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• (1540)

[English]

The Chair (Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.)): I call this meeting to order.

I take note that we are about 10 minutes late, so with colleagues' permission, we will extend the meeting by 10 minutes further.

First of all, Minister, can you stay for a full hour, or are you obligated to leave by 4:30?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Chair, I will stay until 4:41.

The Chair: Excellent. Thank you for that.

As you can see, we have Minister Anand with us. We welcome her to her first, and what I anticipate will not be her last, meeting with the committee.

I hope we have a constructive relationship and provide a useful challenge function to your very important role.

Before I ask you for your presentation, I take note that we are in a hybrid format due to the ongoing pandemic situation. The directive from the Board of Internal Economy has limited the size of the room and the number of people who can be in it. There are physical distancing guidelines, and we must wear a mask at all times.

With that, I'd ask the minister to make her initial presentation. Then we will go to our question rounds.

Welcome, Minister—

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): I have a point of clarification, Mr. Chair. My understanding is that we are to wear our masks when we're up and about in the room but not when we're sitting. Are you saying that the masks are to be worn at all times?

The Chair: It says that it is strongly recommended that members wear a mask even when seated at their place during committee proceedings.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: All right. Thank you.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): That's new.

The Chair: I don't know if it's new or not. It was January 28, 2022.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Before we were vaccinated, we didn't have to wear one, but now that we're triple vaccinated, we have to wear one.

The Chair: You can take that up with the Board of Internal Economy.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: All right. I just wanted it to be clear.

Thank you.

The Chair: With that, please go ahead, Minister Anand.

Hon. Anita Anand: Mr. Chair and members of the Standing Committee on National Defence, thank you for inviting me to appear before you today.

Difficult times often foster the greatest change. I am honoured to have been entrusted with this role during a pivotal moment in our institution's history. Today I will provide you with an overview of our top priorities, as outlined in my mandate letter, and the work our organization is doing to set us up for success.

First and foremost, our success at home and abroad comes down to having an engaged and resilient armed forces with the numbers to sustain our regular operations and to step up during times of crisis.

[Translation]

The past two years have demonstrated the importance of this, as our personnel continues to do incredible work in the face of a global pandemic.

[English]

Last year the chief of the defence staff, General Wayne Eyre, announced a substantive forces-wide reconstitution program. A key part of reconstitution is ensuring that the defence team is a place where everyone feels safe, respected and protected.

• (1545)

[Translation]

This goal is a top priority for me and the entire leadership of national defence. It is truly heartbreaking to know that our members have been injured in the line of duty. Our members—and all Canadians—deserve to work in an environment where dignity and respect prevail.

The creation of the chief professional conduct and culture group last year supports these efforts.

[English]

CPCC is leading our much-needed conduct and culture change reforms across the organization. Its work is in parallel with and complementary to Madam Arbour's independent review into defence team policies and culture. We look forward to receiving her final report later this year and implementing her recommendations.

There is no doubt, Mr. Chair, that we are facing significant challenges right now from both domestic and global threats. However, we are also facing a fundamental challenge to the institution charged with defending our country against these threats. For too long, far too many members of the defence team have suffered sexual harassment, sexual assault or discrimination based on sex, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation. I will say it again: Things can change, they must change and they will change.

I will turn now to international missions.

[Translation]

In today's highly complex operational environment, the skills and dedication of our people are more important than ever. Many of our international allies and partners face very real threats from state actors seeking to undermine the rules-based international order.

[English]

We are all troubled by the challenges to Ukraine's security and sovereignty due to Russia's military buildup in and around their borders. During my recent trip to the country, I saw the toll this threat has had on our Ukrainian friends.

We remain steadfast in our support. Since 2015, we have trained roughly 33,000 members of Ukraine's security forces through Operation Unifier. We just extended and expanded this mission for another three years.

[Translation]

I am pleased to have had the opportunity to meet with Ukraine's minister of defence, Oleksii Reznikov, and we will work closely together to identify other areas where Canada can provide support. Our work in Ukraine demonstrates that Canada is always ready to help in times of crisis.

[English]

In all of our missions around the world, we are reaffirming our commitment to peace and stability in an uncertain time.

I'll move now to domestic missions.

[Translation]

Here, at home, we are also facing an unprecedented demand for military assistance. From the beginning of the pandemic, our armed forces have been helping out in hard-hit communities and supporting vaccination efforts across the country. Thousands of personnel from the Regular Force, reservists and Canadian Rangers were mobilized.

[English]

At the same time, we have been called on to deploy personnel in response to climate-related disasters, which have increased in scope and severity over the previous decade.

Moreover, Canada and North America are increasingly vulnerable to external threats that know no borders. Against a backdrop of rapid technological change and vastly increased adoption and reliance on digital technology in Canada, the government's cybersecurity expertise is essential.

[Translation]

The reputation of the Communications Security Establishment, or CSE, in the defence of Canada is well established. Together with our armed forces, the CSE plays a vital role in strengthening our defences here, at home.

[English]

We are also working with the United States to bolster our continental defences. This includes modernizing NORAD. As part of these efforts, we are improving how we monitor, defend and operate in the Arctic region. In fact, just last week we announced a new seven-year contract with the majority Inuit-owned Nasittuq Corporation to maintain the 50 radar sites of the north warning system as we explore options for modernizing Arctic surveillance.

Our fighting force must be ready to respond to a variety of threats from all directions at all times and in very close co-operation with our closest allies. That means having the right number of people in our ranks. It means making sure that they are included, respected and engaged. It means giving them the right equipment and training to match these threats.

To conclude, Mr. Chair, our military is indeed at an inflection point. We are facing a significant demand for Canadian Armed Forces support both here at home and across the globe. We are also facing rapidly evolving threats that risk outpacing our ability to defend against them. Our solutions must be built around people.

● (1550)

[Translation]

We need the right people, with the right training and the right equipment. We need to create a culture that supports the health and well-being of those individuals who perform the critical functions we entrust to them.

[English]

There's a lot to do, but I am confident that by working together we will realize our objectives.

Thank you. *Meegwetch.*

The Chair: Thank you, Minister, and thank you for that timely speech.

With that, we'll turn to our six-minute round.

We're starting off with Ms. Findlay and then we will have Mr. Fisher, Madame Normandin and Ms. Mathysen, in that order.

You have six minutes.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister, for being here today.

I note that you've said it's very important that we have an engaged and resilient CAF that's able to step up during times of crisis. The U.S. and United Kingdom are sending reinforcements to NATO states Poland and Romania to bolster their defences. Are there any plans to send military reinforcements to join our 550-person tripwire force in Estonia or any other frontline NATO state?

Hon. Anita Anand: Thank you for the question.

Under Operation Reassurance, we are able to commit up to 900 Canadian Armed Forces members. We currently have about 500 on the ground, operating in land, air and sea. We are currently examining from an operations standpoint whether further commitment would be possible.

I can ask my chief of the defence staff Wayne Eyre, who is here, to comment further if you would like.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I think we'll have a chance to ask him questions later, so I will do that. Thank you.

Minister, the United States is dispatching troops to Poland to help Americans escape Ukraine in the event of an invasion. To not repeat any blunders of the Afghanistan evacuation, do we have similar plans in place and people ready to go, or are we just asking people to leave?

Hon. Anita Anand: I can say that we are preparing for all eventualities. We are cognizant, of course, of the Russian escalation at the Ukrainian border, including in Belarus. The Canadian Armed Forces, for example, recently moved west of the Dnipro to indeed take account of the rising threat. We are preparing for various contingencies.

At this time, I think it would be prudent if I kept those contingencies close to the chest given that we are not planning for hypotheticals, at least at the current time.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you, Minister.

In all of the mandate letters of your predecessor, Minister Sajjan, he was tasked with future fighter replacement. It's not in your mandate letter. Does that mean that it's no longer a government priority and the file is either dropped or sidelined?

Hon. Anita Anand: Not at all. Our government has been clear: A modern fighter jet fleet is essential to defending Canada. That is why we are acquiring 88 fighter jets to replace our CF-18 fleet through an open, transparent competition.

We have reached a key milestone in the process and we will be moving forward with two suppliers, and this competition essentially will ensure that we get the right aircraft at the right price, while creating job opportunities.

• (1555)

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Minister, certainly as long ago as I was associate minister of defence, and before that, we've been talk-

ing about replacing fighter jets. There have been a lot of studies and a lot of proposals. It would seem that it's time to make that decision. Do you have a timeline for making that decision?

Hon. Anita Anand: As you may be aware, we did reach a key milestone prior to the holidays, at the end of 2021, in terms of the procurement process and narrowing the field down to two suppliers. That process is being run by the Department of Public Services and Procurement Canada, and I believe that the timeline is intact, but the questions relating to that timeline would be best directed there.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: There's also no mention in your mandate letter, Minister, about threats to national security, such as Russia, China, Iran and North Korea. How do you give direction to the Canadian Armed Forces about the forces needed and their connection to foreign policy when your government does not seem to see a threat to Canadian national security?

