Canadian Armed Forces strategic response team for sexual misconduct. In the past three years, the Canadian Armed Forces has taken definitive action to address all forms of sexual misconduct, through operation honour, but there's still much work to do. We're fully committed to continuing our efforts to better support victims, while working to reshape our culture to ensure respect and dignity for all.

[English]

Thank you. I welcome your questions.

The Chair: Thank you, Commodore.

I will ask the members to check—I know you have two or three devices—that their ringers are off. I would appreciate that.

To our guests, I know that many of you have appeared before, but if you see this, perhaps you could wind down slowly with 30 seconds to go. Also, you could glance at me once in a while, because sometimes I'm trying to get your attention. It's the same for my colleagues, but I'll cut them off. I don't want to cut you off.

I'm going to give the first seven-minute period to MP Robillard.

[Translation]

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

I want to thank the witnesses for joining us and for their excellent presentations.

I have a first general question for all of you. In recent weeks, committee witnesses have spoken about the potential benefits of a mentoring program on diversity in the armed forces. The implementation of this type of program is part of the Canadian Armed Forces' diversity strategy. Can you inform us of the latest progress of this initiative?

● (1550)

LGen Charles Lamarre: I'll answer first.

The mentoring program isn't yet formally in place. It will be implemented as part of the ongoing review of the Canadian Armed Forces' diversity strategy. However, I can assure you that relationships with mentors have already been established, including on a formal basis.

In the chain of command, all senior officers are responsible for promoting the development of members under their command. This is done in a very formal way through interviews, but also in a more informal way through everyday conversations.

Many people are also accustomed to meeting with their superiors or with individuals who have more experience in their field of expertise, such as artillery, to seek advice and guidance for the purpose of advancing their careers.

We also know that a great deal of formal and informal mentoring is done on the women's side. This has been going on for a number of years. The mentoring has been paying off, as Commodore Patterson explained in her presentation. An increasing number of high-ranking women are moving into key command or leadership positions.

Mr. Yves Robillard: Can you also tell us how this initiative is viewed within the armed forces?

LGen Charles Lamarre: In terms of how the initiative is viewed, I can share only my opinion and tell you that the mentoring program seems appreciated and well received. In addition, according to the internal surveys conducted by my research team, people trust that their chain of command will take care of them, ensure their development and solve their issues, and that the annual evaluation process is very fair.

Mr. Yves Robillard: One objective of the diversity strategy is to implement a framework for measuring the performance and evaluating the effectiveness of the strategy. Can you tell the committee about the status of the performance measurement framework and the indicators that have been developed to evaluate the implementation of the strategy?

LGen Charles Lamarre: As I said earlier, we're closely monitoring the number of women, Indigenous people and members of visible minority groups in the Canadian Armed Forces. Regarding the last two categories, of course we must hope that they've identified themselves as such to the Canadian Forces.

If I take the example of the number of new recruits, 562 women enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces in the 2015-16 fiscal year, 575 in the following fiscal year and 860 in the 2017-18 fiscal year. These figures prove that we're monitoring the situation properly and that we're achieving success.

Mr. Yves Robillard: When it comes to women, members of the LGBTQ2+ community or visible minorities, retention is a fundamental issue for diversity in our armed forces.

The "Strong, Secure, Engaged" defence policy states that a comprehensive Canadian Armed Forces retention strategy would be implemented. Can you describe how the diversity strategy and retention strategy are complementary?

LGen Charles Lamarre: I'll answer your question in English for terminology reasons.

Mr. Yves Robillard: Okay, Mr. Lamarre.

[English]

LGen Charles Lamarre: The whole idea of making sure we're achieving diversity in the Canadian Armed Forces is based on a number of things.

First is to set the conditions for what we're trying to do, not only the recruiting that's taking place right now, but the conditions backed by research, by the director general, military personnel research and analysis, an organization that works for me. Dr. Kelly Farley heads that piece. He has about 76 Ph.D. scientists who work for him to do research into the human condition, into the human personnel issues. Based on the research these folks conduct, which ranges from everything about retention for women in the regular and the reserve force to anything related to racial diversity or discrimination and the like; these are research projects that they have under way or completed.

We then looked at the next part of the information that we use to put in place what we're calling Operation Generation, a formal look at how we do recruiting on an annual basis in the Canadian Armed Forces. It was signed off by the CDS and the deputy minister. As a result of that, we now have a formalized system that uses a targeted approach to get the people we want to get in the Canadian Armed Forces, whether it be women, visible minorities or indigenous people.

We have to back that up, however, with policies that support that aspect. I mentioned some in my opening comments, the whole idea of making it so people who are from, as an example, visible minorities can see themselves in the Canadian Armed Forces and feel comfortable that their religious affiliation or even just their dress is respected, and we very much do that. It's a proud moment when you're on a graduating parade at RMC and you see proud, young Sikh men wearing the full beard and turban and they're wearing the scarlets.

We go from there to changing our environmental culture and get into the practical things, everything related to how the clothing is designed to fit men and women, but things like education as well, to demystify how it is to be in the armed forces, to avoid having people self-select out, which can be a problem for us. We want to make sure they can see that they can join and have success.

● (1555)

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

MP Martel.

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Good afternoon.

I'm pleased to see you today.

I'm looking at your titles here. There's the champion for gender and diversity and the champion for Indigenous peoples, but is there a champion for official languages?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes. It's me.

Mr. Richard Martel: I didn't see it here. Do you think that there are still untapped resources in terms of linguistic diversity?

LGen Charles Lamarre: In fact, I think that linguistic diversity is thriving in the Canadian Forces. Right now, of course, we're spending money to train our world. We've also established certain levels of bilingualism required to reach the next rank. This is done very formally. We provide second-language training, but we also assess, in our annual reports and selection boards, the people who want to take language training for promotion purposes.

You have before you a bilingual senior officer. We've adopted a bilingualism policy that applies to senior officers and senior non-commissioned officers in the Canadian Forces. Most officers in key or senior positions are fully bilingual.

We're reviewing the policy to seek, at the beginning of their careers, the people who will be given the opportunity to work in a meritocracy with regard to learning a second language, so that they can progress and reach higher ranks.

Mr. Richard Martel: We have a base in our area, in Bagotville. If military members come to Bagotville, they can certainly become bilingual much more easily. I may have an incomplete picture of the situation. However, among the military members who haven't been to the Bagotville base, I haven't seen many who are proficient in French.

LGen Charles Lamarre: That's surprising.

I'll provide an example. When my spouse entered the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, she spoke only English. She came out of the school fully bilingual three years later. We're trying to ensure as much as possible that people can learn a language through contact.

I pointed out that we'll be changing the policy on language training. Currently, 70% of the people who enter the recruit school in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu are anglophone and 30% are francophone. In terms of the instructors, the opposite is true, meaning 70% are francophone and 30% are anglophone. They want to stay in their area. With our new policy, we'll force people to work more often in a second-language environment, which will help them become bilingual.

Of course, the family issue comes up. We've previously given English courses to a young francophone family that arrived in Edmonton to help them progress in their new environment.

Mr. Richard Martel: Thank you.

Do you have anything to add, Mr. Lanthier?

• (1600)

LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier: We're talking about diversity and official languages, but there are other languages and cultures.

For example, during the last week of January, I was with 32 Canadian Brigade Group. The group is part of the reserve force, in Toronto. Over one hundred languages are spoken by members of the brigade.

This is an incredible strength, because along with language comes ethnicity, culture and a way of seeing things. This is an advantage, because it helps us reach the communities. It increases our genetic

potential to recruit, because we can reach more groups. In addition, from an operational standpoint, it gives us an advantage when we deploy an expeditionary operation. We can count on the second or even first generation members who come from the countries where we travel.

This aspect goes far beyond the two official languages. I think this aspect is an incredible strength that, in the case of the army, lies mainly within the reserve force, because the reserve force remains local. The reserve force is based in over 127 communities across the country.

RAdm Luc Cassivi: I want to add that it's also important to ensure that, as part of the review of our policies, we also consider Canadians who join us and whose first language isn't English or French.

They face greater challenges, both in meeting the standards required for professional development and in reaching higher ranks. We must ensure that we have supportive policies to address these barriers so that these members can progress on their own.

Mr. Richard Martel: My next question is for Ms. Patterson.

