

The Minister of National Defence
and
The Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada
2000 Annual Report
to the
Standing Committee on
National Defence and Veterans Affairs on



in the Canadian Forces

Preface

24 March 2000

We are pleased to submit the 2000 Annual Report to the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs on its Report tabled in the House of Commons on 28 October 1998, entitled, "*Moving Forward – A Strategic Plan for Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Forces.*" This is the first annual report that follows up on the Government's Response published on 25 March 1999, and it updates the information provided in the Canadian Forces' Interim Report to SCONDVA dated 1 December 1999.

During the last year, the Government began and completed many more Quality of Life (QOL)-related initiatives that were recommended by SCONDVA. Improvements to the QOL of our Canadian Forces (CF) members and families remain one of our top priorities. Great strides have been made toward pay comparability with the Public Service (PS), Maternity and Parental Leave benefits, cost of living assistance, and care of injured members and veterans. Additionally, our health services system is in desperate need of revitalization; therefore, funding has been allocated for Health Care reform, and a Project Management Office has been established to champion this reform initiative.


We are pleased that the most recent federal budget included another \$400 million for Fiscal Year 2000/2001, part of which will be used to further address the Committee's recommendations aimed at improving CF Quality of Life by providing family care assistance and regional cost of living assistance. A portion of this new funding, together with last year's \$175 million annually of new funding, and the \$364 million annually from within the existing Defence budget, will further improve the QOL of the Canadian Forces members and their families.

Veterans and military members injured while on duty to Canada have seen major improvements in support and benefits with the establishment, on 13 April 1999, of the Department of National Defence (DND)/Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) Combined Centre for the Support of Injured and Retired Members and their Families. The Centre coordinates necessary action within DND and VAC to resolve legitimate claims. Thus far, hundreds of still serving and retired members have been helped to receive medical and pension benefits as well as employment opportunities in the private sector. DND and VAC also plan to work together on a Joint Task Force that will outline recommendations to modernize the Government's current compensation scheme for CF members, including areas of disability pensions, income, health, rehabilitation and retraining.

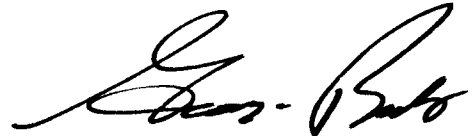
This first Annual Report to SCONDVA marks a significant milestone in how well we are progressing the Quality of Life issues within the Canadian Forces for still serving and retired members and their families. We have accomplished a lot in a short period; however, there is still a lot more to be accomplished in the years to come. We will continue working hard to resolve the issues of a pension for reservists, a standardized universal pay system, and improved accommodations, to name just a few.

The Government is committed to improving the lives of our military and will continue to support the efforts of the Canadian Forces Quality of Life Project and the Standing Committee.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Art Eggleton,
Minister of National Defence



The Honourable George Baker,
Minister of Veterans Affairs

List of Acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| ASD | Alternate Service Delivery |
| CDS | Chief of Defence Staff |
| CF | Canadian Forces |
| CFAO | Canadian Forces Administration Orders |
| CFAS | Canadian Forces Assignment System |
| CFB | Canadian Forces Base |
| CFCEP | Canadian Forces Continuing Education Program |
| CFHA | Canadian Forces Housing Agency |
| CFMS | Canadian Forces Medical Services |
| CFPSA | Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency |
| CFS | Canadian Forces Station |
| CFSA | Canadian Forces Superannuation Act |
| COLA | Cost of Living Allowance |
| CRS | Chief of Review Services |
| DAOD | Defence Administrative Order and Directive |
| DND | Department of National Defence |
| DPSP | Director of Pensions and Social Programs |
| DRET | Director Recruiting, Education and Training |
| DSG | Deployment Support Group |
| EE | Employment Equity |
| FCP | Family Care Plan |
| FCA | Family Care Assistance |
| FY | Fiscal Year (1 st April - 31 st March) |
| HRDC | Human Resources Development Canada |
| IRPP | Integrated Relocation Pilot Program |
| LTD | Long-term Disability |

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| MFRC | Military Family Resource Centres |
| NJC | National Joint Council |
| NYS | National Youth Summit |
| PDRHC | Post Deployment Regional Health Centre |
| PEP | Personal Enhancement Program |
| PLD | Post Living Differential (allowance) |
| PMQ | Private Married Quarter |
| PS | Public Service (Federal) |
| PSC | Public Service Commission |
| PSP | Personnel Support Program |
| PTSD | Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder |
| QOL | Quality of Life |
| RFP | Request for Proposal |
| RMC | Royal Military College, Kingston |
| SCAN | Second Career Assistance Network |
| SCONDVA | Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs |
| SDA | Special Duty Area |
| SHARP | Standards for Harassment and Racism Prevention |
| SISIP | Service Income Security Insurance Plan |
| SRB | Senior Review Board (Co-chaired by Deputy Minister and CDS) |
| TC | Total Compensation (factor or methodology) |
| UN | United Nations |
| UTPNM | University Training Plan for Non-commissioned Members |
| UTPO | University Training Plan for Officers |
| VAC | Veterans Affairs Canada |
| Y2K | Year 2000 |

Introduction

Much has been accomplished this past year to satisfy the 89 recommendations made in the report of the Standing Committee entitled *Moving Forward: A Strategic Plan for Quality of Life Improvements in the Canadian Forces*, which was tabled in the House of Commons in October 1998. The Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada are proud to provide the first Annual Report on Quality of Life in the Canadian Forces to the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs (SCONDVA). This report outlines the accomplishments made with respect to the Government's commitment tabled on 25 March 1999 and enhances the Canadian Forces' Interim Response to SCONDVA that was published on 1 December 1999.

The Government is very much committed to seeking improvements to the social and economic aspects of life within the Canadian Forces. To this end, some 116 initiatives, comprising the 89 SCONDVA recommendations and several internally generated ones, were worked on during this past year. Remarkable accomplishments have been made in the areas of pay and allowances, maternity and parental leave benefits, family care assistance, and regional cost of living assistance (now referred to as Post Living Differential (PLD)). To date, 35 SCONDVA recommendations have been successfully completed, finalizing 47 of the 116 initiatives. Work will continue at a rapid pace to resolve the remaining initiatives as quickly as possible.

The Quality of Life Pillars

This annual report is organized into five parts, which continue to reflect the five pillars that support the Department of National Defence's Quality of Life Project. Those pillars are:

- Pay and Allowances (compensation for work),
- The Housing Portfolio (accommodation),
- The Injured, Retired, and Veterans (care of injured personnel),
- The Military Family, and
- Transitions (including recognition, work expectations and conditions of service).

This report is intended to provide a complete, concise overview of the Government's progress toward fulfilling the recommendations made by the Standing Committee. This section will provide an executive summary of the year's program, while the Annex to the 2000 Annual Report will provide details on the status of all the QOL initiatives.