Hon. Anita Anand: I will say in response, as outlined in the Speech from the Throne, that peace, stability and international security are of critical importance to Canada's strategic interests.

That is why we will be moving forward as a government with establishing an Indo-Pacific strategy. That is why, we have in my mandate letter the importance of cyber-surveillance and cybersecurity. That is why we are working on reconstituting and rebuilding the Canadian Armed Forces.

All of these pieces are integral to ensuring that the Canadian Armed Forces and our broader government can act in the best interests of national security.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Minister, I have one last question.

There is also no mention in your mandate letter of the Five Eyes alliance, the Quad or AUKUS. Does this mean that Canada has given up on bilateral defence diplomacy and that your government is taking a pass on both the Atlantic NATO and the Pacific where it comes to those alliances?

Hon. Anita Anand: We are not at all. In fact, both bilateral and multilateral partnerships are fundamental to my portfolio in defence as well as to Minister Joly's portfolio in foreign affairs.

In fact, with regard to the current crisis in Ukraine, I have been engaged with our partners both bilaterally and multilaterally. For example, I have been meeting with our partners in NATO on a bilateral basis and I spoke with the defence minister of France this week.

By the same token, we cannot underestimate the importance of the defensive relationship we have as a member of NATO. I was at NATO last week meeting with Secretary General Stoltenberg to reiterate Canada's commitment to the international rules-based order and to the deterrence underpinnings of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The Chair: We're going to have to leave it there, Minister and Madam Findlay.

Mr. Fisher, you have six minutes, please.

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

Thank you, Minister. It's so great to see you here.

I don't have to tell you, as a fellow Nova Scotian, that my riding of Dartmouth-Cole Harbour includes CFB Shearwater and, of course, has CFB Halifax right across the harbour. We have a large CAF and DND population. On both sides of Halifax Harbour, we're building the Royal Canadian Navy's modern fleet. I also don't have to tell you that there's a lot of pride at home in Nova Scotia over these incredible shipbuilders.

The investments through Canada's defence policy, "Strong, Secure, Engaged", are tangible. They're easily felt in the riding of Dartmouth-Cole Harbour and also in the riding of Halifax. They matter deeply to our community. I look forward to working with you to keep moving that forward and to keep enhancing and making those very important defence investments.

I was pleased to see that your mandate letter includes a commitment to expanding Operation Reassurance in eastern Europe. HMCS *Montréal*, as you know, recently deployed out of Halifax to join on this important NATO mission. Your recent announcement to expand Operation Unifier was also very good to see.

Minister, I'd like to talk about our commitments to NATO, especially in the context of Russia and Ukraine and the conflict there. You spoke about this a bit in your opening remarks. Are members like Canada increasing co-operation to support stability in the area? How is Canada stepping up to provide more support as a NATO member and as a very important friend to Ukraine?

• (1600)

Hon. Anita Anand: Before I address the question itself, I will just say that, as a daughter of Nova Scotia, I can agree that we can all be very proud of the work being done in Nova Scotia, as well as in Quebec, B.C. and around the country to advance our national shipbuilding strategy. Not only is this work important to ensure that the navy has the equipment it needs to serve Canadians. It is creating high-quality jobs and economic benefits in communities across our country.

With respect to our NATO commitments, I can say unequivocally that we have and will continue to deepen co-operation with our friends, our allies and our partners to support stability in the region. The recent deeply concerning buildup of Russian forces at the Ukrainian border underscores the importance of Canada's activities in the region.

We have extended and expanded Operation Unifier. We have committed \$340 million over three years to ensure that we continue

training Ukrainian soldiers. We have put forward a \$120-million loan and \$50 million in humanitarian aid. Those are representations of our commitment, not only to Ukraine but to democracy, peace, stability and security in the western world. This is why we have approved additional measures to continue to support Ukrainian sovereignty.

You mentioned the broader NATO alliance. I want to reiterate our commitment to Operation Reassurance as well, in the region of NATO's eastern flank. Canada leads a high-readiness, multinational battle group in Latvia comprised of approximately 1,500 soldiers, representing 10 allied nations. Canadian soldiers are serving alongside soldiers from 10 of our NATO allies. Operation Reassurance is Canada's largest military commitment, involving the deployment of land, air and sea elements. As you mentioned, we also contributed two frigates, Halifax class frigates, which set sail on January 19 to join a standing NATO maritime group in European waters. In addition, six CF-18 Hornets are also periodically deployed in support of NATO's enhanced air policing activities in Romania, with the next scheduled deployment set for fall 2022.

I do have my chief of the defence staff, Wayne Eyre, with me. He will add anything he likes, if that's permitted by the questioner at the current time.

General Wayne D. Eyre (Chief of the Defence Staff, Canadian Armed Forces, Department of National Defence): Mr. Chair, thank you for the opportunity to add to my minister's comments.

We remain very closely engaged with NATO as we take a look at what is happening on the eastern flank. In fact, just eight hours ago I was talking with NATO counterparts about the possibilities as we develop options for reinforcing. Those military options I'll be discussing in much more detail with Minister Anand in the coming days. We remain very concerned but engaged with NATO.

• (1605)

Mr. Darren Fisher: Okay.

Minister, really quickly, I've travelled with the NATO PA, and I've travelled with this defence committee. The feeling I got when I spoke to NATO countries and parliamentarians around the world who are in the NATO PA is that Canada unequivocally punches above its weight class. Is that something that you heard very clearly during your visit there last week?

Hon. Anita Anand: Actually, I'm really glad you asked that question because what the Prime Minister of Latvia said to me—and this was reiterated by the Secretary General of NATO—is that Canada's contribution is incredibly important to the mission in terms of supporting Ukraine. In fact, NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg said that Canada is one of the top three countries, along with the U.K. and the U.S., in terms of the support we are providing across the NATO alliance for Ukraine, so your question is—

The Chair: Unfortunately, we'll have to leave it there or we'll never get through our rounds of questions.

Hon. Anita Anand: Thank you.

Mr. Darren Fisher: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Madame Normandin, you have six minutes, please.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Thank you very much, Minister, for joining us today. It's always a pleasure to welcome you.

I'll start with a question that deals indirectly with recruitment but more specifically with French in the Canadian Armed Forces.

A number of training courses are offered exclusively in English, which makes it difficult for a French speaker to pursue a career path in their mother tongue. There are also several so-called bilingual units, where everyone knows that there is little French spoken. You hear about cases where people completed all the training to join the special forces and weren't told until the very end that their English skills were insufficient. In the end, these people were rejected and couldn't complete the program.

In the context of a labour shortage, where we don't have the luxury of turning anyone away, I would like to hear from the minister on what she intends to do to improve the status of French within the Canadian Armed Forces.

Hon. Anita Anand: Thank you very much for your question.

I would like to say that personnel recruitment and retention are essential for maintaining a healthy, skilled and dedicated armed forces. Furthermore, as minister, both official languages are very important to me. It's a very serious matter. Bilingualism and diversity within the forces are priorities for me.

I will ask the chief of the defence staff to add something on the subject of official languages.

[English]

The Chair: Before we turn it over to the CDS, I'm assuming that you have a point of order of some kind, Mr. May.

Mr. Bryan May (Cambridge, Lib.): It's just a technical thing. We were able to get translation, but the volume was the same for the translation and the speaker. It was hard to hear.

The Chair: Okay. It's being checked.

Madame Normandin, we were just transferring the question, if you will, to the chief of the defence staff. I'll add on a little time at the end, if that's all right.

Go ahead, General Eyre.

[Translation]

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Thank you very much to the member for her question.

I would like to add a few comments.

For us, the policy on official languages is essential. It is also important to provide training in both official languages. Bilingual instructors need to be found for each course. From time to time, that is difficult, but it's our objective.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you. I will follow up with you from time to time on the creation of programs officially in both languages.

I would like to ask the minister about fighter jets. We know that the choice of the next fighter jet will have an impact on the personnel needed to operate it.

I would like to know whether an impact assessment has been carried out to help with the selection of a CF-18 replacement.

• (1610)

[English]

The Chair: Before you respond to that, Minister, I understand that the issue raised by Mr. May is actually the result of your selection of French, English or floor. The preference is to select "floor" from what I understand.

[Translation]

Hon. Anita Anand: Okay.

The process falls under Public Services and Procurement Canada, which also has a fairness monitoring program that ensures the integrity of the process.

If the deputy minister wishes to add something on this topic, I would invite him to do so.

Mr. Bill Matthews (Deputy Minister of National Defence, Department of National Defence): I would perhaps add that the minister is correct. We did involve a fairness monitor to ensure that the process was fair for all potential suppliers, but Public Services and Procurement Canada is the department that manages the program.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Unless I'm mistaken, I did not get an answer to my question.

Above and beyond a fair and transparent process, when the aircraft is chosen, will we have the necessary resources to operate it? Has a study of personnel resources been conducted?