I know that the mentality and culture with regard to women is currently changing in the Canadian Forces. I want to know how we could assess the improvement in the situation. We're told that the situation is already much better and that assault cases are identified more often. However, how could we know that mentalities are changing? We know that there's a deep-rooted cultural issue.

Is there a way to measure this improvement in terms of a percentage? We're dealing a bit with the unknown, even if we believe that things have improved. We need to believe this.

[English]

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: If you don't mind, I'll answer in English.

Mr. Richard Martel: Go ahead. Absolutely.

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: You have certainly pointed out something that is a challenge: How do we evaluate and measure cultural change and a change in attitudes? I'll point back to some of the work that is being done to reinforce the values from the moment a recruit goes through basic training, where we talk about what acceptable behaviour is. We know that we can tell people to do things, but how do we actually measure that it's done? We use surveys.

I'll use my current work in sexual misconduct as an example. We do qualitative surveys, "Your Say" surveys and Statistics Canada surveys, that measure people's attitudes and beliefs towards various topics.

I've received a white card, sir.

The Chair: Thank you for noticing.

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: I'll yield the floor to MP Hardcastle.

Welcome.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome. This is a really intriguing discussion.

I'd like to continue on Mr. Martel's theme but go a bit further.

The difficulty is measuring and evaluating, but I've also heard us talking about our diversity strategy in terms of recruiting diverse people from diverse communities and bringing them in. Does something exist or is it still emerging? What are we doing about recruitment in general to evaluate and measure any new recruit's level of understanding of diversity culture, let's say, in terms of where they're starting off and how much work the organization has to do?

I heard that there is some research being used or being tapped into in terms of the human condition, but that's a difficult question, isn't it? It's not just about educating people inside. It's not just about educating a diverse community to demystify the armed forces and say, "Oh, we are welcoming. We are changed."

How are you measuring? Do you recognize that this is a challenge that has to be done? I'm willing to take the rest of my time to have that loose conversation. It's extremely intriguing. I don't know; I think that's the first time I've seen it written as carefully as "inculcate a culture of diversity"—at the recruitment level, I would say. That's where I'd like to stick with my time, if we could.

•(1605)

LGen Charles Lamarre: I'll jump in on that one and talk about the recruitment level, just to close off, because it will become important. You're asking about how we measure as well, and it's a follow-on to what Commodore Patterson was putting in there.

We also do the measure by a survey that's called "Your Say", and that occurs twice a year. That would go out to the Canadian Armed Forces and we ask people to answer a number of questions. They can range over a broad number of things, such as, have you ever been exposed to racist behaviour, or do you have confidence in your chain of command to be able to look after a complaint if you bring it forward. That's, indeed, to help us to figure out what it is that's going on and how are members are perceiving it.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Is that a mandatory survey, if I may ask?

LGen Charles Lamarre: It's not mandatory. We ask for people do it. But we get a great rate of return on it. Over 10,000 people answered the last one. When you're looking at that, it's a pretty good sample size for the research that's in there.

But if I can come back to how we evaluate a recruit's understanding, when the recruits go through the process of joining, they ultimately go through a Canadian Forces aptitude test which measures their cognitive abilities. They also have to go through an interview process. As part of the interview process, we indicate to them what it is that we expect as behaviour in the Canadian Armed Forces. There has to be an acknowledgement from them that it's a place where you cannot discriminate based on a number of things. You can anticipate what they are. It's your sexual orientation, your gender, your age, those types of things.

After that, when they come in to the recruiting school, the leadership and recruiting school in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, they then have to undergo a number of things that relate to training, inculcating the aspects that we consider to be the values and ethics of

the Canadian Armed Forces. Every single soldier coming in as a regular force soldier undergoes six hours of training over three different weeks that look and make sure that he or she understands what our values are, but also understands the tenets of Operation Honour. That's taught not only by the section commander, but also by the commandant of the school in the fifth week of the course. For the officers it's 6.6 hours during that same period of time. The training for those two groups is 10 weeks and 12 weeks, respectively, for the junior NCOs and for the officers coming in.

Along the way, we make sure that we not only expose the recruits to what is expected behaviour, but also that they get taught what the expected behaviour is. If they actually run afoul of those behaviours, then we have the administrative and disciplinary measures available to us. Every now and again you will have folks who come in and display the kind of behaviour that's unacceptable, whether it be racist or whether it be sexualized behaviour that's not conforming with our ethics and values, and if we cannot correct it we'll get rid of those individuals before we invest too much time in them.

RAdm Luc Cassivi: What's important too is to follow through. It's great to have six to 6.6 hours of training, but then there's a reinforcement through career and through exemplary leadership, through leaders speaking openly about a situation that happened in the workplace where bad behaviour takes place. It's reinforcing our code of ethics, to respect the dignity of all persons, but also having candid discussions when a situation happens to reinforce what good behaviour is, why we need that respectful environment, and point out the negative impact it has on the unit, it has on the people, and that we can't do that to each other. We all volunteered to serve this country. That is worthy of a high level of respect by all right there.

It's this constant reinforcement. What we're trying to do is to continue to equip those, particularly young leaders, who are the first line as supervisors with new folks, to feel confident in having those discussions. We want them to have the tools, to have the framework, and to feel confident to advance that forward. That will take time.

In measuring it as to the results, I think we're still trying to find what the right metrics are. As we advance our defence analytics framework, there's an opportunity to exploit that and to understand more of what's happening under the surface.

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: I'd also like to add, too, that when you're actually talking about going beyond the organizational climate to cultural change, using very traditional models we know isn't successful. Coming from my domain, I know some bits are but other bits aren't. Therefore, one of the key pieces is engaging those that do and basically using our junior leaders at the most coal face level and having them talk the talk, walk the walk, model the behaviour. As we move forward, at least in the domain I'm working with on a day-to-day basis, we're actually looking at it as one of our primary prevention tools: leadership modelling, creating that climate because it sets the conditions in order to actually start measuring what the change is going to be down the way.

• (1610)

The Chair: That's good timing.

MP Spengemann.

Mr. Sven Spengemann (Mississauga—Lakeshore, Lib.): Chair, thank you very much.

I would like to thank all four of you for being with us and for your service, and through you, I thank the women and men whom you command and represent for their service.

We had previous testimony from witnesses who raised the question with a debate on whether diversity and inclusion is about the right to work and serve in the Canadian Forces or whether it's about improving the operational effectiveness of the armed forces. Is it one? Is it both for you? How is that debate shaping up inside the Canadian Forces as you go through diversity, inclusion and cultural reform?

LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier: I can start.

LGen Charles Lamarre: Maybe I will still go in there. But you can tell there's an eagerness to be able to do it.

Is it a question of a right to serve or making the armed forces better? It's really a combination of both. By law, if you're a Canadian citizen you have the right to serve. We want you to serve. We're always on the search for talent. That's the important thing.

I think making it stronger is what it is. We keep talking about talent. Our responsibility is to have a 100,000-person force that can fight at the far end of the world and look after Canadians here in Canada. We want to get the folks who can make this happen.

You can see how it is getting challenging all around the world to get that search for talent, if you will. We need to be in the thick of things and make sure we can get that talent.

If anything, that's one thing that comes to the question you were asking about recruiting.

How important is it to broaden this? It's very important to us. We realize we've had an under-representation of women in the Canadian Armed Forces. Yet if you look at Canadian universities and colleges and stuff like that, most faculties now are bulging with women as opposed to men.

We need a combination of all sorts of folks, intellectuals who can bring us forward in a number of areas, but also hands-on folks who are going to make other things happen. Just robust Canadians to come and join.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: That's all?

Okay, good. Thank you.

Picking up on that, the chair mentioned our recent trip to Mali. Again, it's tremendous work; tremendous teams are doing difficult work. It's a complex conflict in Mali.

This shift from state-to-state conflict to essentially interstate conflict is popping up more and more. I might be asking the obvious, but how has diversity and inclusion called for or offered us an opportunity to do work that is qualitatively different in those types of conflicts?

What kind of strengths are you seeing on the ground, in the field, with more diverse and inclusionary Canadian Forces?

LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier: I've spent over 18 months in Afghanistan, working directly with the Afghan National Security Forces.