Commanding Officers will continue to ensure that details of the Quality of Life (QOL) initiatives are passed onto their personnel. This report and other QOL-related information, with many links to other websites, are also available on the DND Internet

website at (www.dnd.ca), and on the DND Intranet at http://hr.dwan.dnd.ca/home_e.shtm (English) or http://hr.dwan.dnd.ca/qol/frgraph/home_f.shtm (French).

I. Pay and Allowances (Compensation for Work)

The compensation provided to members of the Canadian Forces must reflect the unique contributions, demands and risks of military service. Military compensation must be comparable to pay provided within the Public Service at all levels and ranks within the military; it must allow the CF to attract and retain high-quality personnel to meet military mission requirements; and it should better recognize regional differences in the cost of living, both within Canada and abroad.

The Report: The Committee made 20 recommendations designed to deal with the issue of compensation and benefits provided to members of the Canadian Forces, especially at junior ranks.

The Government's Position: The Government accepted the vast majority of the Committee's recommendations, particularly those related to pay comparability and to relieving financial stress for lower-ranking individuals. Many of the recommendations have been implemented with existing funds, while others will be implemented with incremental funding.

Specifically: Within the area of *pay and allowances*, significant pay raises, particularly for the entry-level ranks and Non-commissioned members, were achieved primarily as a result of an increase in the Military Factor, which recognized the unique conditions of military life, and the restoration of pay comparability with the Public Service. This has addressed what arguably was seen as the single largest dissatisfier among members of the Canadian Forces. With respect to overtime, a survey of CF personnel that began on 15 October 1999 to determine the current extent of overtime in the CF has been completed. DND, in conjunction with Treasury Board, will review this overtime data and determine the appropriate value of the overtime factor in the total compensation formula for Fiscal Year 2000/2001. [**Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10**]

With respect to the *pay system*, the Government is still committed to introducing a new integrated pay system that will, when fully implemented, provide the same pay services to both Regular and Reserve Forces. Until recently, a major re-programming of the Regular Force pay system that corrected all Y2K problems took first priority, but work will now commence on an integrated pay system. This project and the bi-weekly pay issue cannot, however, be implemented before 2004 because of technical reasons and skilled personnel shortages; nevertheless, these issues will be addressed as soon as practicable. In the meantime, Reserve pay accounts have been reconciled to ensure that an individual's pay is accurate and paid in a timely manner; additionally, reserve unit pay clerks have benefited from refresher training, and a toll-free 1-800-773-7705 number is

available to handle queries or problems about reservists' pay. [**Recommendations 7, 8 and 17**]

With respect to *leave policy and practices*, the Department has concluded a thorough review of the existing leave policy, and a new Defence Administrative Order and Directive will be with effect from 1 April 2000. The new policy will include such changes as the introduction of Special Relocation Leave, which ensures that adequate non-duty time is provided to members and their families to deal with the many details relating to relocation. [**Recommendation 11 and 40**]

With respect to a *pension plan for reservists*, the Canadian Forces Superannuation Act (CFSA) Review Project is studying this issue. Phase one will be completed by April 2001. Then, once the results have been accepted, the development of options, technical implications, detailed plan design and implementation will commence. A Reserve Force pension plan is a priority within the CF, with plan development relying on the recommendations made in phase one of the study, Treasury Board approval, and funding availability. [**Recommendation 6**]

With respect to *pay - acting rank*, this recommendation has been accepted and will be implemented in two parts. First, members are compensated on a universal basis over their entire career under the system of comparability with the federal PS for acting in replacement or "fill-in" situations. This is being evaluated to ensure the CF remains comparable with the PS. A regular review will ensure compensation is accurate and personnel get full compensation for work done. Second, staffing is ongoing to develop policies, guidelines and administrative procedures that will appropriately compensate individuals, through Acting Rank, when they are formally posted to a position that calls for a higher rank level. [**Recommendation 12**]

With respect to *allowances*, a number of steps are being taken. The special CFS Alert allowance, effective 1 April 1999, is now payable from the date of arrival in Alert. The development of the specific structure of a new allowance will require further review and is included as part of a major review of military allowances that is scheduled to commence this year. Maternity Leave now qualifies as time towards severance pay. A proposed regulation has been prepared which would extend this to Parental leave. It is anticipated that this regulation could come into force in the spring of 2000. Regional cost of living disparity has been a serious concern within the Canadian Forces; therefore, a Post Living Differential (PLD) study was conducted in 1999. The study confirmed that the cost of living differences in Canada were substantial and warranted compensation. We plan to introduce a new allowance with effect from 1 April 2000 -- Post Living Differential (PLD) allowance would provide compensation for overall cost of living differences at locations in Canada. It would compensate for cost of living differences above a baseline cost set at the CF average. In the case of foreign postings, changes considered appropriate and feasible will be recommended as a part of the National Joint Council Triennial Review of Foreign Service Directives. The Government endorses the principle that the cost of living for CF personnel and their families should be maintained at a relative and predictable level, no matter where personnel are called upon to serve. At the same time, the Government has decided that allowances should continue to be taxable

in the hands of recipients. Mess dues, as currently defined, should not become tax-deductible but the Department will continue its review of their purpose, with the intent of addressing the underlying issue related to their compulsory nature.

[Recommendations 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 27, 28 and 41]

With respect to *regular reviews of pay and allowances*, commencing in 2001, compensation and benefits will be reviewed triennially by a committee whose composition is still being developed. **[Recommendation 20]**

With respect to *relocation*, the first anniversary of implementing the new Integrated Relocation Pilot Program (IRPP) is approaching. This program enhances previous relocation benefits and provides greater flexibility to reimburse legitimate relocation expenses. The IRPP contains home equity protection provisions, which are an improvement over the former Home Equity Assistance Program. Military spouses may now claim various professional relocation expenses, and children may accompany their parents on extended house hunting trips. As stated previously, members and their families are now entitled to Special Relocation Leave of up to 5 days at the old residence location and another 5 days at the new one, which will help families deal with the many details involved in moving households. As a result of the year's experience and CF members' feed-back, there continues to be refinements to the relocation process that will ensure that members and their families are treated in a fair, equitable manner and have maximum flexibility during a relocation. **[Recommendations 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 67, 70 and 71]**

II. The Housing Portfolio (Accommodation)

Canadian Forces members and their families must be able to secure safe, suitable accommodation wherever they are posted. Previous under-funding of housing stock and repairs must be corrected.

The Report: The Committee made 21 recommendations designed to provide much-needed improvements to military housing stock and greater flexibility to the Canadian Forces Housing Agency (CFHA).

The Government's Position: The Government supported the aim of the Committee's general statement of principles on accommodation and accepted the intent of their recommendations with respect to the CFHA. Key to correcting these issues is the development of a Department of National Defence accommodation policy. The Government has and will spend tens of millions of dollars in the next few years on remedial health and safety repairs through reallocation of existing funds. The Committee's recommendations relating to the role, responsibilities and funding of the Canadian Forces Housing Agency are currently under study. The Minister of National Defence will inform SCONDVA when decisions on the status of the Housing Agency are confirmed.