Mr. Bill Matthews: I believe the question is about whether we have processes in place to ensure that there are enough pilots to operate these aircraft. I believe that question is best answered by my colleague, General Eyre.

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Thank you very much for your question.

We are currently ensuring that we have enough pilots, technicians and personnel to be able to operate this new aircraft. It's a matter of recruitment and retention. The air force is participating actively in this process.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you very much.

I'd like to come back to the choice of the F-18 replacement plane. There are some obvious disadvantages to choosing the F-35 when it comes to economic spinoffs in Quebec but also across Canada. It is possible that we will lose jobs, but also some expertise and the intellectual property of the various technological components of the aircraft.

I would like to hear from the minister or General Eyre on the advantages of selecting the F-35 in spite of all of this.

[*English*]

The Chair: It's a complicated question to be answered in 30 seconds or less.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Anita Anand: I'll start.

It is important to remember that we will run an open and transparent competition. Our objective is to design a process that will allow us to obtain the best plane for the best possible price for all Canadians.

This process includes a fairness monitor, and it is important for the process to be open and transparent for Canada and for the Canadian Armed Forces.

General Eyre may have something to add.

[*English*]

The Chair: Unfortunately, General Eyre is not going to get a chance to weigh in on that question, but I'm sure he will over the course of the next hour.

Thank you, Madame Normandin.

We have Madam Mathysen for six minutes, please.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister and General Eyre, for joining us today.

The Deschamps report on sexual misconduct in the military was released April 30, 2015, yet the government has not fully implemented those recommendations in the Deschamps report. It has been seven years almost.

In the former parliamentary session on the status of women committee we studied this. We looked at the Deschamps report. Numerous other justices and entities have looked at and said to implement the Deschamps report.

Why have you not yet implemented the reforms of the Deschamps report?

• (1615)

Hon. Anita Anand: Actually, I would beg to differ that we have not implemented reforms suggested by the report. We have been making very meaningful reforms relating to culture. In particular,

you will recall that the main contribution of the Deschamps report was to highlight the fact that there is a crisis of culture in the Canadian Armed Forces, so what we have been doing is ensuring that we are building an armed forces where everyone can be safe, respected and supported.

DND has allocated \$236 million over five years to address sexual misconduct and gender-based violence, and to support survivors. These funds will enable the sexual misconduct response centre to expand its capacity and services to regional offices across the country, including by building a peer support program. The centre's also developing a restorative engagement program, and military police are improving staff training to include a more victim-centric and trauma-informed approach to support those who come forward.

We also have implemented the Victims Bill of Rights.

I believe we are continuing to make progress. We have more work to do, and I am committed to taking on that task.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Unfortunately, in the study I was referring to in the status of women committee, we heard quite the opposite, Minister. I know you're new to this role and it's, hopefully, a different mandate under your leadership. However, that is not at all what we heard from a lot of the women who had served and who had to abandon their entire career because they weren't seeing that turnaround that needed to happen.

I find it difficult when you continue to reference waiting for the Arbour report. I have absolutely no doubt that Justice Arbour will do an incredible job, and I have all of the respect and hopes that the report will be a stellar one. However, when it's the fifth review that you are waiting for, this simply seems like diversion.

What can you say? How can you reassure people—especially the women but also the members from the armed forces and people within DND and the civilian forces—who have seen quite the opposite?

Hon. Anita Anand: I take issue with the characterization that we are waiting for anything. Since I've been on the ground, since day one, I have been taking action on this file.

On November 4, just days after I was appointed, I accepted the interim recommendation of Madam Arbour and began the process of transferring cases from the military justice system to the civilian justice system.

We are not waiting. In fact, we are moving ahead very expeditiously in terms of implementing reforms that will assist women, assist minorities and assist LGBTQ in terms of adapting and ensuring that they have a place within the Canadian Armed Forces that is safe and secure, and will ensure that they are protected. That is my priority as minister. That is what I am working on every day with the chief of the defence staff and my deputy minister, and we will not stop until we ensure that the Canadian Armed Forces is a place where all can function in a safe and respectful environment.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen: I'm certainly glad to hear the passion and the strength with which you want to move forward. I hope that it continues and happens in that faster way.

One of the things we've also heard is how this toxic culture has led to significant retention and recruitment issues. A lot of it also centres around mental health and stability. One thing you and I have discussed before is bringing forward my colleague Randall Garrison's bill to improve mental health within the Canadian Armed Forces, Bill C-206.

With this bill, he wants to remove a clause from the military code that designates self-harm as a punishable offence. That condition is considered to be a barrier to a lot of armed forces members who are facing mental health struggles, but don't want to come forward and potentially face that punishment. The problem of death by suicide for Canadian Armed Forces members is not going away. We are losing more than one serving member per month to death by suicide.

Can you speak to this committee about moving this piece of legislation forward? The aim in hitting this archaic legislation is to prevent that avoidance of service, and taking out self-harm simply removes that perceived barrier to treatment. Wouldn't this be an incredible way for us to address some of those retention, recruitment and mental health stigmas and barriers that lie in the way of the Canadian men and women who serve in the armed forces?

• (1620)

The Chair: That is an extremely important question but, unfortunately, Ms. Mathyssen has left you no time to answer it. I am under time constraints already, so we're going to have to move on to the second round.

Colleagues, we have 30 minutes of questions in the second round and we have 20 minutes before the minister is obliged to leave. I'm going to be arbitrary and cut each member back a minute. Hopefully, with economies of questions and economies of answers, we will get through the second round.

Mr. Motz, you have four minutes, please.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Thank you, Chair. I'll be sharing my time with Mr. Doherty.

Minister, you've written on public sector accountability. Now, in this role, you have an opportunity to translate your writings into action.

Let me ask you about the Canadian Forces ombudsman's office. My understanding is that the ombudsman's budget is controlled by the chief of the defence staff. Interestingly, in 2018, the ombudsman went to the then defence minister Harjit Sajjan over multiple

allegations of sexual misconduct at the highest ranks of the forces. The office of the ombudsman was then subjected to an investigation shortly thereafter, which was ordered by the then chief of the defence staff.

My question is very simple. When will you report back to this committee on exactly when you intend to fix this and ensure the absolute independence of the Canadian Forces ombudsman's office?

Hon. Anita Anand: I'll begin by saying that our government is deeply committed to transparency and respects the important work that the ombudsman does. I met with the ombudsman late in 2021 and conveyed this point to him.

In May 2015, certain financial authorities in the ombudsman's office were taken away, following findings of irregularities by an Auditor General report. The chief of the defence staff and deputy minister have requested more details on these incidents to review and resolve them, but rest assured, I do believe in the full functioning of an ombudsman's office like the one we have here.

Mr. Glen Motz: Thank you.

I'll turn it over to Mr. Doherty.

The Chair: You have two and a half minutes.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Thanks for being here.

Pardon the brevity, I don't have a lot of time.

Can you tell me the national 10-digit Canada suicide prevention hotline, yes or no?

Hon. Anita Anand: No, I cannot.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Minister, can you tell me the Halton regional branch, in your riding, of the Canadian Mental Health Association's 10-digit crisis hotline, yes or no?

Hon. Anita Anand: Mr. Chair, I am very committed to mental health issues and issues relating to suicide.

Mr. Todd Doherty: I get that, Minister.

Hon. Anita Anand: I'd like to ask where the member is going with these questions.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Minister, the Canadian Forces member assistance program has a 10-digit distress number. Can you tell me that number?

Hon. Anita Anand: The number is easily accessible to me. I do not have it in front of me at this moment, if that is what the member is asking.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Minister, I'm not trying to embarrass you. I'm merely trying to point out that, in a crisis when seconds count, having an easily remembered three-digit number like 988 can be critical in saving lives. Would you agree to that?

Hon. Anita Anand: Yes, I would.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Minister, are you familiar with my Bill C-211 that passed in 2018, an Act to establish a federal framework on PTSD?

Hon. Anita Anand: I am.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Part of that bill was a requirement for the federal government to produce a report setting out the framework 18 months after the act. Are you familiar with that report?

Mr. Bryan May: With respect, Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

We've been doing really well. I want to stay on track.

Mr. Todd Doherty: This is on track. It's relevant.

Mr. Bryan May: I just ask about relevance. The minister is here to talk about her mandate letter, and I'm just wondering if the member can get back to a question about the mandate letter.

• (1625)

Mr. Todd Doherty: With all due respect, Mr. Chair—

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Let me bring this to an end. I deem the questions to be relevant. You may continue with this line of questioning, although I think it would be more fruitful if the line of questioning was not quite so adversarial.

Mr. Todd Doherty: I apologize if it seems adversarial. I'm just trying to get in the questions in the two and a half minutes that I have. I do apologize. I take offence to the relevance question on that.

Part of the report talks about the Canadian Armed Forces and the mental health programs available to Canadian Armed Forces members. Are you familiar with the CAF-VAC joint suicide prevention strategy, Minister?