In late 2000, the concept of female engagement teams came forward. It was deployed initially mostly by our allies. The understanding, despite what appears to be initially a very patriarchal society, is that the role of women in society in Afghanistan is critically important. What happens in a compound is that the rule of the house is led by the ladies. To be able to break that cultural barrier through the use of a female engagement team allowed us to understand culture and influence over and above the military's traditional means. Here's a clear example of where gender really matters.

As I mentioned, it's the ability to have a diverse force not only just in operations, but when you come into an organization with different beliefs, different paradigms and different approaches. I'll speak as the champion for indigenous people. They were looking at medicine credentials and medicine and healing, which is highly based in spiritual offers, things we don't necessarily explore. It brings new avenues, new ways of looking at critical things. It makes us more effective, more efficient. For me it plays a tremendous role.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Thank you very much.

I'm going to shift gears and talk about two things that are less frequently talked about but very much fit into the topic under discussion.

One is age and the other is gender diversity. Often the reflex is to talk about LGBTQ2+.

What about Canadians with non-binary genders? In that context I want to acknowledge the approach we've taken in the Canadian Forces compared to some other militaries that have banned certain citizens in their jurisdictions from serving.

Do you want to say a few things about age, experience, the Canadian Forces as a potentially second career outside the reserves? In the reg forces—and Canadians of non-binary gender?

• (1615)

LGen Charles Lamarre: I'll offer a couple of comments for both and after that pass it on to my colleagues.

First of all, on the age, we don't discriminate on the basis of age. We have folks who have joined the Canadian Armed Forces later on in their lives, oftentimes having had successful first careers and then having the chance to consider things. These folks, though, have to meet all of our aptitude tests, and that includes physical fitness. For universality of service, you have to be fit and able to be deployed to wherever you're asked to go. We have folks who continue to serve and who serve very well. Some of them have joined as late as in their fifties.

On the issue of gender diversity, we do have a policy that recognizes we will have folks who might be at the point in their lives of changing, and we support them when they do that. That starts right from the time they identify themselves to their chain of command, as well as a medical chain that is familiar and attuned with what the process is. It's a very disciplined approach, too, to make sure that these folks going through this are being supported properly when they go through it. We have people in my headquarters who have gone the whole range of switching from being men to being women and who continue to serve with us and do very well. Young officers and troops scattered throughout the Canadian Armed Forces go through this process.

I believe there's a recognition within that community that you will get a fair shake if you come and join the Canadian Armed Forces.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: That's excellent.

Would anyone else like to comment?

RAdm Luc Cassivi: If I may, as a member of one of the communities, I think we've made tremendous progress in this, which is measurable both on the aggressiveness with which policies were adapted and in the way we've been able to then evolve from what initially was being lesbian to the growing segments of the spectrum of identity. The non-binary spectrum is just another...I won't say it's just vocabulary, but it's just another complement to what we've already done. I think the ability for us moving forward there is quite easy. We're one of the principal employers of transgender and non-binary people in the country and we're proud of it.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: That's perfect. Thank you.

I don't see the white flag just yet, Mr. Chair—

The Chair: You have seven seconds for a question and response, though, so....

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: I'm going to pass the floor to MP Dzerowicz for five minutes.

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

Thank you for your excellent presentations.

I've worked only in male-dominated professions. It's very easy for there to be a co-opting there without really realizing it, a co-opting of thinking. It's very subtle. To what extent are senior leaders or any of your diversity recruiters taking unconscious bias courses? Is that something that happens right now?

RAdm Luc Cassivi: We have some courses across our professional development framework that introduce the concept of bias and bias awareness. We do 360° evaluations at certain levels in the leaders' progression. We also are directing a lot more curation of material through our self-development pillar. We've generated a self-development website with recommended readings, and we encourage people to take the tests that are available online, realize and understand their biases and understand how they impact their decision-making and the people around them. We're not as mature as we could be in that, and we need to do that—

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Excuse me. I have less time than my colleagues.

Do you think it would be a good idea if we encouraged everybody above a particular level to do an unconscious bias training session or course? Do you think it would be helpful?

LGen Charles Lamarre: If I can talk about it for just one second, to carry on with what Admiral Cassivi was saying, we don't have it encouraged across all levels or anything like that. What I can tell you, though, is that we're looking at specific aspects where the bias can be dangerous for us.

For example, our Canadian Forces aptitude test, by which we test every single person trying to come and join the Canadian Armed Forces, is being specifically examined for any aspects of bias right now, because we consider that to be a problem we would like to rectify if it exists. The other aspect of it is that we're looking at all our recruiters within the recruiting system to give them, as part of their training, an awareness of bias so that they themselves don't help to select people out through the use of bias.

I am not familiar with an institutionalization of training everybody on the issue of bias.

• (1620)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Yes. It's just that I wonder whether that would be helpful in actually changing culture as well.

I'm going to move to the next question, as unfortunately I have very little time.

I've also worked within a large organization where we tried to increase diversity, but senior leaders were incented to do so. Is there any incentivization that actually exists to ensure that we are increasing diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces?

LGen Charles Lamarre: It's called orders. I'm not trying to make light of it, but for us, it's specifically that we've been given the mandate to do those, and it's a mission we take very, very seriously.

We have, first of all, the direction to go forward and do it. That's why we're setting all the conditions I was talking about, why we're doing the research to help us to achieve it and why it is that we want to make sure that we make the necessary changes to the culture and everything else to encourage it. That's the first one.

But much more importantly, it brings me to my first piece. It's the whole aspect of talent. When you're looking at bringing in people to operate the complex systems we have, we just have to go out there and get it. If you're not actually going to look at, for example, getting more female recruits to come in, you're cutting yourself off from 52% of the Canadian population. First of all, we're told to do it, but more importantly it's the talent aspect that's driving it. We're not incentivizing individual people to go and do it, but we are indeed saying that you're going to benefit from what is out there.

The only level at which we formally incentivize is the recruiting level. We go to recruiting centres and we say this is what we want to bring in. The recruiting group is actually assessed as to how they're going to meet the requirements we've identified through an annual military occupational review, the system through which we create our strategic intake plan.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: When did the orders start? Did they start a few years ago? Did they start five years ago? Did they start two years ago?

LGen Charles Lamarre: We've seen various efforts along the way. If you remember, there was a time when military colleges did not have any women in them, and all of a sudden, a decision was made in the early 1980s to include women in the classes. There was some hard slogging, but we're at the point now where it's taken place.

This one in particular, though, to reach the specific figure of 25% by 2026, has come as a result of us having a new "Strong, Secure, Engaged" and the targets that were given to us in that.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: I have just a quick comment, because I think my time is up.

I just find that it goes too slowly even with orders. This is my sense about it. I also was very fortunate to be part of the trip to Mali, and 14.3% of those who are serving there are women. Below the logistics officers, human resources administrator, mobile air movement, nursing, and intelligence officer, everybody was one or two, so there are very few. When I asked why more do not actually apply, the answer was that, well, they didn't meet the requirements.

Anyway, I do think there's probably a need for some sort of incentive. I will wait until maybe another opportunity to ask some other questions.

The Chair: There might be an opportunity at the end. There might be some time for that.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Thank you.

The Chair: I'm going to give the floor to MP Gallant.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As I'm sure you're aware, Justice Marie Deschamps appeared before this committee on February 7, when she gave us her opinion on Operation Honour as it compares to her original 10 recommendations. She said there's a real disconnect between the intention behind the recommendations and the way they were actually implemented. She recommended a centre for accountability with a lot of responsibility. Operation Honour was created to be a response centre with, in her words, "a tiny bit of responsibility". So why is

there the disconnect between her recommendations and the reality of Operation Honour?

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: As you know, it is a challenge to grow anything. There is no other institution in Canada that's actually tried to approach sexual misconduct as we have, so her recommendations were welcomed and accepted. We admit that our initial attempts weren't quite where they needed to be. The sexual misconduct response centre, once it was stood up, had to grow. It started off dealing with the most critical issue and it was supporting those victims who were affected by sexual misconduct.

However, we've been very fortunate to have gone through the Auditor General's report, and we once again welcome the recommendations that came out there, but it says, okay, you need to really look at this now. So we really are in what I call a shifting moment, where we have hit a critical mass within the sexual misconduct response centre, and the mandate of the SMRC is in the process of going. In fact, as of now, Dr. Preston is the lead of Operation Honour, and I am in the supporting role of creating the products and the pieces for the institution to make us go forward.