Specifically: With respect to *health and safety repairs*, the Department has provided to CFHA an additional \$50 Million in FY 1999/2000 to implement a dedicated Married Quarter Health and Safety Repair Program. Another \$50 Million for FY 2000/2001 have been committed. This program is expected to run until FY 2003/2004 with forecast funds of \$28 Million for each of FYs 2001/2002, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004; thereafter a long-term program will be in effect. **[Recommendations 24, 25, 26]**

With respect to *single quarters*, the DND accommodation policy will address the need to respect the dignity, privacy, safety, and security of occupants. There is no quick, easy solution to the complex single quarters problem, but over the next several years, access to accommodation that meets these requirements will be realized. All means of providing access to suitable single quarters will be explored; including the possibility of public/private joint ventures similar to those contemplated for family housing off base. **[Recommendations 21, 22 and 23]**

With respect to *housing of military families*, a new Departmental Accommodation Policy was issued in June 1999; additionally, CFHA initiatives include site-by-site married quarters condition assessments and housing requirement studies. These have been contracted and will be used to formulate a CFHA Long-Term Plan. This plan will then serve as the blueprint for a modified housing portfolio that will better meet the housing needs of CF personnel and their families as we enter the new millennium. Affordability will be addressed through adequate compensation and not through subsidized or sub-standard on-base housing. The PLD allowance is intended to be the vehicle by which this compensation is delivered. **[Recommendations 27, 29]**

With respect to a *new or expanded mandate for the Agency*, the CFHA Long-Term Plan will serve as the business case for the establishment of a revitalized, empowered CFHA. The final CFHA organization will be capable of innovative business practices in partnership with industry and the financial sector. The CFHA Long-Term Plan should be developed by mid-2000 in order to expedite the evolution of CFHA. **[Recommendations 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 37]**

With respect to the issue of *water quality* at bases, specific projects to address this issue have been completed at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Borden and CFB Valcartier, the two locations mentioned during the SCONDVA testimony. Significant improvements have been noted to date and additional improvements are expected as follow-on projects are implemented. **[Recommendation 34]**

III. The Injured, Retirees, and Veterans (Care of Injured Personnel)

The Canadian Forces must be able to provide appropriate care for members who are injured while serving; care must also be provided once an injured member is released or retires; failure to provide such care can have negative consequences for the member and the member's family, as well as a deleterious impact on the morale of other members of the CF.

The Report: The Committee made 16 recommendations, most of them relating to disability and pension issues, which included some changes to the Pension Act.

The Government's Position: The Government accepted the thrust of the Committee's recommendations in this area and has implemented many of them. To advance this Pillar's initiatives in the areas of improved pension benefits and care of injured personnel, an additional \$114 million over the next five years was dedicated with \$36 million annually recurring after that time. The Department of National Defence has completed a comprehensive review of the report on Care of Injured Personnel and Their Families that will lead to further changes.

Specifically: With respect to *disability pension benefits*, the Government continues to work on amendments to the Pension Act designed to provide pension benefits to still serving members injured in the service of Canada, from the date of application, regardless of where the injury occurred. The Department will increase the quality and quantity of information on medical benefits to all CF members and their families through its Quality of Life project. The Government will also assess the implications of recognizing as veterans all members of the CF who have served in designated Special Duty Areas (SDAs) abroad. Improvements to the Service Income Security Insurance Plan (SISIP) coverage and an expanded definition of Long-Term Disability (LTD) within the plan came into effect on 1 December 1999. These changes will improve benefits to those disabled participants with LTD coverage who are medically released when they cannot meet the physical requirements for their Military Occupation. Now under SISIP, if the member cannot perform the duties associated with their specific military occupation, they will be eligible for benefits in the first two years after release. This change will provide increased access to long-term disability benefits for members who are released from the CF because of injury or incapacitation. The steady state cost to the Government of this change will be approximately \$26.6 million, which will be allocated from existing DND budgetary funds. **[Recommendations 45, 51 54, 55, 56, 57]**

With respect to the *care of injured personnel and their families*, a combined DND-VAC Centre for the Support of Injured and Retired Members and their Families has been in operation since April 1999. It is providing information and assistance, client tracking services, a toll-free line (800-883-6094), contingency funding as well as other essential services to injured and retired members and their families. It provides a monitoring, referral and assistance service to ensure that care and compensation are properly provided. The Centre also reduces duplicate medical reporting and accelerates administration and transfer of medical records, while safeguarding confidentiality. Additionally, it provides emergency support to injured members in meeting their immediate daily needs. **[Recommendations 42, 50, 52, and 53]**

With respect to priority *hiring of injured or ill CF members*, the Federal Public Service Commission approved priority hiring status for personnel injured in designated SDAs. The Canadian Forces has requested expansion of this status to personnel injured on domestic operations as well as those injured in inherently dangerous occupations. A Transition Assistance Program has been established within the DND/VAC Centre to provide individual employment assistance to CF members who are medically released.

Ongoing negotiations with Provincial Governments and private industry for priority hiring of injured or disabled former service members have progressed well and received considerable support, in principle, from many of these organizations. The first candidates under this initiative were hired in February of this year, and the employer comments were very positive. **[Recommendation 44]**

With respect to *training*, the Canadian Forces are refining the training provided to Officers and Non-Commissioned Members concerning the care of injured personnel and on the ethos of caring. The Officer General Specification has been expanded to include caring leadership, and training standards are being rewritten to reflect this fact. Similar efforts are underway with respect to Non-Commissioned Member leadership courses. **[Recommendation 43]**

With respect to the *treatment of special disorders*, the CF has taken a number of initiatives. Post Deployment Regional Health Centres have been established to ensure members receive the best care possible after returning to Canada. In the matter of exposure to toxic materials, DND casualty reporting documentation will be changed to include exposure or suspected exposure to toxic substances or material. Specialists have been hired within the Canadian Forces Medical Services (CFMS) to develop other procedures and protocols required to ensure that such conditions are fully documented and dealt with appropriately. Concerning post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD): in addition to the Ottawa Centre, four new Operational Trauma and Stress Support Centres¹ now exist in Halifax, Valcartier, Edmonton and Esquimalt; additional Critical Incident Stress debriefing courses are being conducted; and a Post Deployment Follow-up Policy has been developed. Services are available for both serving members and VAC-referred individuals suffering from PTSD. In addition, the results of previous studies on injured personnel will now be followed-up to ensure their recommendations have been addressed and appropriately implemented. **[Recommendations 46, 47, 48 and 49]**

¹ Phone numbers for the Operational Trauma and Stress Support Centres are: Ottawa (613) 945-8062 ext. 3676; Halifax (902) 427-0550 ext. 1851; Valcartier (418) 844-5000 ext. 7373; Edmonton (780) 973-4011 ext. 5332; and Esquimalt (250) 363-4411.

