

Minister
of National Defence



Ministre
de la Défense nationale

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K2

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The Honourable Kevin Sorenson
Chair
Standing Committee on Public Accounts
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Sorenson,

Pursuant to Standing Order 109 of the House of Commons, I am pleased to present the official Government Response to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts' Thirtieth Report entitled: "*Report 5, Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment and Retention – National Defence, of the Fall 2016 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*", tabled in the House of Commons on June 8, 2017.

I thank you for your report and your interest in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). The Government of Canada is equally concerned with modernizing the CAF's recruitment and retention process. The Government accepts all eight of the Committee's recommendations and will provide the Committee with the requested progress reports by April 30, 2018.

It is clear that the operational success of the CAF requires a robust recruiting system that engages and attracts the best and brightest Canadians, and communicates the unique opportunities and benefits of military service. Canada's new defence policy, *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, focuses on ensuring that CAF members and their families are supported and resilient, from the time they join through to their transition to civilian life. As outlined in *Strong, Secure, Engaged*, the Government is committed to improving the recruitment, retention, and training of CAF personnel. The new policy also includes a commitment to grow the CAF by 3,500 Regular Force members and 1,500 Reserve Force members, as well as a number of initiatives to improve the CAF's ability to recruit qualified personnel, and retain them through modern and world-class training.

The Government has also committed to increasing diversity in the military by attracting, recruiting, and retaining more women across all ranks and promoting women into senior leadership positions. This includes the implementation of a recruitment campaign to promote the unique opportunities offered by the CAF, and the development of a comprehensive CAF

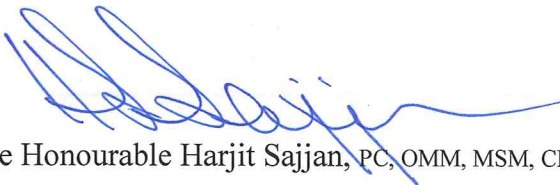
Retention Strategy to keep talented people in uniform with a welcoming and healthy work environment. As part of these efforts, the CAF has also developed a Diversity Strategy and Action Plan, to help develop a more diverse organization by ensuring its recruitment process is responsive to the changing demographics of the Canadian labour market, as well as by working towards a more diverse approach to career management that better balances the needs of all CAF members with the needs of the organization.

Strong, Secure, Engaged also includes specific initiatives to improve retention in the CAF, such as the ongoing review of remuneration and benefits offered to personnel, and the implementation of initiatives to enhance the flexibility of military careers.

The Government remains focused on ensuring the recruiting and retention strategies developed for the CAF satisfy the demands outlined in Strong, Secure, Engaged, and will continue to closely monitor, and keep Parliament informed of, National Defence's progress in improving recruiting and retention.

I would like to thank you and other Members of the Committee for your ongoing support of CAF members and the important role they play.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Harjit Sajjan, PC, OMM, MSM, CD, MP

c.c. Angela Crandall
Clerk, Standing Committee on Public Accounts