We are getting there. We still have work to do, but we welcome her review and her further comments, and we are acting on them now.

• (1625)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: I see that you are in uniform, and Justice Deschamps specifically wanted an independent response centre. So is that aspect of her recommendation unwilling to be honoured?

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: That is, in fact, the case, because I am not part of the sexual misconduct response centre, and the sexual misconduct response centre is not within the Canadian Armed Forces. It's sitting within the Department of National Defence. Dr. Preston leads her own team. She sets her own priorities and objectives, and I am there to support her and to help facilitate what needs to be done. So yes, she is in fact independent, and the centre is independent from the Canadian Armed Forces.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: That independence, would that mean there is absolutely no osmosis between the Department of National Defence and the chain of command?

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: I guess it would depend on what we're referring to, but Dr. Preston is the one who makes the decisions on how victims will be supported. She is the expert in her area of expertise, and provides advice, guidance and direction, using this authoritative voice that you've heard about, to the chain of command, and I then make it happen.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Did you say "to the chain of command"?

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: Yes, to the Canadian Armed Forces.

Dr. Preston will come in and she will say a victim support strategy, for example, in supporting victims. We stand by for her expert input on what that looks like, what they need to do and what we need to do to help make this happen.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Is there a way to look at what her recommendations are and what was actually implemented, if given permission by someone who went through the call centre for help?

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: I know that Dr. Preston will be here to present in front of the committee, and she will have more details on what they're doing, but that process is under way right now. She is in the lead of going through and making the comparisons, and also using the victims' voice and putting them at the centre of everything she is doing.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: The Auditor General's 2018 fall report showed that there was a spike in third party reporting of inappropriate sexual behaviour leading to investigations, which the victim did not want done or was not yet ready to pursue.

Justice Deschamps told this committee that this is the opposite of her recommendation, which was supposed to support the anonymous victims until they were ready to file a complaint, and only then begin investigations outside the chain of command.

Why was her advice not taken? I recognize that you're building. Why was her advice not taken to place the responsibility for investigations completely outside the chain of command? The military police are part of the investigation, and from there on up the commanders are aware of exactly what is going on.

The Chair: I'm going to have to hold that question. There will be time at the end, MP Gallant. Let me know if you'd like more time.

I'm going to yield the floor to MP Chen.

Welcome to the defence committee.

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all the witnesses for being here today.

In 2016, the Auditor General released his report on recruiting and retention in the Canadian Armed Forces. Specifically he said, in section 5.25 of his report:

We found that although the Canadian Armed Forces had established a goal for the representation of women among its ranks, it set this overall goal with no specific targets by occupation. We also found that despite the fact that achieving this goal depends heavily on increased recruiting, the Canadian Armed Forces had not implemented any special employment equity measures....

The AG went on to say in his recommendations:

The Canadian Armed Forces should establish appropriate representation goals for women [in] each occupation. It should also develop and implement measures to achieve them.

We're now in 2019. Have we implemented what the AG has recommended?

LGen Charles Lamarre: We're in the process of doing exactly that.

First of all, on the recommendation by occupation, we reflect a bit what you see in society. We can point to eight occupations in the Canadian Armed Forces where the majority of women like to work, and a lot of them relate to health care. Forty-eight per cent of all the members in the Canadian Armed Forces health service are women. We see the same thing in support and administration, those kinds of occupations.

We don't have that many women who actually want to go into and become infantry soldiers. We encourage them when they're coming through, and we're seeing a growth in that aspect as well. We believe that once you begin having more people there, you will see a corresponding growth because there will be leaders who go forward.

Right now a number of our key combat arms lieutenant-colonels, the level at which they command units, are women and this is in the combat arms work, and of course for Jean Lanthier, and these are the kinds of folks you're starting to see pierce through there, so leadership is starting to emerge.

As for being able to cite targets for each occupation, the reality is that we are setting targets for anybody for each occupation, and we encourage women, when they show up, to go into non-traditional ones and the ones where we have the most need.

For example, we're looking to increase the number of sonar operators we have to make sure we can maintain our ships and have them sailing properly. When women are coming in, we're making sure that shows up as a priority occupation.

If we spend a bit of time, we can see that, on our recruiting websites, all of those priority occupations are there, and again, the emphasis is put on making sure women can see that they're welcome in each one of those occupations.

● (1630)

Mr. Shaun Chen: Are visible minorities and indigenous peoples included in that encouragement in those particular occupations where they are under-represented?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes, they are. If you go in there and look at some of the products we have, you can tell that we have representation. We use men and women who are serving in the Canadian Armed Forces right now to represent those communities, so that, indeed, prospective candidates can see themselves when they're looking to recruit into the Canadian Armed Forces.

Mr. Shaun Chen: In 2016, the chief of the defence staff stated that the goal is to have 25% women, that the forces would increase by 1% each year.

I like numbers, so I drew a little table here. In 2016 there were 14.4% women and currently there are 15.7%. The goal is to have 25.1% in 2026, so there's a long way to go. When it comes to indigenous peoples, in 2016 it was 2.7% and currently it is 2.8%. That is not much of a change over two and a half years. The goal is 3.5% in 2026. Finally, with respect to visible minorities, it was 6% in 2016 and is currently 8.7%. The goal is to have 11.8%.

Out of the three groups we are looking at, the visible minority group seems to be making the most progress. How are we going to fill the gap for women and indigenous people? Are you confident that you're going to be able to meet those targets that are set for 2026?

LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier: I'll use the number as the champion for indigenous people.

For example, on the number of recruits, if you take the percentage of recruits who were indigenous, self-declared indigenous, 3.2% of recruits were indigenous last year in the numbers, so it shows that trend.

I run six different programs in the summer to encourage indigenous people. We had an initial intake last year of 223. I've created two new programs in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and the intake this year will be 340. To go from 2,800 indigenous people to about 3,400 to meet those targets, we need to recruit approximately 200 indigenous folks a year. Last year we recruited 162, so with my throughput, I'm very confident we'll get there.

Mr. Shaun Chen: So you're getting there, good. I have one final question.

Lieutenant-General Lamarre, you said in your testimony earlier, "I know of many members who do not self-identify as belonging to any group within visible minorities" and "They do not want to be known for being a minority".

That comment got my back up, because I wear my racialized identity. The salience of race prohibits anyone from not being able to identify what their racialized identity is.

How did you get this information? I did not read that coming out of the Auditor General's report. Can you explain to me how you came to that conclusion?

The Chair: I'm going to have to hold it there. There will be time at the end, so if you're interested just—

LGen Charles Lamarre: I really would like to have a chance to come back and answer that one specifically, if I could.

The Chair: I think it's important we get back to it, and there will be time.

MP Bezan has the floor now. He can continue or proceed with his own line of questioning.

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

I thank our witnesses for being here and thank them for their service to Canada.

I just want to clarify, General Lamarre. You referred to Operation Generation. Is that the recruitment strategy that the Canadian—

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes, sir, that's correct.

Mr. James Bezan: Is that a document that you'd be able to share with the committee? Is it public?

LGen Charles Lamarre: I'd be happy to share that with the committee. It's a formal order that is signed off by the CDS and deputy minister. It talks about how we're operationalizing recruiting, including how it is that we have all the L1s. I am the supporting

commander for that operation. It's a departure from how we used to do things.

We used to do recruiting, which was supported at a lower level, if you will. In this case, we're bringing it up to a level CDS-DM direction to me as an L1, a level one, and it's with the support of my colleagues, to make sure that we can do things. It talks about how we set when we want to have a strategic intake plan. Also, it talks about how it is that we're going to have the support from our colleagues to make sure that we have the right recruiters at the right time communicating and influencing the men and women in the Canadian population who we want to bring in.

• (1635)

Mr. James Bezan: Just give us a bit of a picture of that. If you're looking at increasing the participation of women in the Canadian Armed Forces, how would that look when you're talking air force, navy and army through Operation Generation?

LGen Charles Lamarre: For each one of them, of course, we want to have the overall 25% by 2026. That's a goal we've set ourselves, because you want to strive for something, so whenever we're going out there, we want to use the types of recruiters and the types of strategies that can help us to increase the number of women, visible minorities and indigenous folks that are going to be in the Canadian Forces.