IV. The Military Family

Given the need to ensure the individual effectiveness of CF members, so they can be deployed quickly to international hot spots, it is critical to maintain family well being. This in turn requires consistent support for families; it requires adjustments to take into account the changes both in the nature of armed forces deployments (less warning and shorter stints than, for example, in earlier operations in Cyprus or Germany) and in the nature of family units (more single parents, more dual income families and more women as active members of the CF); and it requires greater attention to the challenges facing military spouses.

The Report: The Committee made 16 recommendations designed to improve conditions for the families of serving members.

The Government's Position: The Government accepted all of the recommendations relating to spouses and children of CF members, and to the military family overall, and will introduce a Family Care Plan for Deployments and Emergencies. An additional \$45.1 million was allocated, from the Defence reference level over five years, to be spent under this pillar of the Quality of Life Initiative.

Specifically: With respect to *children and spouses*, and in recognition of the responsibilities of parents, effective April 1999, the Canadian Forces has established Deployment and Emergency Child Care Coordination positions in all Military Family Resource Centres to assist and support service families. In addition, by August 2000, all Canadian Forces members with children or other family members for whom they are financially responsible (e.g., elders or disabled) will be required to submit a Family Care Plan (FCP) form for deployments and emergencies. The FCP will ensure that parents have thoroughly considered and put in place appropriate arrangements for their children (elders, etc.). The activation of the FCP will confirm, not only to those parents but also to unit Commanding Officers, that CF members' families will be properly taken care of when the member deploys. Contingency funding is now in place to reimburse those CF members who incur emergency childcare costs for up to 72 hours, with assistance for any follow-on period. In addition, a Family Care Assistance (FCA) plan, with effect from 1 April 2000, will provide some financial assistance to help service couples and single parents who incur additional family care costs when faced with an absence away from home overnight due to military requirements. With respect to spouses, the Government is now reimbursing members for spousal professional fees and travel costs associated with job interviews. It is promoting awareness of spousal skill sets to improve employment opportunities and is providing employment counselling; additionally, the Government is providing second language training to spouses. With Employment Assistance Counsellors established at all of the Military Family Resource Centres since April 1999, counselling and job search support for spouses have been enhanced dramatically. The new Integrated Relocation Pilot Program has allowed for

reimbursements of all relevant costs to spouses. Lastly, the MFRCs are now empowered and funded to give more efficiently support to reservists and augmentees to UN operations. [Recommendations 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71, and 72]

With respect to the *family overall*, to help families when members are deployed, the Department of National Defence has defined common support standards to be administered by the Deployment Support Groups (DSGs) to ensure that families will receive the same level of support and service across the country. It has also established a Canadian Forces Family Policy and continues to support and expand the Military Family Resource Centres. The Department will continue to provide bilingual services and programs, recognizing that the current levels of service already exceed the requirements under the Official Languages Act. To assist members who have valid reasons for desiring a specific location, but do not qualify for a “Compassionate Posting,” contingency cost moves continue to be available. In 1999, 127 members received such moves to improve their quality of life. As well, the Canadian Forces has almost finished its review of posting policies with the aim of considering family requirements in decisions; nonetheless, recognizing that meeting operational requirements and providing for career and professional development for CF members must remain paramount. A DAOD for Compassionate Postings is complete and the Imposed Restriction policy will be completed in 2000. Finally, a National Youth Summit was held to hear the concerns of the youths that are part of our Military Families. Those concerns will be used to formulate and deliver better youth programs within the mandate of the Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency (CFPSA). [Recommendations 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 66, 70, and 73]

V. Transitions (including recognition, work expectations and terms of service)

The work environment is critical to attracting and retaining the highly-skilled members needed to fulfil the operational challenges facing the Canadian Forces; treating all members with dignity, honesty and respect is also critical, as are encouraging a good balance between career and family, feedback, performance evaluation and appropriate reward and recognition.

The Report: The Committee made 14 recommendations designed to improve the conditions of work generally; it focused particularly on career management, advanced training, and protection for employees when functions are considered for alternative service delivery.

The Government’s Position: The Government fully accepted the principles upon which the recommendations were based and agreed to review all of the recommendations, while at the same time recognizing that other operational considerations may limit the Department’s ability to accept and implement all recommendations. In FY 1999/2000, \$171 million was allocated from the DND reference level for this QOL pillar.

Specifically: With respect to the *alcohol policy*, it is clear that military operations and alcohol cannot mix; consequently, alcohol consumption by deployed members must be strictly controlled. The requirement to provide adequate opportunity for rest and relaxation (R&R), however, is recognized as essential to the quality of life of our members, and is integral to the Contingent Commander's planning process. With this level of scrutiny and the care and well being of CF members in mind, the alcohol policy is considered fair and appropriate at this time. **[Recommendation 74]**

With respect to *career management*, the Director General Military Careers has undertaken a review of the planning cycle and is developing policies and practices to address this recommendation. The Canadian Forces Assignment System is currently under evaluation, and is scheduled for implementation for the Year 2000 Active Posting Season. The Canadian Forces Assignment System is designed to improve the overall planning and delivery of career management to members of the Canadian Forces. The CF is attempting to provide an average 90 days advance notice of new postings; however, operational requirements and fiscal constraints sometimes become overriding factors that make this advance notice difficult. **[Recommendations 75, 76, and 77]**

With respect to *career development*, the Second Career Assistance Network (SCAN) program, which is part of the Personal Enhancement Program (PEP), is under review, including the issue of accessibility and funding of the program. The program is currently available to all CF members who have achieved career status and to those who are being released due to injury on-duty. The CF has undertaken to increase the scope of military training for which equivalent civilian accreditation is granted and to develop a program to recognize military equivalents for civilian training. They are currently building the Canadian Forces Equivalency Database to provide information to members regarding equivalencies that have been granted. The DND will continue to conduct an analysis of CF training and seek appropriate accreditation with civilian agencies. In addition, to provide additional developmental options, the Royal Military College (RMC) Distance Learning Program has expanded. **[Recommendations 81, 82, 83 and 84]**

With respect to *employment equity*, the first Canadian Forces Employment Equity plan was adopted on 20 December 1999. The Plan strives to ensure fair treatment of all persons based on merit and capability, which supports teamwork, unit cohesion and ultimately operational effectiveness. The Department continues conducting an awareness program (Standards for Harassment and Racism Prevention, or SHARP) and all members of the CF are required to participate in sessions on harassment and discrimination policies. The sexual assault/harassment complaint line that was established in May 1998 continues to afford a valuable service to CF members. **[Recommendations 85 and 86]**

