

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

### **GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS, ENTITLED: *REPORT 6, ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF CANADA – NATIONAL DEFENCE, OF THE 2017 FALL REPORTS OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA***

#### **Introduction**

The Government of Canada has considered the report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PACP) entitled: *Report 6, Royal Military College of Canada – National Defence, of the 2017 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*.

The Government would like to thank the members of the Committee for undertaking such a thorough study. National Defence will provide all reports requested by the Committee by the recommended deadline. In addition, National Defence would offer further information on each of the recommendations below.

National Defence remains committed to ensuring that the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC) produces the quality of officers that the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) needs at a reasonable cost, and to ensuring proper conduct of Naval/Officer Cadets and Staff at RMC.

**Recommendation 1 – Regarding the integration of military training and academic education: That, by September 2018, National Defence provide PACP with a report detailing what progress has been achieved with regard to 1) clearly defining and strengthening military training of Officer Cadets at RMC so that it is relevant, practical, and provides value to operational units; and 2) integrating this improved military training with the academic education of Officer Cadets. A final report must also be submitted by 31 August 2019.**

The Government commits to providing an interim report by September 2018 detailing what progress has been achieved with regard to 1) clearly defining and strengthening military training of Officer Cadets at RMC so that it is relevant, practical, and provides value to operational units; and 2) integrating this improved military training with the academic education of Officer Cadets. A final report will be submitted by August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

National Defence is reviewing the delivery of military training at RMC with involvement from key stakeholders including Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) senior leadership, RMC military and academic staff, and Naval/Officer Cadets. Based on the findings of the Auditor General (AG) and Special Staff Assistance Visit audits, the comprehensive Professional Development Programme, which seeks to ensure success throughout the RMC Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP-RMC) and prepare subordinate officers for their first employment upon graduation, is being revised.

The revised Professional Development Programme will be based upon core competencies such

as leadership, ethics, and proper conduct, and will comprise of the following four components:

- Professional Military Education;
- Military Training;
- Experiential learning; and
- Self-Development.

Notably, it will entail a progressive approach to learning where the Naval/Officer Cadets will progressively take on more responsibility. During the summer training periods, focus will be placed on providing second language training, military occupation training or On-Job-Employment (OJE) opportunities.

The revised Programme will ensure that ROTP-RMC Naval/Officer Cadets deliver immediate operational value to their operational units upon arrival. The intent is to integrate this new Professional Development Programme into academic year 2019/20, with revisions and adjustments throughout the year.

**Recommendation 2 – Regarding Cost Effectiveness: That, by 31 December 2018, National Defence provide PACP with a report outlining the progress that has been achieved regarding cost effectiveness as presented in the Department’s Detailed Action Plan that was tabled on 21 November 2017. A final report must also be submitted by 31 July 2019.**

The Government commits to providing an interim report by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, outlining the progress that has been achieved regarding cost effectiveness as presented in the Department’s Detailed Action Plan. A final report will be submitted by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

Under the Detailed Action Plan, National Defence has committed to conduct a review and analysis to confirm whether the cost per student of operating RMC is reasonable, compared to similar allied service academies. National Defence has also committed to develop a cost model that enables RMC to be compared with other Canadian academic institutions of similar size, adjusted for scope.

The office of the RMC Comptroller is developing a cost model for activities at RMC that will allow the College budget and operating expenses to be expressed in a manner similar to those used by other universities. It is expected that this will allow for a detailed itemization of the full range of activities undertaken at RMC and for the completion of comparisons of RMC operating costs with those of allied service academies and Canadian academic institutions of similar size.

RMC will also undertake a review of academic programming being delivered with a view to reducing costs per student while maintaining RMC’s ability to meet the education and research needs of the Department of National Defence and CAF. Progress on this front will be facilitated by the restoration of the Collège militaire royal in Saint-Jean as a full-degree granting institution. In addition to ensuring the effective recruitment, training and retention of Naval/Officers from Quebec, this will improve cost effectiveness by reducing the number of programs offered at RMC with extremely low student-to-professor ratios.