Hon. Anita Anand: Of course I am. I'm the Minister of National Defence, and I take issues relating to mental health extremely seriously.

Mr. Todd Doherty: I appreciate that. Would you agree that the 988 national suicide prevention hotline, accessible to all Canadians, would be something that the Canadian Armed Forces could also employ?

Hon. Anita Anand: The issue of mental health and the Canadian Armed Forces is one that I've discussed at length with my team and with the chief of the defence staff. We will continue to adopt reforms that support the mental health of Canadian Armed Forces members.

Mr. Todd Doherty: I appreciate that.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Doherty.

Ms. O'Connell, you have four minutes.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

To the minister, I'm just following up on those questions. I think everyone can agree to the value of a three-digit national mental health hotline, but what is waiting for that caller on the other side is equally important.

Do you feel that somebody who is trained to deal with, let's say, children who are having thoughts of suicide or a nurse who might be having thoughts of suicide would require a different level of expertise from, say, a veteran or an active serving CAF member, so that, on the other side of that hotline, the trained individual dealing in this crisis moment has an understanding of what, for example, a CAF member serving might be facing that might be different and require different training—not less, not better, just different—from another Canadian also in crisis?

Hon. Anita Anand: I think that is absolutely important, and that is why the health and well-being of our members is my top priority. That is why we are investing in the mental health of our defence team, including launching a suicide prevention joint strategy along with my colleague, Minister of Veterans Affairs MacAulay. We are also providing \$17.5 million, through budget 2017, on a centre of excellence focused on the prevention and treatment of PTSD and mental health.

The bottom line is that National Defence offers a wide range of programs and services to meet the needs of our civilian and military members, including 31 in-house mental health clinics and referral options to over 4,000 mental health care providers. This includes dedicated mental health professionals at 31 of 37 Canadian Armed Forces health services centres, a 24-7 phone referral service for access to counselling and peer support for those coping with operational stress. The Canadian Armed Forces chaplain service also provides personal support and can refer members to social workers, psychologists and other medical services—

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: I'm sorry, Minister. I don't mean to cut you off. I'm just really limited in time, and I have one last question on that.

With all of these supports that you have indicated as well, when the government is able to set up the three-digit mental health hotline, are you and your department commenting and providing advice that would be specific to that, whether it is with Minister MacAulay for veterans or active members through CAF and the department you represent? Supporting the government in the establishment of a three-digit hotline, like I said, is important, but only if the supports on the other end are there and ready to serve a Canadian or a CAF member in crisis. Are you providing specific expertise in that work?

• (1630)

Hon. Anita Anand: We are committed to ensuring our military personnel have access to the robust and high-quality mental health care and services that they need and that they deserve. We are taking a whole-of-government approach to mental health.

My deputy minister, Bill Matthews, may have something something to add here.

The Chair: He probably does, but he's not going to have that chance.

With that, Ms. O'Connell's time is over.

Madame Normandin, you have a minute and a half.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question is once again concerning fighter jets. I would like to know the degree to which possible pressure from the United States will play a role in the choice of the next fighter jet.

Hon. Anita Anand: As I have already mentioned, this process is the responsibility of Public Services and Procurement Canada.

I do not have the information concerning the United States at this time. I will therefore ask my deputy minister whether he has anything to add on this subject.

Ms. Christine Normandin: I'd rather ask you another question.

Since the process is so transparent and independent, can I conclude that pressure from the United States will have absolutely no impact?

Is the minister able to confirm that this will have no impact?

Hon. Anita Anand: As I have already stated, this process is independent and falls under Public Services and Procurement Canada. It is not my responsibility.

However, I know that it is an independent and transparent process that does not involve politicians.

[English]

The Chair: Unfortunately, we will have to leave that question there.

Ms. Mathysen, you have a minute and a half, please.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: I'll have to practice my brevity.

I'd like to come back to the question that you weren't able to answer from the last round. Do you support the aims of Bill C-206 in eliminating self-harm as a punishable offence under the military code of conduct?

Hon. Anita Anand: I'll begin by saying that I do support mental health concerns and support, as I just responded to a previous question. The section you're referencing is not meant as a punitive measure against those suffering from mental health issues. It includes protections within the military justice system for persons who suffer from mental health issues.

Nonetheless, in Justice Fish's report, he recommended amending the Queen's regulations and orders for the Canadian Armed Forces to clarify regarding intent. The office of the judge advocate general has, therefore, recommended that a note be inserted to clarify that self-injurious conduct relating to mental illness is excluded from the scope and application of paragraph 98(c).

The judge advocate general is here with us. If you would like to hear from him directly, I could turn the mike over to him.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: I would love to know exactly when that's going to happen and how quickly.

The Chair: We're going to have to leave that question out there. You could possibly direct it to Colonel Holman in the next round of questions, because we're just running against the clock. I'm sorry.

Madam Gallant, you have four minutes, please.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Morale is at an all-time low with the Canadian forces. They're short thousands of members, yet even those who had the first COVID inoculation, suffered serious adverse reactions and had cardiologists recommend forgoing subsequent COVID injections are sent packing without earned pensions and benefits.

Minister, even Russell Williams was afforded his pension. Why are soldiers who have served honourably for decades being treated worse than a convicted serial rapist and murderer when it comes to refusing a new vaccine?

• (1635)

Hon. Anita Anand: The Canadian Armed Forces and the Canadian government in fact believe in the importance of vaccines, as they are recommended by our public health experts. To date 98% of the Canadian Armed Forces have been vaccinated.

In reference to the specific question, I will turn the mike over to the chief of the defence staff, Wayne Eyre.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Wayne can answer later on something.

In a May 2000 ruling described as "enlightened and precedent-setting", a military judge stayed a charge of disobeying a direct order for declining the injection of a mandated new anthrax vaccine. It was wrong to force military personnel with the injections of new drugs on soldiers back then, according to the ruling. What has changed since then?

Hon. Anita Anand: Mr. Chair, I will reiterate that, as regards the current pandemic, our government and the Canadian Armed Forces are committed to vaccines against COVID-19, which have been proven to reduce the severity of the virus.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: What advice was sought from the justice department before the mandate on the military was decreed?

Hon. Anita Anand: The mandates put in place in the Canadian Armed Forces and in federal workspaces are based on public health guidance relating to the efficacy of vaccines. In this party we follow the science, and that's exactly why these mandates are in place.

The Chair: I'll just point out to colleagues that we are here to ask the minister questions about her mandate letter, not mandates generally.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Public servants are on administrative leave. Why are soldiers being treated differently from public servants? They're being booted right out—no benefits, no pension.

Hon. Anita Anand: Again, that is a question that I would direct to my chief of the defence staff, Wayne Eyre. He would be able to best respond to issues relating to vaccines within the Canadian Armed Forces.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Thank you, Minister.

When you were first put into that position I invited you to Base Petawawa to visit the troops there and to accompany you there. That invitation is still open, and I hope we're able to see you there.

Hon. Anita Anand: Thank you so much. I have been visiting bases across the country. I believe it is extremely important to speak directly with members of the Canadian Armed Forces, and I do hope to visit Petawawa sometime very soon.

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Gallant.

We have Madam Lambropoulos for the final four minutes, please.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, Minister Anand, for being here with us today to answer our questions.

I know you mentioned earlier the \$236 million over five years in order to combat gender-based violence, sexual misconduct and any discrimination based on gender. I was hoping you could elaborate a little more on what programs you plan on putting in place.

Also, this has been a problem for a very long time. I know this has been, perhaps, money that has been allocated in previous budgets, so I'm wondering what the difference is now and why we should be able to recognize a change in the coming mandates.

Hon. Anita Anand: I would like to zoom in on one of the major reforms that we've put in place. That's the sexual misconduct response centre, which provides 24-7 confidential counselling, assistance, advocacy and accompaniment to victims of sexual misconduct. Since it has been put in place we have received over 1,100 contacts, which suggests to us that there is a need for this type of response centre.

Furthermore, what's so important is that it operates independently from the Canadian Armed Forces' chain of command and reports directly to the deputy minister, who is here with me today in case you have further questions. The SMRC has agreements with nine community-based sexual assault centres in communities that have a large Canadian Armed Forces presence. For example, in fiscal year 2021-22, 1,100 total contacts were made to the centre.

The Arbour report that we are going to be receiving this year will include an examination of the sexual misconduct response centre's mandate, activities, independence and reporting structure, but we didn't wait for this report. We put this reform into place because we realized that peer-to-peer support and support for those suffering from sexual harassment and sexual violence are necessary now. It is a very important project and approach, and we will continue to support it and build on it in the Canadian Armed Forces and beyond.

• (1640)

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you very much.

Obviously, recruitment is an issue. If more women were recruited, and more people who were a little bit more open-minded and had a better idea of what the culture of the military should look like, things would change obviously.

Are there any plans for a change in structure in that sense in order to change the culture from the top down?