With respect to *alternative service delivery (ASD)*, the Department is still committed to communicating and consulting when ASD is being considered. It provides resources to assist employees to prepare in-house bids, and provide employment opportunities to affected employees through redeployment, retraining, employment offers with the new ASD venture or departure or retirement incentives. In the case of military personnel, similar HR management tools are available to address any surplus personnel resulting from ASD reviews. **[Recommendations 78, 79 and 80]**

With respect to *military clothing*, an injection of funds was provided for national procurement in 1998 to address the immediate critical shortfalls of clothing. The army continues to introduce new clothing through the Clothe the Soldier program. Similarly, the air force and the navy continue to introduce new clothing or modify the scale of issue to address requirements. The air force introduced, in 1998, new winter environmental clothing to rectify a long-standing deficiency; all air force personnel at Wings have been issued with this clothing. The navy has just recently introduced a set of Naval Combat Dress that will be issued in 2000. **[Recommendation 87]**

Follow-Up

The Committee has asked for follow-up reports on several of its recommendations. The Deputy Minister and the CDS will provide verbal briefings and written reports to the Committee on decisions and on progress, as appropriate. The CDS provided an interim report in December 1999 as an update in preparation of this report. In the future, SCONDVA can anticipate another annual report for 2001. The QOL Project Office is scheduled to complete its mandate in August 2001, and a plan to continue QOL-related monitoring and SCONDVA reporting will be developed by December 2000.

[Recommendations 88 and 89]

In addition, the CDS will continue to address quality of life issues in his annual report to Parliament. As recommended by the Committee, the Government believes that this kind of continuing dialogue on the vital issues raised in the Report is the best way of informing Parliament about what is being done. It will also serve to remind all concerned Canadians of the valuable contribution made to the Canadian Forces by Members of Parliament through their work on the issue of Quality of Life.

**2000 Annual Report to the
Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs
on
Quality of Life in the Canadian Forces**

SCONDVA RECOMMENDATIONS

Pay and Allowances (Compensation for Work)

- 1. That the pay gap between Non-Commissioned Members and their Public Service equivalents be closed no later than 1 April 1999.**

This recommendation was accepted and implemented. Effective 1 April 1999, Non-Commissioned Members received a 1.13% “catch-up” pay increase, which restored full comparability with the public service to that point.

- 2. That the base pay gap between General Service Officers and their Public Service equivalents be closed by December 1999.**

This recommendation was accepted and implemented. Effective 1 April 1999, General Service Officers received a 7.02% “catch-up” pay increase, which restored full comparability with the Public Service to that point. It is noted that this initiative was completed earlier than the December 1999 time frame recommended by SCONDVA.

- 3. That, effective 1 April 1999, the pay for Privates, Second-Lieutenants and Lieutenants, essentially entry-level ranks, be increased by not less than 10%.**

The recommendation to increase entry-level pay was accepted and implemented. The Department, in conjunction with Treasury Board, developed new benchmarks for the pay of Privates, Second-Lieutenants and Lieutenants that allow comparison with their counterparts in the Public Service. The resulting overall average pay increases, including those for other pay elements, were approximately 14.4% for Privates and 18.1% for Second-Lieutenants and Lieutenants. The entry-level component increases for these groups were 6.67% and 5.4% respectively.

4. That, effective 1 April 1999, the pay for Non-Commissioned Members be increased by approximately 6%; for Captains, through and including Lieutenant-Colonels, by approximately 3%; and for Colonels and above by approximately 2%.

This recommendation was accepted and implemented. Effective 1 April 1999, total average pay increases (less comparability increases in recommendations 1 and 2, and not including entry-level pay increases) were 6.081% for Non-Commissioned Members and 4.704% for General Service Officers (Captain through Lieutenant Colonel). An average 2.01% increase was achieved for Colonels and above through implementation of recently revised benchmarks with the Public Service.

5. That the Canadian Forces pay increases should then mirror the economic increases of the Public Service and be granted in a timely fashion.

This recommendation was accepted. The Government has committed itself to providing the Department with the necessary additional funds to expeditiously match future increases in compensation for the Public Service.

6. That the Department of National Defence pursues initiatives to put in place a real pension plan for the Reserves and report annually to SCONDVA on the progress achieved.

This recommendation was accepted in principle and is being implemented as part of the Canadian Forces Superannuation Act (CFSA) Review Project, which has the mandate to identify CFSA areas that require change and to develop proposals in response to those requirements. DND sought and received from parliament via Bill C-78 the flexibility to develop within a regulatory framework a pension plan for the Reserve Force. DND intends to exercise this flexibility using a phased approach, starting with an examination of the factors related to the feasibility, design and implementation of a pension plan vis-à-vis the Reserves. Phase one will be completed by April 2001 and once the results have been accepted, the development of options, technical implications, detailed plan design and implementation will commence. A Reserve Force pension plan is a priority within the CF, with the development dependent on the recommendations made in response to the results of the phase one study, Treasury Board approval and funding.

7. That, in the interim, the Department of National Defence immediately rectifies the current problems with the Reserve Force pay system by 31 December 1999.

This recommendation was accepted and has been implemented. As stated in the response to recommendation 8, the new integrated pay system will serve both Regular and Reserve Force personnel. In the interim, a team reconciled individual Reserve pay accounts and took special steps to ensure that an individual's pay will be accurate and timely disseminated. Reserve unit pay clerks received refresher training, and a special 1-800

number is now available to handle queries or problems from Reservists regarding their pay.

8. That, by 31 December 1999, as soon as practicable, a common pay system be adopted for the Regular Force and the Reserves.

The recommendation was accepted in principle and will be implemented after the year 2000. A major re-programming of the Regular Force pay system was required to ensure its ability to continue to operate in the year 2000. Once this system is stable, work will begin on the integration of Reserve Force pay into the Regular Force pay system. This work is expected to take several years and will not be completed before 2004.

9. That the Department of National Defence immediately review the Military Factor to ensure that both the criteria and the values assigned properly reflect the uniqueness of military service and that the results be reviewed by SCONDVA on an annual basis.

This recommendation was accepted and implemented. Effective 1 April 1999, the Military Factor value for Non-Commissioned Members was increased from 4.0% to 7.5%. For General Service Officers (Lieutenant Colonel and below) it was increased from 4.0% to 6.5%. These increases provided a large portion of the overall pay increases noted in recommendation 4.

10. That the Department of National Defence, in recognizing that overtime is a reality of military service, re-examine the valuations of the overtime factor in order that they properly reflect the workloads experienced by CF personnel and report to SCONDVA on an annual basis. The calculation for overtime should remain integrated to the total compensation formula.

The Department agreed to re-examine the overtime factor within the total compensation formula. A stratified random sample survey of CF personnel, designed by DND and reviewed by Treasury Board Secretariat to determine the current extent of overtime in the CF has been completed. In conjunction with Treasury Board, the overtime data will be reviewed and a determination will be made of the appropriate value of the overtime factor in the total compensation formula.