For example, because we measure all the initiatives we're doing, we've found that when we have young women who are recruiting and appearing in some of our online videos and the like or doing the chat rooms, which we do around the world, the reaction is very, very positive if people can see themselves, so we do emphasize the fact that we need to have more women and more visible minorities in recruiting. As I indicated in my opening statement, that pays a great dividend for us when we are going through and doing it. Op Generation speaks to us to actually go and get those types of recruiters specifically from those environments to come and be part of the recruiting team.

Mr. James Bezan: We had retired Colonel John Selkirk at committee a couple of meetings ago. He's involved with Reserves 2000. Of course, more autonomy has been given to reserve units to go out and do their own recruiting. A large portion of our reserve units across this country are combat arms. They struggle with getting women's participation, though they seem to be having some pretty good success, in certain urban communities, with increasing the participation of visible minorities.

How does Operation Generation tie back into the reserve side of the equation now that extra autonomy is given to each unit?

LGen Charles Lamarre: The autonomy, I think, is well placed. They have a footprint in the community. I'll get General Lanthier to add his comments as well.

It ties in together because we have the overall requirement to recruit. Few folks know this but every year we get approximately 800 to 900 reservists who transfer into the regular force. It's of benefit to us to have that. It does help us down the long road, if you will. From a practical aspect too, however, we share some of the same resources for the screening of potential recruits and also for such things as medical screening of potential recruits.

We need to make sure we're working hand in hand with each other to make sure that the system is able to support the throughput from both the regular and reserve forces in recruiting.

Mr. James Bezan: I still get the odd complaint on how long some of that takes, especially on the medicals and the screening process.

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes, but—

Mr. James Bezan: It's a little bit better than before, but there are still people complaining.

LGen Charles Lamarre: —perhaps I can just add one thing before I pass it on to General Lanthier.

You're absolutely right, and we're very conscious of that. We've reduced significantly some of the processes. I'm not surprised you're still getting some complaints. When we hear about those, we deal with them expeditiously. We have significantly reduced, however, the time for medical screening. It takes something like 14 days less than it did a short while ago. For most young people joining the forces between the ages of 18 to 23, their security screening is accomplished within about five days as opposed to multiple weeks. We've done that.

General.

LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier: One of the great successes of the reserve in attracting diversity is the attachment to the community. With the regular force, you join in St. John's, Newfoundland, but you end up in Shilo, far away from your community. The reserve, because it's local employment, is actually an incentive, because you can join and remain in your community, remain attached to it. For indigenous recruits, three of the largest obstacles to joining the forces are leaving their ancestral lands, leaving their communities, and being afraid that their tradition, culture and customs will not be entertained.

That's why we're now much more efficient. Every time we do an exercise in a northern area or near indigenous people, we do outreach activities to attract them. I think that's the great strength of a reserve—that local footprint, that permanent presence.

The Chair: MP Gerretsen.

• (1640)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Thank you.

Mr. Lamarre, in an exchange with Ms. Dzerowicz, you referenced RMC in the 1980s, when women started attending the Royal Military College. Would you comment on how successful you think we've been over the last 30 years in getting more women into RMC? Would you say it's been a success?

LGen Charles Lamarre: It has been a success, but it's been hard slogging to get there. I think it's reflective of how we have been doing recruiting overall, without having a focus, a targeted approach, towards making it attractive to women and specifically going to get women to come and join our organization. Over the last two years, 25% of the cadets coming into the regular officer training program have been women. We specifically set the target and said we were going to get it there and move those numbers in.

When you're going down to the military colleges right now, both at RMC and at CMR, you're seeing about a 25% representation. I

believe we still need to go forward, however, to make sure we can increase the numbers.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: With RMC, if memory serves me correctly, you have to serve five years afterwards for your university tuition, or your responsibility to pay for it, to be waived. Is that correct?

LGen Charles Lamarre: It is. The payback time is approximately five years.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Do you have any statistics on how many women versus how many men remain in the military after that five-year period? Do you maintain that 25%?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Of the intake? Not necessarily. I need to nuance that a bit—

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: No, sorry; of those who continue on, do you still maintain the roughly 25% women?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Actually, yes. What we do have are statistics. We do an awful lot of self-serving for this, for DGMPPRA. That same organization does research analysis.

We find that women tend to stick around in the same numbers or a little bit more than men do, up to until approximately 20 years of service. It happens to correspond, oftentimes, with where families are, kids at certain stages and everything else. One of the reasons we're going out with a comprehensive family support plan is to make sure that we can increase retention as well.

As far as retaining women in the Canadian Armed Forces, we do see the same numbers as for men, up until about 20 years of service.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Good.

When Mr. Robillard was asking questions in the beginning, you talked a little bit about the recruitment strategies to increase diversity. Can you give some examples of the on-the-ground recruitment strategies? Can you give a couple of examples as to how you specifically do that?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes, I certainly can, if you'll just allow me to go to my notes here.

We have a number of significant pieces, not only in the programs for indigenous youth that General Lanthier was talking about, but we have different places, for example, a number of websites that portray young women who are going through basic training, so they can be followed and seen. We can tell the following-up and everything else. There are approximately 16,000 people who are following these two young women going through training. It helps to demystify what the training looks like.

We also have something called Operation Resurrection. We use the term to go after those files where people have gone quiet. When a young Canadian starts to apply, if they all of a sudden stop the application process, our recruiters actively try to get them back. We get a return rate for reviving the file, if you will, of approximately 30%.

We also have a number of advertising campaigns that are done at various detachments. In St. John's, for example, we are joining up with the College of the North Atlantic, Bonavista campus, for orientations in trade technologies. Specifically, we are trying to encourage those graduates, especially the women graduating from those programs, to join the Canadian Armed Forces.

We're doing this as well in Fredericton, career exploration in trades and technology for women. It is a forum that's being held. We go and actually sponsor the forum, to make sure women can come and see that they can be part of trades and technologies in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Clear across Canada, all of our detachments or recruiting centres undertake to do presence and to do these kinds of engagements, to make sure that we can excite Canadians to come and be part of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Is there any more time, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: There is not, unfortunately.

The last formal question will go to MP Hardcastle.

• (1645)

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Thank you Mr. Chair.

How many minutes do I have this time?

The Chair: You have three, but there will be more at the end.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: I'm trying to figure out how to frame this so that you can just take the rest of the time now.

What are the opportunities? I don't want to just talk or have you defend what you're already doing. How are we going to move the needle? What do you want to see happen? You must, in all of your experience now, see that there are opportunities somewhere that can be leveraged or things that can be done a little bit differently. Where would you like to be bolder with it? Where do you see the need?

Adm Luc Cassivi: I'll share a few things from my side.

I think having more flexibility in advertisement and attraction from a public communications perspective would be a great tool. Our social media presence is helping right now. We have more meaningfully adapted to modern technology and to what interests young people to communicate.

On the retention side, to go back to an earlier intervention, as senior leaders, I think we're doing great in embracing where we need to be from a diversity perspective. I think there are still struggles at the tactical level in some areas such as bias consciousness and what we may not understand or recognize as systemic biases, where we still have progress to make.

LGen Charles Lamarre: If I could add some other pieces, too, when you're looking at taking a generation forward again, some of the initiatives underneath are going to be different. We want to go out there—and I use the word “targeting” because that's what we're doing.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Yes.

LGen Charles Lamarre: We want to go and reach out to influencers, families, community leaders, coaches, teachers—those types of folks. We're gearing up to do that specific communication with those folks.

We know from the long-form surveys, for example, where women live in the Toronto region by postal code. We can break it down by age as well. Our advertising, our presence, our reaching out with letters needs to be within those specific things to make it attractive to people who may never have thought of joining the Canadian Armed Forces. We also believe that we should consider using the mailings that you send to your ridings, to make sure we put in there the opportunities that exist within the Canadian Armed Forces.

All of these are the aspects of reaching out to influence people so that they can actually consider us as people, as an organization where they'll get a fair shake and a chance to succeed. It really is a place where it's a meritocracy, so come and compete, have some fun, and serve your nation.

The Chair: Given the time we have on the clock and the members who indicated they wanted to speak again, I have MPs Hardcastle, Bezan, Gallant, Robillard, Chen and Dzerowicz. We'll give each member five minutes.

MP Chen had a really good discussion going with General Lamarre, and I'll give him the opportunity to continue that conversation.