Hon. Anita Anand: Is that with regard to recruitment and retention?

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: How can new recruits and getting new blood in the system change the way things are run currently?

Hon. Anita Anand: That's a fantastic question because what my mandate letter actually asks me to do is to ensure that we have diversity and openness to all people in the Canadian Armed Forces. I believe that our recruitment and our retention efforts have to ensure that we are keeping diversity and inclusion at the top of mind at all times.

We need in any year about 7,000 regular force members to meet our operational readiness target in the Canadian Armed Forces. What we are doing to meet that is focusing engagement activities across Canada to increase women's enrolment by prioritizing women applicants at military colleges and mentoring cadets, and enhancing women's care and family leaves.

What are these efforts going to do? They are going to, hopefully, attract a more diverse pool of applicants to the Canadian Armed Forces, so we will have more and more women and diverse individuals moving up the ranks so they are qualified to fulfill leadership positions within the Canadian Armed Forces.

That is a priority for me. Whenever I speak with the chief of defence staff, Wayne Eyre, I mention this because of the importance, not only to the Canadian Armed Forces but to the Canadian population at large. Our forces should reflect the diversity that we see in the broader Canadian public.

The Chair: Thank you, Minister.

Thank you, Madam Lambropoulos.

That brings us to the end of our first hour with the minister. We went two minutes over time, Minister. I appreciate your indulgence, and thank you for your appearance here.

We can suspend for a moment while the minister leaves the meeting.

Again, on behalf of the committee, thank you for your appearance.

Hon. Anita Anand: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair and committee members. Take good care.

The Chair: We'll suspend.

• (1640)

(Pause)

• (1640)

The Chair: I call the meeting back to order. That was pretty quick.

We did not formally welcome General Eyre. Welcome to your first appearance before this committee. I'm pretty sure you've been before this committee a few times.

Mr. Matthews, welcome.

I see Colonel Holman. Welcome, Colonel Holman.

I also see Ms. Bruce. Welcome.

General Eyre, I'll turn to you. I don't know whether or not you have an opening statement. If you have an opening statement, you're welcome to give it now.

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Mr. Chair, I don't have a prepared opening statement, but I will say a few words.

Minister Anand talked about an inflection point, and I see the Canadian Armed Forces on the cusp of so much change right now.

We are seeing so much change in the international security environment as geopolitics take a turn for the worst. We're seeing so much change in the climate and what that means not just for our ability to respond to domestic emergencies but how it is causing conflict around the world. We're seeing so much change in technology, an acceleration in the pace of technological change and what that is doing to the way we need to operate to defend Canada and Canadian interests. We're seeing so much change within our society, which means we have to change to better reflect our society.

I'll be able to unpack any of that in more detail, Mr. Chair, depending on where the questions go.

• (1645)

The Chair: Thank you, General Eyre.

Apparently there was a theme for the day. With our theme for the day, Mr. Motz and Mr. Doherty, you have six minutes between you.

Mr. Glen Motz: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Yes, I will be sharing my time with Mr. Doherty.

General Eyre, welcome. Greetings from Medicine Hat. I know you've spent some time here.

I have two questions for you, sir.

I recently received an email from a retired member of the armed forces that noted he and 300 other crew members were deployed and they didn't receive their at-risk pay when they were deployed because the paperwork wasn't done on time. After returning, they were told their back pay was tied up with other pay adjustments, and it would be between three and 10 years before it was resolved.

This individual has left already. Many will be leaving and, no doubt, they'll be leaving in part because of these issues.

Who's going to check that everyone gets paid the right amount in this debacle? All I'm asking of you, sir, is if you will commit to resolving the at-risk pay and back pay issues within the next six months.

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: I get irked when I hear stories like that, so I have to get the details and look into it more. From the sounds of it, it's something that needs to get sorted out.

Mr. Glen Motz: Thank you, sir. If you get a hold of my office, we'd be happy to give you the details of this gentleman and the ship that it relates to.

Secondly, General, our committee is undertaking a study on threats and force readiness, as you are aware. There are serious concerns, given the increased global tensions. There's a shift in warfare to cyber. There's a lack of personnel, as has been mentioned already today by the minister. There are training and equipment issues. Canada is not really a trusted ally any longer, which is concerning some of our allies. We can't deal with the coming challenges.

Can you outline your mid- to long-term concerns about the future of the forces? What is your plan to address them?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: I understand that we don't have a heck of a lot of time here. I will try to make this concise.

I'm very concerned about what the future security environment entails because Canada is no longer as safe as it once was or once thought itself to be. I believe the Canadian Armed Forces is going to be increasingly called upon to address security threats around the world and to protect Canada and Canadians here at home.

What is the plan to do that? Over the course of the pandemic, we have shrunk. Our readiness has been reduced. Last summer I issued a Canadian Armed Forces reconstitution plan. That plan focuses on rebuilding our strength, but not in the same way. It is to be focused, to be oriented to those threats that we're going to face in the future.

Of three priorities, number one is people. Right at the top of that list is changing those harmful exclusionary aspects of our culture, addressing some of the real challenges in our society right now—the cost of housing and the cost of living, which are one of the major dissatisfiers that I see as I travel around the country—and rebuilding our strength and getting our numbers back up there.

The second priority is operations, being ready to respond to the plethora of hot spots we see around the world, the constant demand for Canadian Armed Forces intervention.

Finally third is modernization. We cannot take our eyes off the future. We can't mortgage the future to pay for the present. We must continue to get those projects that are in our defence policy and continue to focus on continental defence and what we need to do, looking at our force structure and perhaps changing some of the structure that's been in place in place for 70 years, since the industrial age, and getting it better ready for the information age.

What this means, though, is that we have to put the concepts in place, as well. You talked about cyber. That's one of the new domains I'm quite worried about. Space is the other. We have to better integrate those domains—land, air, sea, cyber, space, information—to really have a pan-domain approach, an integrated approach as we approach the challenges of the future, because our adversaries are doing just that.

• (1650)

The Chair: Mr. Doherty has about a minute and a half.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Great.

Ms. Bruce, do you think Canada approving Huawei for 5G presents significant national security concerns for our country?

Ms. Shelly Bruce (Chief, Communications Security Establishment): As you know, the CSE has a very significant mandate when it comes to cybersecurity. We are very interested in telecommunications security and have been working with the other partners in the government on the proposals that will inform a decision for the government.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Should Canada ban Huawei in your view, yes or no?

Ms. Shelly Bruce: The government's decision will be forthcoming.

Mr. Todd Doherty: General Eyre, it's the same question. Should Canada ban Huawei in your view, yes or no?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: That's a government decision, and I'll leave it at that.

Mr. Todd Doherty: General, you touched on it. The morale is at an all-time low by all accounts. It is a big job to recruit and retain. The minister mentioned a couple of times in her opening remarks about the right people and the right equipment.

Is that to say we haven't had the right people, or is that a different focus?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Over the course of our history, morale has gone up and down. It's not a constant. We're facing a particularly challenging time right now, as are all Canadians. We're not immune to the challenges out there in society.

It's important to realize that our troops, our people, continue to do excellent things here at home and around the world. They are proud to serve. They serve selflessly. They leave their families behind. As we speak, we have people in harm's way in different places around the world. As we go out and talk to them doing their jobs, they are very proud of what they're doing.

Could we use more equipment? Could we use more people? Absolutely.

The Chair: Thank you. I'm sorry, General Eyre. Mr. Doherty's time has expired.

With that, we go on to Mr. Zuberi for six minutes please.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Thank you, General Eyre and deputy minister, for being here, and to all the witnesses.

I'd like to preface my remarks by sharing that I did serve in uniform in our armed forces as a reservist many years ago, for about five years. I appreciate your being here today.

I want to ask a question that is somewhat personal, something that I've seen in the past when I was in uniform. It relates to sensitivity training. It relates to diversity inclusion. It relates to what I've seen in the past, not personally witnessed but in general terms.

We know that sexual misconduct, harassment and discrimination has been a large conversation as it relates to the armed forces. The minister recently said that things can change, must change and will change. I'd like to put forth to both of you, in terms of the department and CAF, what are the forces doing to uphold this?

General Eyre, would you like to comment, please?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: I could discuss a large list of initiatives and different activities that we're undertaking. There is no one single silver bullet for culture change. It's a number of initiatives top down and also bottom up.

I will say, at its root, we need to address the exclusionary aspects of our culture. Traditionally we come from a homogenous group. We've been recruited from homogenous group, but the face of Canada is changing, and our armed forces, if we are to be successful in the future, has to be able to attract and retain talent from whatever segment of Canadian society it may come.

If operational effectiveness is predicated on cohesion, cohesion is predicated on teamwork. The way we build our teams has to change. We have to have a much more inclusive approach to leadership. What I mean by that is that we just can't have a cookie-cutter approach to building teams. Leaders at every level have to understand the unique backgrounds, strengths, weaknesses and developmental needs of each one of their individuals so they can weave them together to form that team. Every member of that team has to believe that they are in an organization where they belong so that they feel psychologically safe to contribute, to share their ideas and to point something out if it doesn't look right.