11. That the Department of National Defence develops management practices that will allow CF members to take leave in order to meet personal and family expectations. Subject to operational requirements, designated leave periods should be mutually acceptable to commanding officers and those desiring leave. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

The Director of Pension and Social Programs has commenced a thorough review of the existing leave policy. The result of consultations throughout the Department and

previous amendments that were published via message or other directives will be integrated into the revised policy in the form of a Defence Administrative Order and Directive. The policy will be implemented with effect from 1 April 2000 to coincide with the start of the fiscal year.

It should be noted that as part of the preparations to deal with potential problems associated with the Year 2000 situation, direction was issued regarding leave for the 1999/2000 fiscal year as part of the Op ABACUS plan. This action was necessary to ensure that, in the event the members of the Canadian Forces are required to be deployed, they will have been given at least fifteen days leave prior to the end of 1999.

12. That when an individual in the Canadian Forces is posted to a position that calls for a higher rank level, acting pay, at the higher rank level, should apply immediately.

This recommendation has been accepted and will be implemented in two parts. First, all members are compensated on a universal basis through an appropriate increase in the acting pay component of the Total Compensation (TC) methodology of pay comparability with the Public Service (PS). This provides comparable compensation with the PS on an average annual basis for all members acting in replacement or "fill-in" situations over their whole career. This TC component is being evaluated to ensure the CF remains comparable with the PS. A regular review will ensure compensation is accurate and personnel get full compensation for work done. Second, staffing is ongoing to develop policies, guidelines and administrative procedures that will appropriately compensate individuals, through Acting Rank, when they are formally posted, on an ongoing basis, to an established position that calls for a rank level at least one rank higher than the member's substantive rank

13. That the CF rethink within a year the current relevance of military messes with a view to demonstrating their utility, particularly to younger members. Mess dues should be tax deductible. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

Over the past year, the Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency has taken steps to improve the efficiency of delivery of services within messes.

The Department has been reviewing the nature of the structure of messes during the past year. The Department will continue to study, over the next year, policies and practices to adequately address this recommendation.

With regard to mess dues, it was determined that it is not possible to obtain tax exempt status because the nature of the mess and the reason for paying dues do not fall within the definition of professional dues as defined by Revenue Canada.

14. That the Special Allowance - CFS Alert be replaced by an allowance similar to that of the Foreign Duty Allowance, and that it be applicable from the date of arrival at Alert.

15. That the appropriate level for the new CFS Alert allowance be significant and therefore set at rating level IV of the Post Differential Allowance.

These recommendations were accepted in principle and have been implemented in part. The current CFS Alert allowance, effective 1 April 1999, is now payable from the date of arrival in Alert. The development of the specific structure of a new allowance will require further review with Treasury Board and is included as part of a major review of military allowances that is scheduled to commence this year.

16. That the Department of National Defence immediately adopt the benefit counting maternity leave as time qualifying for severance payment.

The recommendation was accepted and implemented effective 1 April 1999. In addition, a review of Canadian Forces maternity and parental policies has been conducted to ensure that they are in keeping with contemporary societal norms and support the new Canadian Forces Family Policy. To that end DND will be implementing a new parental allowance that will provide 93% of pay for a period up to 12 weeks and will increase the current parental leave from 10 to 26 weeks. It is planned that these new benefits will be approved by Treasury Board with effect from 1 April 2000.

17. That the Department of National Defence move to a bi-weekly pay system by 31 December 1999.

This recommendation has been accepted in principle and now that the Year 2000 (Y2K) problems are resolved can be considered. Prior to implementation of a bi-weekly pay regime, the impact of such a change to CF members and the pay system will be studied. A change to bi-weekly pay is a major undertaking, from the point of view of both the compensation regime and the pay delivery system, and requires careful study to determine the demand, feasibility and costs. As part of this study, a survey will be conducted to establish whether and to what extent CF members desire such a change. The cost and technical feasibility of the changes within the CF central pay system will also be determined. Work on this in the pay system will not begin until after the common pay system is fully implemented and will not be completed before 2004.

18. That the Department of National Defence establishes a non-taxable global Cost-of Living Allowance (COLA) to be paid to CF personnel posted at locations in Canada.

The Government recognized that hardships might be imposed on Canadian Forces members and their families because of regional cost of living differences. Regional cost

of living disparity has been a serious concern within the Canadian Forces. A Post Living Differential study was conducted in 1999, which embodied a fundamental review of the requirement for a cost of living allowance and an objective examination of the cost of living at CF locations in Canada. Additionally, the study included a CF family questionnaire related to their financial situation and an analysis of options for a suitable compensation program to address the net-after-tax differences in cost of living. The study confirmed that the cost of living differences in Canada were substantial and warranted compensation. It also concluded that CF requirements for mobility and unlimited liability have created a level of financial inequity on CF members and families that are not shared by Public Service employees and their families. For those CF members within Canada whose principal residence is not at an isolated post, the current Accommodation Assistance Allowance would be replaced with a new allowance that provides compensation for overall cost of living differences at Canadian locations. The proposed allowance will compensate for cost of living differences above a baseline cost set at approximately the CF average. This result is a much-improved benefit, compared to Accommodation Assistance Allowance, in the highest cost locations. The appropriate documentation for regulatory changes and Treasury Board approval are being prepared for implementation of this benefit as quickly as possible. This new allowance is planned to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2000.

19. That the Department of National Defence adopt a similar approach, in line with the domestic COLA, to the cost-of-living entitlements for CF members serving overseas. The Department should report to SCONDVA within a year.

The DND representative on the National Joint Council (NJC) will, as part of the NJC Triennial Review of Foreign Service Directives, recommend that the Department apply to outside Canada postings those aspects of the proposed domestic Post Living Differential allowance that are appropriate and feasible.

20. That the Government appoint an independent review panel, at least once every five years, to examine, and make recommendations with regard to the appropriateness of compensation and benefits provided to the Canadian Forces. The panel should report to SCONDVA.

This recommendation was accepted in principle and will be implemented in 2001. Compensation and benefits will be reviewed on a triennial basis commencing in 2001. The mandate and composition of the committee who will conduct this review is currently being developed.

The Housing Portfolio (Accommodation)

21. That the Department develops and adopts a policy to ensure those personnel at all bases and major facilities have access to well-maintained single quarters. An annual progress report should be made to SCONDVA.

The Department of National Defence issued the DND Accommodation Policy in June 1999. Embedded in this policy is the commitment to ensure CF members have access to suitable accommodation wherever they may serve. The standards whereby suitability will be benchmarked are being developed and will be incorporated into subordinate policy documents.

22. That a common standard for the design and operation of modern single quarters at all bases and stations of the Canadian Forces be established and that facilities not meeting this standard should be upgraded or replaced as soon as possible. SCONDVA should receive a progress report within a year.