Mr. Shaun Chen: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I brought up an issue earlier and didn't fully mention my question. Lieutenant-General Lamarre said earlier in his comments, “I know of many members who do not self-identify as belonging to any group within visible minorities” and “They do not want to be known for being a minority.”

One's racial identity is visible and as a Canadian of Chinese descent I wear my Chinese face and I am a very proud Canadian. It is an intrinsic part of my self-identity.

How did Lieutenant-General Lamarre get this information? I know that in the Auditor General's report, as far as I can recall, there was no mention of members of the Canadian Armed Forces and their self-identity and how they identified.

Could I hear from Lieutenant-General Lamarre?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Absolutely. Thanks for raising that point. I'm glad you did because I don't want to have any misconceptions based on that.

The next sentence that I said in my statement is that they want to be identified as part of the Canadian Armed Forces, and that's an important aspect.

I heard from many members as I have as the champion for visible minorities. I have what we call a visible minority advisory group made up of visible minorities within the Canadian Armed Forces. I just met with approximately 30 of them two weeks ago. We talk about a number of issues they bring up.

At one of the previous meetings with them when I first came into the position and as we were standing up Op Generation, how we're going to recruit, I was a bit taken to task. I had members from this advisory group and other individuals who said they didn't want to be known as coming from this or that organization. When they were in, they wanted to be part of the Canadian Armed Forces. One of them, who was a general officer of Japanese ancestry, soon to retire, has been very successful in his career, was the one who took me to task for 15 minutes on this. He said when it first came out that we wanted people to self-identify, he looked upon it as something he did not want to do. He wanted to be known just as a member of the Canadian Armed Forces.

So when I raise the issue, it's not to say that you shouldn't be proud of where you come from, far from it. As Jean-Marc indicated, we gain tremendously from having this wide diversity, but as for them, when they're coming to join the Canadian Armed Forces they want to feel they're coming to be part of this team. I think that's one of the big things. It's a powerful feeling for them. I had both young and older members from visible minorities, different ethnic backgrounds, who said they first and foremost want to be identified as a member of the Canadian Armed Forces. That's what my comment was intended to say.

• (1650)

Mr. Shaun Chen: I hear you, Lieutenant-General, and I appreciate that explanation. I can't speak for the person you're referring to, but as a member of Parliament, as a Canadian of Chinese descent, I am very proud to be a member of Parliament. I would imagine any person who serves within our Canadian Armed Forces is proud to serve.

However, in any organization there is a dominant culture, and we need to be mindful that when people feel it unnecessary to self-identify as a particular group or that they believe it's not good to be known for being part of a minority, it speaks to the possibility of a cultural dissonance, the feeling they are better off being part of that dominant culture in the absence of self-identity.

I believe that any person is very well aware of their self identity if they are racialized. We should encourage women and visible minorities to self-identify as who they are and to be accepted and to have a sense of belonging in that organization. To me that is very important.

I believe that if we are looking at a situation where people feel they do not need to self-identify and they do not want to be known for being a minority, then we need to do a better job of creating that inclusive environment where they should be comfortable and to be able to do their jobs as members of the Canadian Armed Forces with pride, having the diverse lived experiences, histories and culture they can bring to the work they do.

My colleague Mr. Spengemann's question on how that diversity enriches the work of the Canadian Armed Forces gives a very good example of the importance of enabling that true inclusiveness.

LGen Charles Lamarre: I can't just leave it lie like that either. We do encourage people from all ethnic backgrounds to celebrate where they come from. We do that in a manner of ways, whether it be Black History Month or whether we have visible minority awareness groups or events. We do encourage that. As Jean-Marc

Lanthier was indicating earlier on, we also benefit from it tremendously.

When we sent a contingent to the Philippines after that horrible typhoon a few years ago, we were fortunate to be able to do a call-out and get 34 Tagalog speakers within the Canadian Armed Forces so that the first helicopter that showed up, hovering over a village that had not been reached by any force whatsoever, a Canadian helicopter, had a crew on board and a Tagalog speaker who could at least be understood for the dialect.

We embrace that in a great way. I think it's one of the great strengths in the Canadian Armed Forces, and that's why we're putting such an emphasis on it as well.

Mr. Shaun Chen: I just want to reiterate that I do congratulate the work that is being done, as I said earlier, with respect to visible minorities. There's clear progress in the number of people who are serving. I just want to underscore that my concern really is that when we hear people say that they do not self-identify as belonging to a particular group, then we have to reflect on why that is.

LGen Charles Lamarre: Thank you.

The Chair: I'm going to move to MP Gallant.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: I have a quick question.

Does the existence of having an allergy to nuts and fish preclude potential recruits from being accepted into the Canadian Armed Forces?

• (1655)

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes, it can.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Can you give some rationale for that?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Absolutely.

It's the concept of universality of service. We expect that all our members will be able to deploy and go on operations when we tell them to, and oftentimes on very short notice. It is our mandate to have folks who can do it.

Whenever we have individuals who present themselves with a medical situation that would make them very vulnerable and when it comes their being able to deploy, then at that point, we have to be conscious of what that would mean in terms of their ability to conduct the mission, but also what it would mean in terms of who would have to look after them if they became incapacitated.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Thank you very much.

I'll give the rest of my time to Mr. Bezan.

Mr. James Bezan: Thank you, Ms. Gallant.

I want to come back to General Lanthier. You are in charge of the indigenous recruitment. No?

LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier: No, I'm the champion. He's responsible for recruitment.

Mr. James Bezan: Okay. You're a champion for indigenous members.

You run the summer primary reserve training program. I know in my first nation communities, they've had some members who have gone to Bold Eagle, Black Bear, Raven. Not all of them stayed. They did the training and had a good time, enjoyed the experience, but then didn't stay on as either members of the armed forces or as members of the reserves.

What number of people who participate actually become members?

LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier: I can share later the exact numbers, but I give you, for example, in Raven last year, 27 started the course. Sorry. I'll go a year back because the data is now old. Forty joined the course, 37 finished the course and five went into the reserves. The numbers varied from year to year. The previous year there were actually eight who joined the forces. Bold Eagle is a much larger program in the Prairies. Out of the 114 who started, 102 graduated from the course and 30 were retained. Turning to the east coast, in the Atlantic programs, out of the 40 who started, 32 graduated and 50% joined—16 joined. So, the numbers vary.

I see the trend. Last year's numbers are not finalized, but I expect a growth in retention—i.e., they joined and stayed in the forces—by about 30% across the two main army programs, for different reasons—the experience, as the word goes around and they see the success.

What I was told by the first FISM...when I was there for the graduation last year is the simple fact of having on your CV that you're a graduate of Black Bear is a mandatory key to employment in the civilian world. A lot of people join with no intention whatsoever. They want to acquire skills. They want to learn about leadership, ethics, ethos, to exceed their own limitations so that they don't perceive limitation by doing a military program. That explains a lot about those we do not retain when we do what we call the exit survey discussion: "Why didn't you join?" "Well, I wasn't interested. I wanted to get the experience."

Mr. James Bezan: In trying to recruit more indigenous members, you used some of the stories of very successful indigenous military members. Sergeant Tommy Prince, the most decorated indigenous soldier in Canadian history, grew up and died on Broken Head Ojibwa Nation, in my riding. He was a member of the Devil's Brigade and was incredibly brave, and after World War II went on to serve in Korea.

His community, because of his legacy, has at least a dozen members who are currently serving either in the Canadian Armed Forces or in the U.S. armed services. A lot of them are rangers. They really do take pride in the fact that they have such a powerful leader from their community who served so well in the Canadian Armed Forces. By promoting him, you promote their own pride and they see themselves in the Canadian Armed Forces when you do that.

The Chair: Thank you.

I have MPs Dzerowicz, Hardcastle and Robillard.

Julie.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

Let me go back to my notes here. I'll direct a question to Commodore Patterson.

How do women support each other to get where they want to go?

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: I've been part of the Defence Women's Advisory Organization since it started a long time ago.

One thing we do know about women, no matter where we serve, is that networking and how women network is quite important. In a force where you can be a minority in the group, losing that network can make you feel very isolated. I come from health services, so I've come from a fifty-fifty split throughout my career. What we end up doing is creating informal networks of professional support. That's on the support side. We've also done it—I'm going to go back to the comment about mentoring.