**Recommendation 3 – Regarding Cost Comparisons: That, by 31 December 2018, National Defence provide PACP with a report that A) explains the Department’s rationale for comparing the operating cost of RMC to those of Allied military institutions, given that the scope of the audit was to compare RMC’s costs to other Canadian officer development plans; B) compares RMC’s education operating cost per student to Canadian academic institutions of similar size; and, C) compares the cost of officers recruited and developed through other means such as the Regular Officer Training Plan and the Direct Entry Officer Plan.**

The Government commits to providing an interim report by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, that a) explains the Department’s rationale for comparing the operating costs of RMC to those of Allied military institutions, given that the scope of the audit was to compare RMC’s costs to other Canadian officer development plans; b) compares RMC’s education operating cost per student to Canadian academic institutions of similar size; and, c) compares the cost of officers recruited and developed through other means such as the ROTP and the DEO. A final report will be submitted by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

Historically, National Defence has compared RMC’s operating costs to those of allied service academies because their mandates and missions to produce high-quality military officers through an integrated package of academic education, physical challenge and military leadership training are more akin to RMC’s than those of domestic academic institution. As a result, these institutions provide a more accurate standard, both in terms of outcomes and costs, against which RMC can be compared. National Defence will develop a costing framework to determine a reasonable assessment of annual student per capita costs for a national level military college that accounts for differences in population, curriculum structure (including language requirements) and operation. This costing framework will be applied to a sample of foreign military colleges, including the United States Military Academy (West Point) and Royal Military College Duntroon (Australia).

To better assess RMC’s costs against a range of civilian domestic institutions, National Defence is also producing a detailed cost assessment of all the components of an Officer/Naval Cadet’s military education to distinguish between general university education costs and those additional costs unique to the production of an Officer/Naval Cadet. This will allow National Defence to complete an analysis of the academic cost factors common to both RMC and a sample group of similar civilian universities to complete accurate comparisons.

Finally, National Defence will conduct a cost comparison of officers recruited through three major officer intake and commissioning plans: ROTP-RMC, ROTP-Civilian University and the DEO.

**Recommendation 4 – Regarding the purpose, cost, and value of Royal Military College of Canada’s higher standards: That, by 30 July 2019, National Defence provide the PACP with a report detailing what progress has been achieved with regard to demonstrating and ensuring that the higher standards of the Regular Officer Training Plan at the Royal Military College of Canada are required, that they result in better qualified officers, and that the cost is reasonable, compared to other officer development plans.**

The Government commits to providing a report by July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019, detailing what progress has been achieved with regard to demonstrating and ensuring that the higher standards of the ROTP-RMC are required, that they result in better qualified officers, and that the cost is reasonable, compared to other officer development plans.

The higher standards surrounding physical performance, language profile, and military training enforced at RMC produces officers with the mental, physical and linguistic capabilities and the ethical foundation required to lead in the CAF. The ROTP-RMC ensures that Officer/Naval Cadets learn from an academic curriculum tailored to their career in the military, are imbued with the distinct military culture of the profession of arms in Canada, and understand the institutional functioning of the CAF. It also provides critical experience in leadership, responsibility, and discipline.

National Defence is also conducting additional military personnel research in a number of areas including retention rates, promotion rates and success in attaining General and Flag Officer ranks for officers from the three major officer intake and commissioning plans (ROTP-RMC, ROTP-Civilian and DEO).

Finally, National Defence is also researching and intends to develop measurement frameworks to understand the quality and performance of officers from the different commissioning plans.