This recommendation will be implemented through the introduction of a long-term program. As noted in response to recommendation 21, the functional accommodation standards for single quarters are being developed and will be established in subordinate policy documents. Existing facilities will be evaluated against these new standards and deliberate upgrade programs will be undertaken where priorities and funding permit. New single-quarter facilities constructed or otherwise obtained by the Department will adhere to the new functional accommodation standards.

23. That departmental planners and contractors must give a high priority to the protection of the dignity, privacy, and safety of individuals in the design and administration of single quarters. SCONDVA should receive a progress report within a year.

The single quarters functional accommodation standards policy will provide the necessary guidance to ensure that single quarters are properly planned, constructed and administered. However, as noted in the responses to recommendations 21 and 22, it will only be possible to implement these improvements as a long-term undertaking.

24. That the Canadian Forces Housing Agency must review its policies and its arrangements with contractors at all bases to ensure that efficient and appropriate repairs are made to PMQs at the earliest possible time when emergencies occur.

25. That the Housing Agency must ensure that its officials at all bases are properly trained to provide fast and courteous service to residents of PMQs, especially in emergencies.

A more effective response process for accommodation-related emergencies has been implemented. Corrective action has included increasing the number of available contractors on each base, as well as the introduction of staff training and an improved system of customer service.

26. That the Housing Agency must provide adequate and efficient services, including emergency repairs, for PMQs slated or likely to be abandoned in the next few years because of the closure of a base, the transfer of military units or other reasons until alternative housing becomes available.

This recommendation has been accepted and is already being instituted. The Department has provided CFHA with an additional \$50M by re-allocating existing funds during FY 1999/2000 specifically to address remedial health and safety repairs. This program is estimated to be required until FY 2003/2004. Another \$50M has been allocated for FY 2000/2001, while \$28M is forecast for each of the following three years.

27. That to ensure that military personnel pay the same rents regardless of the base to which they are posted, the Accommodation Assistance Allowance should be replaced by an accommodation expense allowance to compensate for the difference, if any, between regional housing costs and standardized rents determined by using the average housing costs of a number of major bases.

This recommendation was accepted in principle. Accommodation is a major component in variations in the cost of living. Consequently, it has been included as an integral part of the proposed Post Living Differential that will address regional differences in cost of living referred to in recommendation 18.

28. That the accommodation expense allowance should not be considered taxable income.

This recommendation was acknowledged. The establishment of a non-taxable accommodation expense allowance is, however, not in keeping with current government policy and therefore not an appropriate mechanism for this allowance. The proposed Post Living Differential, which addresses regional differences in cost of living, as discussed in recommendation 18, pursues the principle of a tax-effective payment.

29. That the Housing Agency should proceed with the task of determining the best way of providing modern and environmentally efficient Permanent Married Quarters, in consultation with Base Commanders and the Department, which should report on an annual basis to SCONDVA. The Agency should keep in mind the need to:

- a. tailor the housing to the specific requirements of each base;**
- b. select the most cost-effective option available even if this involves the construction or leasing of homes off the bases and arrangements with private developers; and**
- c. ensure that the housing remains suitable and affordable regardless of the options selected.**

The DND Accommodation Policy promulgated in June 1999 committed the Department to ensuring that all CF members and their families have access to suitable accommodation wherever they are posted. The policy also reflects the need for housing solutions to be site-specific, cost-effective and suitable to personal circumstance. Finally, the policy states that affordability will be addressed through adequate compensation and not through subsidized or sub-standard Crown-owned housing.

Site-by-Site Housing Requirement Studies are now underway and should be completed early in the year 2000. Individual housing project initiatives will be programmed and implemented based, in part, on the results of these studies.

30. That the Housing Agency be given an expanded mandate in order to undertake any option it determines to be the most cost-efficient to provide housing and housing services for military bases.

Under its current mandate the legal authority of the Canadian Forces Housing Agency is limited to the operation and maintenance of the current housing portfolio. The Department is considering amendments to the mandate of the Agency and exploring various means of restructuring it so that it has the flexibility and authority it needs to carry out a wider mandate. The intent at this time is to pursue full Special Operating Agency (SOA) status for CFHA.

31. That the Department of National Defence be allowed to use the funds generated by the sale or long-term leasing of departmental lands and facilities or to swap land with private developers primarily to help the Canadian Forces Housing Agency finance the construction or leasing of Permanent Married Quarters.

32. That the Department be empowered to use the proceeds from the sale of capital assets primarily to help the Housing Agency finance the construction or leasing of PMQs. Indeed, we further recommend that revenues generated by the sale

of departmental assets be retained by the Department in order to enable it to meet other requirements as well.

The recommendations regarding the retention of funds relating to the disposal or leasing of assets are fully supported as they pertain to property and assets linked to housing. Future Agency authorities to be sought will include the ability to form a wide variety of joint ventures including the provision for the use of land in exchange for property, capital, or services.

33. That the government grants the Housing Agency a repayable low-interest loan to help it proceed with its business. The Housing Agency should obtain other revenues through long-term lease arrangements with contractors.

The provision of capital may be required to assist CFHA to achieve its mission. A comprehensive Master Implementation Plan will be prepared with detailed funding projections based on the site-by-site studies and joint venture discussions with industry (site by site).

34. That the Department and the Housing Agency together with municipal officials, where necessary, co-ordinate their efforts to improve as quickly as possible the quality of water supplied to PMQs at bases where problems with the colour and odour have been documented.

Specific projects to address this issue have been completed at CFB Borden and CFB Valcartier, the two locations mentioned during the SCONDVA testimony. Significant improvements have been noted to date and additional improvements are expected as follow-on projects are implemented.

35. That the Guaranteed Home Sale Plan be continued beyond March 1999, at least for military personnel.

The Guaranteed Home Sale Plan, designed in part to protect homeowner equity, was initiated by Treasury Board as a three-year government-wide pilot project in response to Program Review decisions and their application in a generally difficult housing market in Canada. This pilot program ceased on 31 March 1999 (end of the contract period). However, the Government has implemented the Integrated Relocation Pilot Program (IRPP), which addresses homeowner equity as well as other aspects of the relocation process.

36. That the Home Equity Assistance Programme be revised, notably by eliminating the 10% rule, to ensure that homeowners have access to fair and equitable assistance when, because of a new posting, they have to sell their home while the local real estate market is depressed.

This recommendation has been accepted and implemented effective 1 April 1999. The Integrated Relocation Pilot Program (IRPP) removes the 10 % home resale market decline eligibility criterion. It compensates for 80% of the loss on the sale of a residence up to a maximum of \$15,000. Amounts above the 80% and/or above the \$15,000 may be reimbursed from the funds still available within the IRPP "Customized Component." However, 50% of the reimbursement in excess of \$15,000 will be subject to taxes in accordance with the Income Tax Act. To assist members in long-term improvement of their equity, the IRPP offers financial incentives to retain their homes when posted to new locations, including the reimbursement of property management fees under the "Customized Component," as well as financial incentives to rent accommodation at the new location.