Women have been mentoring women for a very long time. It does not necessarily know the barrier between "I'm a public servant" and "I'm a member of the Canadian Armed Forces". We tend to network as groups and we create networks. There are networks that support, as well as share questions like, "How did you tackle this problem?" I think one of the key things, moving forward, is to carry on looking at a gender-focused mentoring approach, where we're talking about how we confront and overcome issues in life, and asking each other's experience. That has actually been my experience in my career.

The last thing I'd like to add is that, as a member of the Canadian Armed Forces and as a woman, I have been supported by men and women in my life. As I have grown up in this organization, I have been very fortunate. I have been mentored from a very young age, before it was popular to do so. I've also carried on to having mentors who are men, as well. So I've been able to get a broad view.

I thought I'd like to share that.

• (1700)

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: I appreciate that.

Again, I've only been in the business and the political worlds. In my opinion, we actually don't have.... It's not as developed as it is for men. Whether it's networks or supporting each other automatically, it hasn't been as developed in the two areas that I've worked in. That's the reason I've been asking.

How do you actually evaluate it, ongoing? I don't have a lot of time now, but if you have additional suggestions on how we can help women be more supportive of other women within the Canadian Armed Forces, I'd be very welcoming of that being sent to this committee.

There is another question I have. I was just remarking on my colleague's research of the AG report, which said, "the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) should establish appropriate representation goals for women for each occupation". When I was in Mali, I was a little bit surprised to hear that there were a number of positions that didn't have qualified women. When you're talking about a medical technician, health care administrator, traffic technician and aviation system technician, these all sound like areas that, in my opinion, are not like those of engineers or pilots for which you need lots of hours and years of training. Sometimes I feel that you have to go to the people who exist who are women in these positions and ask, "Why are there not more of you? What might be some of the roadblocks?" Is that something that might actually be done right now in the Canadian Armed Forces?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes, actually we do that specific research. You raise a very good point of what we have as a potential block.

Again, DGMPPRA does research on diversity and inclusion, to find out about it. One of the research projects I just finished in 2018 is about recruiting and employing women in the regular force, CAF members' perspective of what brought them in, what obstacles they've found and how they find they're supported.

We've done a similar thing in the primary reserve. That one will be published in 2019. After that, we have a number of other ones that are related to racism and harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces.

We work with NATO to find out about factors for diversification, to take advantage of that network. I have a network of Five Eyes partners as well, the English-speaking nations, where we do the same exchange of information.

All of that is to make sure we can look at employment diversity and how we measure the inclusion aspect of it.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: It sounds as if you have research but haven't acted on it yet.

LGen Charles Lamarre: No, this is the point, and I won't belabour it as I see the chair's white square.

It comes down to how we're structuring Operation Generation, how we're actually going to get people to fill that, based on what we're finding in this research. It's almost like the intelligence aspect, to make sure we know how people are affected, so we can overcome those specific deficits that you're mentioning.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Thank you.

The Chair: MP Hardcastle.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Just on that, if you're going to overcome specific deficits, how exactly are you going to tap into or leverage these external organizations and bodies that can help with the answer instead of circling the wagons, since we're talking a little bit about demystifying what happens in the CAF, from the top down, and there's no acquiescence of authority? With regard to the chain of command, there's no discretion that comes from what would be an external source. I'm sure you've had time to think about that, because you have a very aggressive plan to achieve certain targets. When you look at them, they seem minuscule, but hearing you speak, I think it's very significant. How are we going to not just demystify but actually authentically and genuinely tap into external resources?

What are your thoughts on that, Commodore Patterson? We'll start with you because you were nodding.

• (1705)

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: I'm probably going to say what General Lamarre is going to say, but we were already engaging civilian organizations through our research programs, through DGMPPRA, that look at what our best practices are. How do we actually identify barriers? I'm using external academic institutions, but I'm also going to say other departments. With regard to wages, looking at gender-based analysis plus has been very interesting, because it's something that makes you shake up your thinking. Have you thought about this? We are now using external pieces to say, "We can't think anymore on this issue. How should we progress?"

I'm going to pass it to General Lamarre. He'll be able to give you some more details about some of the studies they are doing.

LGen Charles Lamarre: It's more than just the studies at this point. You're asking about the implementation, and you're absolutely right. Part of it we referred to earlier on when we talked about more use of social media or virtual platforms, if you will. We find we're getting great success from that. The advantage of actually using social media is the fact that you can get analytics from it as well. So just as when they're going to look at running shoes or whatnot, folks can see what is being examined on the Internet. It's just a reality of life, and it's an important aspect for us to make sure that when we're sending out things, we can read how popular they are.

That's how I was able to give my answer earlier on about the aspects of women as recruiters and women being featured. We have a great little feature going on right now in which we have a cadet at Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean, and she is being featured as a guest speaker for the webcast. That is widely popular with female audiences in the province of Quebec, francophone speakers and everything else.

We think it's important for us to be able to do that, because that's how we're going to expose what is there for people to potentially join. It's everything from looking at how you use social media, how you do data analytics, how you make sure you have websites that are up to speed and that are popular, if you will. It can't be a stultified, difficult thing to navigate. We've given a mandate that the forces must be able to recruit in six clicks. That's how they start their process, as opposed to the 27 that it used to be.

Those types of hands-on, easier and more attractive campaigns are important to us. It's the same thing when we're actually putting out campaigns in which we need to feature more women. We don't have a problem with getting enough people to come to be infantry soldiers, but we do have a problem with getting enough women to come and join the Canadian Armed Forces, so we're concentrating our actual recruiting. If you look at our ads, we're always featuring young women and oftentimes, young women from visible minority communities or indigenous folks, to say, "Come and join this team and see yourself reflected here. See who we have." Luckily, we have some great ambassadors in the Canadian Armed Forces who are there and able to speak to these folks and say, "Come on in. It's a good place to be."

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: I could say cynically that's advertising and marketing, and that goes back to retention. Where are these people years down the road? Is there enough of a culture change within or a culture embracing within? You said earlier that we're still working on some of the metrics, some of the ways we can evaluate and measure our progress. Is there external expertise that you're open to in order to expedite that?

The Chair: I'm going to have to hold it there.

I now give the floor to MP Robillard.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Robillard: During the study of diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces, witnesses have told the committee that exit interviews should be conducted when personnel leave the Canadian Armed Forces.

Are the Canadian Armed Forces considering exit interviews? If so, why?

• (1710)

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes, we're considering them. In December 2018, the Canadian Armed Forces transition group was created under the leadership of General Misener.

The group is currently assessing how to make this transition in the Canadian Armed Forces. Some exit interviews have already been conducted. This is done for some trades in high demand, such as pilots or doctors. We want to conduct interviews with all the people who leave the Canadian Armed Forces.

Regarding the transition, a test will be conducted at Borden, in Ontario. Everyone who leaves the Canadian Forces will take part in exit interviews. We'll start using this information to guide the development of our future policies. The test in Borden will take place this year. Over the next four years, we'll be implementing the transition process for all Canadian Forces members across the country.

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

I want to go back to operation honour. We're in the fourth year of this operation, which has already undergone some changes.

Can you tell us about the impact of this operation to date on the culture in the Canadian Armed Forces?

[English]

Cmdr Rebecca Patterson: Thank you for the question.

Again, it comes back to measuring the culture. What we can say is that through the surveys we've done, such as the "Your Say" surveys, the first step in changing culture is addressing behaviours and the climate that they are in. We're about to have the release of our second Statistics Canada survey at the end of May of this year, which will be our second data point to actually give us an idea of how we're doing, beyond just counting the number of behaviours and just output data in order to see how we're faring.

The last "Your Say" survey that we were referring to showed that 87% of the people had confidence that their chain of command would support them if they came forward with a complaint about sexual misconduct. Now, while that isn't culture writ large, it's starting to tell you that the first step in trying to move forward is to make people feel more confident with our system.

I'm hoping that by the end of May we'll be able to have more information for you and give you a really good idea about how we're doing with elements that are related to culture.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: You have about a minute and 50 seconds.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Robillard: Okay.

One objective of the diversity strategy's action plan is to increase awareness of mental health issues in order to eliminate the associated stigma. How is awareness being raised and what are the results?

LGen Charles Lamarre: I'll start by answering, but I invite my colleagues to join the discussion.