**Recommendation 5 – Regarding the role of the Commandant: That, by 31 December 2018, National Defence provide the PACP with a report detailing its progress regarding better defining the role of the Commandant as the executive authority for day-to-day operations and long-term planning of all aspects of the Royal Military College of Canada’s operations, particularly the ability to oversee and integrate military training and academic programs.**

The Government and commits to providing a report by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, detailing its progress regarding better defining the role of the Commandant as the executive authority for day-to-day operations and long-term planning of all aspects of RMC operations, particularly the ability to oversee and integrate military training and academic programs.

National Defence is already taking steps to better define the role of the Commandant as the executive authority for day-to-day operations and long-term planning of all aspects of RMC’s operations. The Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) has directed that the length of command tour for the Commandant will be three years, commencing with the current Commandant, to allow strategic continuity and management of the leadership and programmes within the unique and complex nature of the Canadian Military Colleges (CMC). As part of a focused realignment, Commander CDA will also become special advisor reporting directly to the CDS with a focused

mandate and the CDA will be moved from being under Military Personnel Command to under the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff. Commander CDA has produced and circulated a Professional Military Education Vision paper that will shape the over-arching governance of Leader Development and Professional Military Education.

The Special Staff Assistance Visit report identified the need to review the CMC academic governance framework, the Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Canadian Military Colleges (QR Canmilcols), and the Ministerial Directive for the Principal. Significant work is underway to address these reviews. New QR Canmilcols are expected to be released in August 2020.

**Recommendation 6 – Regarding standards of conduct amongst Officer Cadets: That, by 31 December 2018, National Defence provide the PACP with a report detailing what progress has been made with regard to ensuring that before senior Officer Cadets at RMC are appointed to command positions, they demonstrate high standards of conduct and ethical behaviour.**

The Government commits to providing a report by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, detailing what progress has been made with regard to ensuring that before senior Officer Cadets at RMC are appointed to command positions, they demonstrate the high standards of conduct and ethical behaviour expected of Naval/Officer Cadets.

The process for selecting Naval/Officer Cadets for senior leadership positions has been revised, with a number of major changes as of November 2017. These include new criteria for leadership positions, merit-based selection, and a new approval process that requires that the Commandant approve all appointments to leadership positions.

Additional efforts are being made to ensure high standards of conduct and ethical behaviour at RMC. These include:

- Revisions to the Cadet Wing Directives;
- Formal promulgation of Commandant's and Director of Cadets' policies;
- Formal adherence to discipline under the Code of Service Discipline when appropriate;
- Counselling requirements for every Naval/Officer Cadet each semester;
- Formal assessments with a minimum of two levels of review (not lower than Squadron Leadership Team level) at the end of every semester; and
- Mentorship by a member of the College's Training Wing for each bar/leadership position and each position of responsibility.

**Recommendation 7 – Regarding Mentoring of Officer Cadets: That, by 31 December 2018, National Defence provide PACP with a report detailing what progress has been made with regard to ensuring that military training staff have the proper skills and training they need to develop leadership skills among Officer Cadets at the Royal Military College of Canada.**

The Government commits to providing a report by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, detailing what progress has been made with regard to ensuring that military training staff have the proper skills and training they need to develop leadership skills among Naval/Officer Cadets at RMC.

National Defence and the Royal Military College have examined various best practices for staff well-being, including an increase in staffing, staff orientation and training.

As a result, personnel resource investments have been made to provide additional and more experienced leaders and mentors at RMC. These include increasing the rank of the Director of Cadets from Lieutenant-Colonel to Colonel and increasing the ranks of a number of other Training Wing staff.

A detailed staff orientation programme is being developed under the Deputy Director of Cadets which will occur during the week of 13-17 August 2018. This orientation will occur prior to the arrival of Naval/Officer Cadets and will be the sole focus of the Military Wing staff.

Additionally, revised Terms of Reference have been developed for Divisional and Squadron Commanders, as well as for Training senior Non-Commissioned Members, and new selection criteria for Cadet Wing Training staff has been established to include gender, bilingual capability, diversity, and previous command experience at appropriate level.