We've started to operationalize this. Last fall we issued an inclusivity directive, how inclusivity is going to be operationalized and assessed down the chain. We're changing our leadership training at all levels to have more focus on the human domain, emotional intelligence, power dynamics and inclusion.

We're about to publish a revised military ethos called "Trusted to Serve". Previously we focused on competence, which is still very important, but even more so is character. Character has to lead; competence can follow. One of the new military values we're bringing in is inclusion because it is so important for our operational effectiveness going into the future, not to mention that it's the right thing to do.

• (1655)

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Certainly, and thank you for that.

I'd like to open it up to Deputy Minister Matthews, if he'd like to comment further.

Mr. Bill Matthews: Thank you. I have maybe three quick points.

One, the Department of National Defence is made up of both armed forces members and civilians often working shoulder to shoulder, so capturing both sides of the culture is important.

I have two examples to add to what the chief of defence staff said. We do have an anti-racism secretariat that's been stood up. It's now under the culture change group, and that's an important piece.

Just another example of inclusivity is that upwards of 70,000 of our defence team members have now taken the indigenous culture course as one more step in broadening awareness around the importance of inclusivity as we build the forces going forward.

Mr. Sameer Zuberi: Just to follow up, we heard at a very high level how that is happening, and that's great. I loved hearing about the character aspect and loved hearing about the emotional intelligence aspect.

How are you implementing that in the day-to-day reality of soldiers serving in uniform? In particular, I'm thinking about back in the day when I was in uniform. Once a year I used to get something called sharp training, and it would be a refresher each and every year. I'm just curious about that and where it's at today.

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: I think that once-a-year training was one of the reasons we did not make the progress we should have. It's kind of like going to the gym once a year and saying that you're fit. It doesn't work. The approach we need to take is that it has to be continuous. It has to be in all of our leadership training. It has to be in our self-directed professional development, and we have to talk about it. Only through that continuous improvement are we going to be able to make that change.

That's why I'm so excited to see the advances we're making in our professional military education and our professional development. We're not going to be able to do this overnight, but this is the intent. This is what we've started, and we're going to keep our focus on making this baked into our daily life.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Zuberi. You and I are shattered that once a year in the gym isn't going to cut it.

Madame Normandin, you have six minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks again to all the witnesses for making themselves available. We really appreciate it.

Witnesses have stated that the recruitment problem can be explained by a number of factors, including misconduct, obviously, and COVID-19. I would also mention that veterans are telling us that the transition from military to civilian life poses a number of difficulties that may make the forces less attractive.

According to what we have been told, when members of the military leave military life behind, their medical file is closed and they must transition to a civilian doctor, which is extremely difficult. I'm wondering, therefore, whether a study could be conducted on the possibility of members being treated a bit longer by a military doctor after they leave the military. I would also like to know what work is being undertaken with Veterans Affairs Canada to smooth the transition.

[*English*]

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Thank you for the question.

It is a concern that we have as well. It was one of the driving reasons why, several years ago, we established the Canadian Armed Forces transition group to assist our members as they transitioned back to civilian life so they could reintegrate into Canadian society. Part of that transition process involves working closely with Veterans Affairs Canada to ensure that relevant medical information is transferred. We have made some tremendous progress with this over the course of the last number of years. In fact, I was just talking to the deputy minister of Veterans Affairs two weeks ago about this.

With regard to the proposal to use Canadian Armed Forces health services personnel to continue to treat veterans, I would love to do that but the challenge is capacity. Right now the limiting factor we have in so many of our activities is just the sheer lack of medical resources. Right now it's a question of resources and also a question of coverage. The Canada Health Act is quite clear that the regular force members will receive medical coverage from within the Canadian Forces health services. We don't have a policy to cover for that either.

I'll ask the deputy minister if he has more on this.

• (1700)

[Translation]

Mr. Bill Matthews: I would like to add a brief comment. Since my return to the department, I have observed an improvement in the ties between the two departments. It's important to work with the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve this transition.

[English]

It is an area in which I have noticed an improvement in my three-year hiatus, and I'm delighted to see that. That is not to say there's not more to do, but there is noticeable improvement.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin: Before I ask my next question, I would like to make a comment.

We have been hearing that medical officers who have treated members of the military know their history well. We know that it is quite difficult to find a new doctor in the civilian system owing to a lack of resources there as well. However, civilian doctors are professionals. They do not just take over a military file and rely on its contents. They redo the examinations, which is extremely long.

I would like more information on the drone project planned for either Bagotville or Gagetown. We have been hearing about these two options, so I would like an update on the project.

Mr. Bill Matthews: Thank you for the question.

This project is still under development. We are nearly ready to issue a call for tenders. We will make decisions once we have assessed all of the responses that we receive. The project is ongoing.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Do you have a rough idea of the number of devices that would be used?

Mr. Bill Matthews: I cannot provide you with that information right now, but I may be able to provide further details over the coming months.

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you very much.

I have one last question. We saw that the Canadian Armed Forces were called upon quite extensively for support during the COVID-19 pandemic. I would like to know whether the armed forces feel that they have sufficient resources to respond to future requests by the provinces.

In the opinion of the armed forces, did the provinces ask a bit too much of them?

[English]

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: I will go back to my comments on Canadian Forces health services and our capacity.

We can be viewed almost as the 14th health jurisdiction in Canada, much like the provinces and territories, so when the ask comes in for medical support, we have to take it away from our own clinics, our own care and our own training. That has been the biggest challenge over the course of the pandemic as that has been a shortfall across Canada.

As we go forward, as we look at what additional capacity and capabilities we may need in the future, health services are right at the top of the list.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Normandin: I don't know whether there is time for another comment. I know that I have 30 seconds left.

Ms. Christine Normandin: I would have time only to ask a question, not to get an answer.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Normandin.

[English]

Ms. Mathysen go ahead for six minutes, please.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Thank you so much.

I'd like to direct my question to Colonel Holman.

As we were discussing with the minister, we were talking about Bill C-206 and wanting to make the amendment to delete paragraph 98(c) from the National Defence Act. Many families, the military ombudsman and Justice Fish have remarked that this is an obstacle to people with mental health issues getting help. Families have asked that this be removed, because they see it as a barrier for those who are contemplating self-harm.

Colonel Holman, could you discuss why, when the minister was talking about this note being added, you won't remove the section altogether?

• (1705)

Colonel Robin Holman (Acting Judge Advocate General, Office of the Judge Advocate General, Department of National Defence): Thank you, Mr. Chair and Ms. Mathysen, for the question.

I'd start by recognizing and accepting absolutely the concern that underlies the question and the proposal in the bill. It's a valid concern and one that we have to take seriously.

I think the key in giving effect to our intention to address it is finding the right balance between addressing that concern and ensuring that an important disciplinary concern continues to be addressed; that is to say, the provision deals with an important operational and disciplinary concern. We need to ensure that we can count on members of the armed forces being ready to serve when called upon to do so.

It's a matter of balance. This is a provision that was used several hundred times during World War II and has been used a handful of times in the more modern era. Our allies, all of those whose legal systems flow from the Anglo tradition, continue to have that provision in their code of service discipline or the equivalent.

In terms of what we can do going forward, the proposal submitted to Justice Fish was that we consider putting in a note to clarify the legislator's intent, to clarify Parliament's intent, that this is not a provision intended to capture those who, as a result of mental illness or mental disorder, seek to harm themselves. It's our thought that this is an appropriate way to strike the balance between the concerns you're raising, the concerns that are raised in the bill and the operational concerns.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: If this isn't something that is being used—you said it has been used “a handful of times” since World War II—why would the JAG so desperately need to hold on to it? Is it not true that so many have actually identified this specifically as a barrier in terms of receiving mental health help?

Col Robin Holman: I think the key point is that the JAG's role here is to provide legal advice on options. The chief of the defence staff and the chain of command are the folks who actually provide instructions on these things.

We're working closely with members of the chain of command. In fact, we've been working closely with our medical professionals as well. I understand that they have testified before this committee in the past in the committee's hearing, including Dr. Jetly, the director of mental health for the Canadian Forces.

We're continuing to try to find a way, as I said, to balance those concerns, working closely with the users, the owners of the system, who are the commanders.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: General Eyre, it's good to see you again.

Recently, the DND and CAF departmental results were tabled. The report found that the percentage of the air fleets that are serviceable to meet training and readiness requirements was at 55% in 2020-21, which missed the target of about 85%. That's a significant decline.

The report didn't explain why. I was hoping that you could shed more light on this matter. I would imagine that it's a key concern that the target was missed by so much. Also, I would like to ask if the delay in selecting a replacement fighter jet that has occurred is potentially the reason for this decrease.