Every year and even every day, the Canadian Armed Forces make sure that we talk about the mental health and well-being of individuals. In the fall of 2017, we implemented a suicide prevention strategy with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Each year, we run a campaign with Bell Let's Talk so people know that we don't want to hide people with mental health problems and that we encourage them to seek help. People in senior positions in the Canadian Armed Forces are very open to talking about the difficulties they have had, and serve as examples.

I will add one last thing, because I think it's important. People don't realize that members of the Canadian Armed Forces are no different from them. Many military personnel have had mental health problems. They were treated, returned to work and deployed on operations. They have had tremendous success in their careers and personal lives.

In our environment, we must continue every day to encourage people to seek help and support them. We must also encourage those who support them, whether their peers, bosses or subordinates. In many cases, it is by encouraging and supporting them that these people will seek help.

[English]

Mr. James Bezan: At the Halifax International Security Forum this year, there was a group of women leaders from the militaries of Australia, New Zealand, America, Britain, Germany, Sweden, Canada. I believe they called themselves the Peace With Women Fellowship. I think that's the program. I got to participate in the round table that they had talking about best practices and how we encourage particularly the retention of women and make sure they can continue to balance off family life and work life, and still advance through their careers and not miss out on promotion opportunities.

Commodore Patterson, have you had a chance to look at some of those discussions, those ideas, that are starting to percolate through, and at how we can take those best practices and use them here in Canada?

• (1715)

Cmdre Rebecca Patterson: I actually have just received a sort of retroaction on that conference, which I have not read yet. Once I do, I certainly will be having a look at them to see how they fit. I apologize for not being able to add more.

Mr. James Bezan: I think that's something where the opportunity is there for us to take those best practices and employ them.

I see we have army and we have navy here. I know that whenever I visit one of our ships, whether it's the HMCS *Winnipeg* or the *Ville de Québec*, I see a lot more diversity on board a ship than I see walking around CFB Shilo or at Gatetown.

We don't have any air force here, and we hear that we have a huge retention problem of pilots and air crew with our fighter fleet. Are there any particular recruitment tools you're using right now to increase the number of pilots and maintainers we have for our fighter fleet? Also, how are we actually going about improving diversity within that segment of the air force?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Within the fighter community of the air force, their diversity?

Mr. James Bezan: Yes, and the ground crews as well, right?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes. We haven't broken down, if you will, the diversity aspect between that specific segment. However, when we're trying to increase the diversity of the Canadian Armed Forces, we're looking to do so clear across the entire Canadian Armed Forces.

I do have statistics that can break it down to you by army, navy, air force, by officers and non-commissioned members, for visible minorities, for aboriginal—

Mr. James Bezan: If you would table those, that would be great.

LGen Charles Lamarre: I'm happy to table those, because we have the breakdown of what it is.

Of course, the whole idea of how we're going to increase it is to go forward as we have discussed here, to put in place the goals and to have the process by which we specifically go and do targeted recruiting, and to reach out to influencers to engage folks who can influence young men and women to join the Canadian Armed Forces—and not so young in many cases. All of those aspects are important for us.

It goes beyond that, too. It goes beyond to make sure, for example, we have the right equipment for women. There's been an observation raised that a lot of times we don't have properly fitting clothing and whatnot, so we're doing work through our defence research establishment and with our materiel group to make sure we can do the internal market studies that are going to make sure the equipment fits properly.

That's all part of making it more attractive, if you will, for diversity and for recruitment.

Mr. James Bezan: We've heard at this committee before that one of the reasons we're having such a problem with retention is that the kit they're flying around in is old and obsolete, so I'd like to give notice of the following motion:

That the Office of the Auditor General appear before the committee to explain the rationale behind the cancellation of the scheduled Spring 2018 Report "Requirements for Canada's Fighter Jets."

The Chair: So advised.

MP Martel.

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Martel: I'm concerned about recruitment and my intervention won't be very long.

At what age do you start meeting young people to recruit them? I remember that when I was in high school, people often came to talk to us.

Also, do you have a marketing plan for television? It seems that we see fewer commercials on television today than in the past. Is it because it's outdated or does it no longer work? I can still remember the "If you are interested in life" ad campaign, which aired when I was younger, and where life in the Canadian Armed Forces seemed pleasant and motivating. You could see the team spirit.

I have the impression that the current visibility of the Canadian Armed Forces is lower and that's why I'm asking you these questions.

LGen Charles Lamarre: Marketing is very important, but TV isn't as popular as it once was. Social media have become very important. We've noted that we get results when we use social media. The young and not so young are interested in what we post. In our social media campaigns, we can see people's interest through the number of "likes" we get. It's important for us. That's why you are seeing less advertising on television.

• (1720)

Mr. Richard Martel: Do you post video clips?

LGen Charles Lamarre: Yes, all kinds of things are there. I encourage people to visit our new recruitment website. You'll see what young people are seeing right now. It's interesting for us. That's the first thing—

Mr. Richard Martel: I'm sorry, but time is short.

I'd be interested to know the percentage of cadets who continue on to a career in the Canadian Armed Forces. I know they were popular.

LGen Charles Lamarre: We can talk about cadets for these two individuals.

I want to come back quickly to the recruitment age. You're asking me if we're targeting a specific age. The answer is no. However, we must respect the law. Sixteen year-olds can enter the reserves with the permission of their parents, but we are not allowed to deploy them on operations until they are 18 years old. This is important, and we respect that, of course. There is the problem of child soldiers. We wouldn't want to be part of something illegal.

I will turn things over to my colleagues, who can talk to you about the excellent cadet program.

LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier: I'm not responsible for the cadet program, but since I represent 50% of the Canadian Armed Forces, I have a very strong interest in cadet corps.

The organization currently has approximately 52,000 cadets. One of the explicit goals of the cadet program is to encourage young people to be good citizens and develop their leadership skills, but also to stimulate their interest in service. It's a start. It's not recruitment, but it shows the camaraderie that exists in the army, like the one that was illustrated in the ads you mentioned at the time.

Unfortunately, I don't have the number with me, but a significant number of the serving members were cadets. For example, Vice-Admiral Lloyd of the Royal Canadian Navy, Lieutenant-General P. F. Wynnyk and the Chief of Defence are from the same cadet corps. This demonstrates the effectiveness of such a system in stimulating

Mr. Richard Martel: What is the ratio of young women to young men among cadets?

LGen Jean-Marc Lanthier: I don't know if I have the figures here.

LGen Charles Lamarre: We don't have the exact figures. There are more young men in the cadet corps, but there are still a lot of young women. Two weeks ago, I was in Borden—

Mr. Richard Martel: Because I've seen a lot of them.

LGen Charles Lamarre: —and I inspected a parade of cadet corps. The commander and sergeant major of the youth cadet corps were female. They are very successful in this area.

Mr. Richard Martel: Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I'll ask you to indulge us for just a minute or two. I believe Mr. Spengemann has a motion he wants to put forward to do with an upcoming meeting we have in short order.

Mr. Sven Spengemann: Yes, thank you very much.

I will read the motion:

That notwithstanding the motion of Thursday, February 18, 2016 concerning attendance at in camera meetings, that for the meeting of Tuesday, February 26, 2019 only, certain individuals related to the study concerning a Briefing Session on Canada and the Ukraine Crisis be allowed to remain in the Committee room to hear the testimony.

The Chair: Is there any discussion?

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Who's allowed to stay in the room and who's not?

The Chair: Based on our original agreement, if you go back a few years, it was basically that, at an in camera meeting, it was a member and one staff.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: So the first statements are allowed to be... Okay.

The Chair: Right.

Does anyone have a problem with this? We've all been very supportive. I think it's for the benefit of all involved, but I'm going to need unanimous consent to do it.

James.

Mr. James Bezan: I have a quick question.

Is this a request by the Ukrainian delegation or is it a request by the UCC?

The Chair: It was UCC.

My question went to the deputy minister of defence, if he was okay with it, and the answer I got was yes, he was okay with it.

Mr. James Bezan: He's okay with it.

As long as it's okay, and everybody is on the same page, I'm good with it.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: On a point of order, is that a notice of motion or is that an actual motion?

The Chair: It's an actual motion.

Because it was agreed-upon rules from a couple of years ago, I believe we need unanimous consent to make an exception, and I'm seeking unanimous consent to facilitate that meeting.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Witnesses, thank you very much for participating in this very important discussion and for your service to Canada.

The meeting is adjourned.

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