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: The 85% target is aspirational. I'm not sure if there's any air force in the world that is able to achieve that rate of serviceability with their aircraft. That being said, my understanding is that there are multiple factors for this 55% rate, including the impact of COVID: the physical distancing and the restrictions that were in place, where you can't get all the technicians huddled around one aircraft at the same time.

Is the age of the aircraft a factor? Yes, absolutely, but I think the important thing is that we have been able to deliver on operations continually. We've been ready to respond and ready to deploy our aircraft as the need has been there.

• (1710)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Mathysen.

We're now on the next round.

Ms. Gallant, you have five minutes, please.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I think I'm going to be taking this, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Oh, okay. Well, I guess we can allow that.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you. Through you, Mr. Chair, welcome to the witnesses.

General Eyre, I'm paraphrasing, but I believe you testified that we're making sure we have enough pilots, training and personnel. The Canadian Forces are about 10,000 people short; the navy is 1,000 short; infantry battalions are down to 300 people. We have under 50 fighter pilots, and 50% of our occupations are severely stressed.

Exactly what mitigation and recruitment initiatives have you undertaken to bring our military to full strength and being operationally ready, especially given that we're on the verge of a European war?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Mr. Chair, this is a question that consumes me, and I'm very focused on it. I'm not going to get into the exact figures here, but what is important is that we focus on both ends of this problem: recruiting and retention.

In terms of recruiting initiatives, what we're doing for this year is staffing our recruiting system to 100%. We are staffing our recruit training system to 100%. We're looking at making efficiencies in our personnel production pipeline so that recruits flow through that pipeline in a more efficient manner so that they are ready to be operationally deployed much faster.

At the front end, the attraction campaign is being much more focused. There are upgrades to customer service aspects of our recruiting website, understanding that much of the recruiting is going online right now. We're making more changes to the marketing content of our recruiting online presence and talking about the contract options, talking about the different 100-plus occupations that are out there.

There's a big myth propagated by Hollywood that when you join the military, you're going to have a big rucksack and carry a gun. Yes, that's true for a small number of our occupations, but a vast number are very different. There are a tremendous variety of different occupations that Canadians of all ages can go into.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: General, we only have a short amount of time. Do you have some sense, from these initiatives you're taking, of when we might see the CAF being at full strength and operationally ready?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: It's interesting. We were on a growth path immediately prior to the pandemic, and our numbers were increasing. At the same time, our ceiling has increased as well, because of the additional positions that came as part of the defence policy. Given the gap that we have right now, which is, on the regular force side, about 6,000 people, it's going to take a number of years. Depending on how effective these efficiencies are that we talked about, we're in the process of modelling how long that is going to take to bring us back up to that number.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you.

I understand, General Eyre, that you've been deputy UN commander in Korea. How do you view the threats posed to international security and our national security by Russia, China, Iran and North Korea? Could you rank those threats?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Mr. Chair, thank you for the question.

That tour in Korea gave me invaluable experience, a front-row seat to what was happening in the security environment in the Asia-Pacific. What we see are countries, authoritarian states, achieving their national objectives, changing the rules-based international order to their benefit, the order that has served world security for so long and so well.

In terms of ranking threats, you've named the key ones. China, Russia, North Korea and Iran all have designs on changing either the regional or the world order for their benefit. Oftentimes, achieving national objectives just below the threshold of violent conflict by having all elements of national power work together—diplomacy, economics, military, information—is something that is of great concern.

• (1715)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Findlay. You have four seconds.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I will use it wisely by saying thank you very much.

The Chair: Yes, that's an excellent use of four seconds.

Go ahead, Ms. Lambropoulos.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you, Chair.

First of all, thank you for being here to answer our questions.

My first question is around cyber-threats. I know that Minister Anand has in her mandate letter several references to cybersecurity. We heard from CSE and CSIS at our last meeting that these threats have been increasing steadily for the last while, mainly by China and Russia, along with others.

What kind of plans do you have going forward in order to make sure we accomplish this part of the mandate?

Ms. Shelly Bruce: Shall I take that question?

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Shelly Bruce: Thank you very much for the question. It's very front of mind. CSE's mandate is first and foremost in cyberspace. Whether we're collecting foreign intelligence through cyberspace or we're helping to protect systems through our cybersecurity mandate, it is our raison d'être, so this part of the minister's mandate letter is very near and dear to our hearts.

As you said, they are increasing in sophistication, in number and in variety. We have to really look at what it's going to take for Canada to address some of these. We have decided that a whole-of-society approach is the most appropriate one. In that whole-of-society approach, the federal government does play a specific role, and has a key lead role to play.

For example, when it comes to defending the government systems, we have also consolidated our cyber expertise at the federal level within CSE in the cyber centre. We produce cyber-threat intelligence through our foreign intelligence mandate, or FI mandate, and we have new legislation that allows us to conduct foreign cyber-operations offshore to help mitigate some of the threats before they materialize in Canada.

It's not just CSE; it's very much a team sport at the federal level. One thing we're trying very much to do is to share some of the competitive advantage we have through our federal mandates back with the public. We are doing more public threat assessments that really incorporate the insights that come from our intelligence mandate. We're providing advice, guidance and technical indicators publicly, but also through secure and special channels to critical infrastructure owners and operators and defenders so that they can have the information they need.

We are providing tools that we develop, in our own mandate, into the public domain so that Canadians and others can use them. We're also providing our threat feeds to other organizations—to CIRA, for example, which is the Canadian DNS registry. It allows them to take our threat feed and pass that along to Canadians through apps that they develop, such as Canadian Shield. We are also taking down fraudulent domains that are masquerading as the Government of Canada. In the last couple of years, we have taken down about 10,000 of those sites, together with industry partners.

The minister's mandate letter is asking us, just as a reminder, to ensure that CSE is in a position to continue to lead Canada's response to the evolving cyber-risks. They are definitely in a dynamic and fluid space right now. We will continue to work with critical infrastructure sectors and government jurisdictions, such as provinces, territories and municipalities, and really try to decant the knowledge we have with them. We will be working with the minister and her team to address the mandate letter to look at the resourcing for CSE.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: In your opinion, what would CSE need in order to help it fulfill its mandate?

Ms. Shelly Bruce: Our mandate exists across the entire country. We have a mandate for defending Canadian government systems. I feel like there is some more work that needs to be done there. However, the defences that we have built so far are quite dynamic and resilient. We are really working on a more national campaign to get Canadians, small and medium enterprises, and critical infrastructure owners and operators to really try to raise the bar by just adopting basic cybersecurity hygiene measures. This will go a long way to stopping many, many different kinds of threats that are out there.

We have a number of ideas, and we're working through those with the minister's office.

• (1720)

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Perfect. Thank you.

Mr. Chair, how much time do I have left?

The Chair: You have about 24 seconds.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Okay.

I was going to refer to COVID-19 and the fact that recently we've seen an increase in service to Canadians here at home by the armed forces. If we were to focus a bit more on that, do you believe that would attract more people to the forces?

The Chair: That's, again, an important question, but there's no time for the response.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you.

The Chair: With that, we'll move to Madame Normandin for two and a half minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Normandin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Before I ask my question, I would once again like to thank the witnesses for making themselves available.

I will ask just one question, with two parts. I invite you to take all the time you need to answer.

We have often heard that postings hinder employee retention and recruitment.

I would like to know, first of all, what measures are being taken to reduce the number of postings deemed unnecessary and, second of all, what is being done to improve support for families when postings are necessary. This situation is often most difficult for families.

Could you please answer both parts of the question?

[*English*]

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: We are working on trying to prolong the posting duration in various locations so we don't have to move as frequently. We're asking the hard questions. Is it absolutely necessary that this individual and their family have to move this summer? If not, let's leave them in location. It's a complex problem because we have to realize that some locations are more preferable than others. Some of our more remote locations have to be properly staffed. We have to share, to be fair, the postings to those locations. That is one aspect.

The other aspect is working with the provinces to make the transition between provinces much easier, to ease the burden on families with things like health care, driver's licence and so on. Another example is certifications of spouses and their employment.

Finally, I would add that we have learned over the course of the pandemic that through remote work, working from a distance, you can actually get things done—as we are doing here at this committee. Leaving people in position in one part of the country and having them work in another is something that we've started to do. We can't do it for everything. It works for knowledge workers. Technicians, those who have to operate in the field or those who have to fly aircraft, can't commute to work from a distance in those positions.

The Chair: Thank you, Madame Normandin.

With that, we go to Ms. Mathysen for two and a half minutes, please.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

A number of investments need to be made, of course, in NO-RAD's modernization. We've spoken about that, as well. I'm not sure if this is directed towards General Eyre or Mr. Matthews. This has a huge potential cost, of course, so I'm wondering if the department has done any sort of cost analysis on that. Do we have an idea of what the price tag would be on that modernization?

Mr. Bill Matthews: I can start, Mr. Chair. Chief, please feel free to supplement.

The analysis is ongoing. The department did receive funding to do analysis and costing and evaluate options. Obviously, something like this is not a “take it or leave it” type of project; there are options to be discussed and evaluated. That work is ongoing and will take some time to complete, but it's under way and—

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: I'm sorry to interrupt. What would be the timeline on that?

Mr. Bill Matthews: I can't give you a firm timeline, but it's not weeks. We're talking months. It's been under way for some time, but it is complicated work. The government will have a decision to make on what options they'd like to pursue, but that work still has a way to go.

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen: Okay.

General Eyre, go ahead.

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: I would just add the cost of not doing this. As the threat increases, we see potential adversaries making significant investments in military technology, hypersonic weapons and the like, which increasingly put our continent at risk. If we take a look, we see that potential adversaries consider the United States and Canada as one integrated target set, so given the capabilities that are out there, including for the use of conventional cruise missiles and hypersonics, it is not inconceivable that we could easily be under threat.

As our north opens up and our sovereignty may at some time come into question, we have to be able to respond up there as well, so the costs of not doing this are something that weighs heavily.

• (1725)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Mathysen.

Mrs. Gallant, you have five minutes.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What are the most challenging state actors to Canadian national security on the cyber front?

Ms. Shelly Bruce: As you know, CSE has a mandate to conduct foreign intelligence, and a large part of that is looking at foreign cyber-threats. I've also just mentioned that we try to decant the knowledge we have into our public threat assessments.

The last national cyber-threat assessment highlighted four countries—Russia, China, Iran and North Korea—as the most significant strategic cyber-threats to Canada, but we also talked about how pervasive cybercrime is as an ever-present threat as well.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Thank you very much.

The CDS spoke of the threat environment in Canada having changed significantly. Yet in the past two years, when our nation was most vulnerable, having a federal government lurching from one failed measure to the next dealing with COVID, the military was stood down. Troops were sent home, and they delivered Uber Eats to make extra money. They couldn't train. They couldn't even go to the gym, because the gyms were closed. The basic training that's so badly needed, because we're sorely in need of new troops, stopped altogether.

Whose order was that? Was that the order of the CDS, or was it a political decision to shut things down like that?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Mr. Chair, that was a military decision based on the uncertainties in the spring of 2020, not knowing what trajectory the pandemic would take.

The machine restarted again in June, with the personnel production pipeline, the recruiting, the training, etc. We've learned and we've continued to evolve over the course of this pandemic, adjusting our measures and adjusting our practices to take into account the safety of our people, while at the same time delivering training and readiness and performing on operations.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: The CDS mentioned how important health is for the troops, and they're focusing on that.

The hospital at Base Petawawa was supposed to open in 2015. At last count, it still wasn't open in 2020. Has it opened yet for operations?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Mr. Chair, I don't know.

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: What is the plan to boost troop strength up to where it had been projected to be for this time, given that we have been in a no-train period for so long? Is there a plan to make up for lost time?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Mr. Chair, let me just clarify that we have not been in a no-train situation for some time now. We paused operations for three to four months in the spring of 2020, but now we are in an operational mode where we're training, doing exercises and recruiting. As I mentioned earlier, the plan is to reinforce the recruiting system, to make changes to the recruiting system to

streamline it and to make the personnel production pipeline more efficient. That's one end of the spectrum.

The other end of the spectrum is on the retention side. We've just recently published an armed forces retention strategy, a targeted retention strategy that focuses on those ranks, occupations and cohorts that need to be kept in. We need to retain—

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Is the cyber regiment up to strength and working yet?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: In the armed forces, we don't have a cyber regiment. Several years ago, we stood up a cyber operator occupation. That occupation continues to grow, and it has to continue to grow because so much of our future is going to be based on what those very talented individuals do.

• (1730)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Are they exercising for multi-faceted scenarios, the different exercises we go through at NATO? It will start with a cyber-attack; then there will be a health attack, and then it ends up that it was all related to a kinetic military attack. Are our troops training for those types of scenarios actively?

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Yes. In fact, they are in operations every day. They train every day. They train with the director of CSE's personnel. They work and are employed with CSE personnel, as well. They work with our allies. They train with our allies.

However, have we broken the code completely on this yet? No. We still need to continue to develop, to train, to learn and to become better each and every day.

I'll ask Ms. Bruce if she has anything to add on that.

The Chair: She's going to have to add it in another fashion.

Maybe, as Mrs. Gallant's time is up, I'll ask the final five minutes' worth of questions.

Mrs. Gallant asked a legitimate question there, but I want to ask.... This committee is doing a threat analysis. That's our baseline. We're starting to look at it. It's blindingly obvious at this point that the risk of threat is up. You would know the threats better than we would.

The threats are literally around the world, and the two primary actors are Russia and China. I consider China to be an existential threat to this country. I don't consider Russia to be an existential threat in the same idea. The military is probably far more focused—maybe not far more focused but certainly focused—on the Russian threat, which is coming home to roost in the Arctic. If you see a map of the Arctic, you can see the militarization of the Arctic quite dramatically from the Russian standpoint.

Ms. Mathysen picked up on a point about the readiness of the equipment, and I think the numbers were around 55% to 60% for aerospace. I've forgotten what the land and the sea numbers were, but both of them fell below the standards that are reasonable to expect. Whether or not they're aspirational standards, the numbers are certainly well below what any one of us would like to see.

You have a threat that's up and an ability to respond to the threat that's down. I'm sure that causes you some sleepless nights. I'd be interested in knowing how you intend to rapidly get the military, in all of its aspects, up to the ever-increasing threat level that we are observing at this committee.

Gen Wayne D. Eyre: Yes, you posed a question that keeps me awake at night, because those threats are real and our ability to respond to them is challenged by the challenges to our readiness: challenges to our equipment readiness and challenges to our numbers. The reconstitution of the Canadian Armed Forces that I've previously talked about is going to be fundamental to achieving that readiness into the future: rebuilding our personnel strength with the right occupations and the right culture, focusing on operations and operational concepts that need to be put in place, and working with allies.

One of the things I didn't mention before in terms of the reconstitution is reconstituting our relationship with allies. I firmly believe that one of our competitive advantages is being part of a system of like-minded allies and partners we can work with.

Finally, there's the modernization piece: continuing to invest the right staff into our modernization projects, as well as the new fleets of equipment that need to come in, making sure that we can get the procurement done on those and making sure that we have the force structure right for that. As we face increasing threats to our continent, the continental defence—NORAD—modernization piece is going to be absolutely critical as well, having infrastructure that we can operate out of in the Far North so that we can project capabilities up there.

You're absolutely right about what Russia has done. They have occupied many of their previously closed Cold War bases, opened some new ones and put in place what's called an A2AD, anti-access/area denial strategy, which basically gives them pretty firm control over their part of the Arctic Ocean. It's very similar to what China has done in the South China Sea.

We have to take a look, and we're developing the concepts as to how we can better operate and how we can better project our forces up to the extremities of our country. It's a multi-faceted approach, and it's a long answer to a very complex question.

• (1735)

The Chair: I agree that it was a complex question, and you certainly made an admirable stab at responding. What I do worry

about is whether we actually have any time for the luxury of thinking about this a great deal, given the increased threat analysis.

Colleagues, that does bring us to an end, but I do take note that Mrs. Gallant asked a question of CSE. I know that Christmas has passed, but we can open it up to see whether Ms. Bruce can answer the question put by Mrs. Gallant.

Ms. Shelly Bruce: Thank you very much, Chair.

I would note that CSE and CAF have a very long-standing partnership of almost eight decades of collaboration.

CAF's cyber-authorities were laid out in the "Strong, Secure, Engaged" policy, and CSE has its authorities laid out in the CSE Act. We have a clear national mandate for protecting Canada's most important systems and information and for conducting foreign cyber-operations as well, within certain parameters, and also a new authority to assist CAF with technical and operational support.

We have been working for the last few years together with General Eyre's teams to ensure that we can build the processes, the teams and the capabilities that account for our authorities when they come together and ensure that the governance is in place. That work is well under way.

Is there more work required? Yes, but it's a good-news story, I think, at this point, and together we believe that the blended authorities will give us sufficient range to manoeuvre across the fullest spectrum of cyber-operations.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Bruce, for that answer.

On behalf of the committee, I want to thank Ms. Bruce, General Eyre, Colonel Holman and Mr. Matthews for their two hours' worth of attendance here. It has been a good exchange, sometimes a tad acrimonious, but nevertheless a good exchange.

We look forward to your appearance before the committee in the future. In the event that you wish to come before the committee for something that maybe the committee is not summoning you for, feel free to reach out to the clerk or to me.

With that, we'll bring the meeting to an end.

We look forward to reconvening on February 14. At this point, colleagues, we have confirmed Mr. Rasiulis, Mr. Colby, Christian Leuprecht and one or two more that are pending. On the 16th, we will have Mr. Kolga, Mr. Fadden, Mr. Hampson and Dr. Paul Tailon. These will be at the next two meetings on threat analysis.

With that, the meeting is adjourned.

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