37. That a program be developed to facilitate the leasing by the Housing Agency of homes owned by military personnel for use as PMQs when homeowners are posted to another region of the country or overseas. The status of the program should be reported to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

This recommendation was accepted in principle. Its feasibility and applicability are being examined as part of the development of the CFHA mandate in preparation for seeking approval of CFHA's enhanced status and in relation to the property management dimension of the Integrated Relocation Pilot Program (IRPP).

38. That the contracts with moving companies be modified to allow much more time for individuals to report and document damages to possessions resulting from a move. These contracts should be reviewed on an annual basis.

This recommendation has been accepted and is being addressed as part of the re-engineering of the relocation process. In the interim, the Department has taken action to ensure CF members are fully aware of both their rights and responsibilities regarding insurance coverage.

39. That the Department of National Defence or some other agent such as the Canadian Forces Housing Agency assist members of the Forces in making claims for compensation of damages caused by movers during a move. A report to SCONDVA should be made on an annual basis.

This recommendation has been accepted and is being addressed as part of the re-engineering of the relocation process. A study is currently underway investigating options

to assist members and make specific recommendations to implement this recommendation and recommendation 38 in April 2000.

40. That the time allowed for taking possession or vacating a domicile be increased.

This recommendation has been accepted and implemented effective 18 June 1999. The Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) approved a new Special Relocation Leave benefit to ensure that adequate off-duty time is provided to members and their families to deal with the myriad of details involved with a move. For example, members on normal relocations within Canada receive five days special leave at the old location to prepare for their move and a further five days special leave on arrival at the new location to complete the move into the new residence.

41. That the posting allowance be replaced with a new non-taxable posting benefit that will adequately compensate all personnel for the turbulence associated with new postings. The allowance should be uniform and not tied to rank.

This recommendation was accepted in principle. The current posting allowance has been incorporated into the Integrated Relocation Pilot Program (IRPP). The posting allowance is included in the funding of the IRPP "Customized Component" and is available to compensate members for any legitimate relocation expenses that are not otherwise compensated directly under the "Core Component." The need for any new or modified posting benefit is being addressed as part of the re-engineering of the relocation process.

The Injured, Retirees and Veterans (Care of Injured Personnel)

42. That the Combined Centre for the Support of Injured, Retirees, Veterans, and their Families be established as quickly as possible and have all the resources required to fulfil its mandate and to inform all military personnel and their families of the availability of its services.

The DND/Veterans Affairs Centre for the Support of Injured and Retired Members and their Families was opened on 13 April 1999 in conjunction with Veterans Affairs Canada. It provides information, referral, and VAC pension assistance support to serving and former CF members (Regular and Reserve), their families and survivors of deceased CF members.

43. That the recommendations of the McLellan report concerning the training of leaders on care of injured issues be implemented as quickly as possible and that other measures be taken to inculcate leaders on the importance of caring leadership. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

Leadership course content is in the process of being changed to ensure that proper training is given with respect to the care of injured personnel. Sections within the Officer General Specification, the Officer Professional Development Plan and the Non-Commissioned Officer Development Plan are in the process of being changed to reflect greater emphasis on caring leadership.

44. That the programs be developed to make public and private sector corporations more aware of the skills and experience offered by individuals leaving the Forces and to help facilitate their hiring of personnel who must end their military careers prematurely because of serious injuries or illness.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) has already approved priority hiring for personnel injured in designated Special Duty Areas. DND has requested the PSC expand this priority to personnel injured in domestic operations as well as those in inherently dangerous occupations such as search and rescue and explosives ordnance disposal. Requests to provide similar hiring priority have been sent to provincial and territorial public service commissions and discussions have taken place with several provinces. Private industry has also been approached to assist in this initiative. A Transition Assistance Program has been established within the DND/VAC Centre to provide individual employment assistance to CF members who are medically released. See recommendation 84.

45. That rehabilitation training of their choosing for injured members of the Canadian Forces start six or more months before their release from the military.

Policy direction has been issued to allow personnel being released for any medical reason including injury to commence full-time rehabilitation training six months prior to release.

46. That the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs establish a single access source of assistance, research, and information to individuals suffering severe and debilitating illnesses since their service during the Persian Gulf War.

Post Deployment Regional Health Centres have been established by DND. A DND/VAC Memorandum of Understanding allows VAC to refer former CF members with service in any designated Special Duty Area, such as the Persian Gulf, to these Centres for diagnostic investigation related to an application for a disability pension and the development of a treatment plan for their disabilities. Former CF members who served in Croatia can also access the PDRHCs if they have general health concerns.

47. That guidelines be established to ensure that exposure by personnel to recognized toxic materials during military operations is properly documented.

DND casualty reporting documentation will be changed to include exposure or suspected exposure to toxic substances or material. Specialized staff has been hired within the Canadian Forces Medical Services (CFMS) to develop other procedures and protocols required to ensure that such conditions are fully documented and dealt with appropriately.

48. That the importance of programs to assist individuals dealing with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other types of stress be reaffirmed and that their funding be reinforced.

49. That the requirements of Reservists, especially those who have served on peacekeeping operations, for assistance in dealing with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder and other types of stress be addressed as fully as possible.

These recommendations were accepted and resulted in the following initiatives:

- a. four additional Operational Trauma and Stress Support Centres at Halifax, Valcartier, Edmonton, and Esquimalt were opened¹;
- b. an additional Critical Incident Stress debriefing course will be run yearly;
- c. additional PTSD training will be given to CFMS personnel including doctors and other medical professionals;
- d. a Post Deployment Follow-up Policy has been developed and is awaiting final approval. This policy includes standardized compulsory physical and psychological evaluation for both Regular and Reserve Force members; and
- e. VAC is looking at establishing a crisis line for former CF members, which will be modelled after the existing DND crisis line.

50. That the re-engineering of the Canadian Forces Medical and Dental Systems be reviewed to ensure that future requirements will be met. Attention should also be paid to the medical requirements of military families and the problems they encounter with respect to medical insurance coverage when they move from one province to another.

Chief of Review Services (CRS) conducted an internal program evaluation of the CFMS, and a project management office has been established to rectify the identified

¹ Phone numbers for the Operational Trauma and Stress Support Centres are: Ottawa (613) 945-8062 ext. 3676; Halifax (902) 427-0550 ext. 1851; Valcartier (418) 844-5000 ext. 7373; Edmonton (780) 973-4011 ext. 5332; and Esquimalt (250) 363-4411.

deficiencies. The Department will also review current regulations with respect to medical coverage in isolated and semi-isolated locations (as they pertain to CF families). Revisions to the appropriate sections of these regulations will be made.

51. That the policies governing the reporting of injuries and medical conditions be reviewed to ensure that leaders and personnel in general clearly understand the procedures and apply.

A review of medical and other administrative policies and procedures is underway. Documentation and procedures in the reporting of injuries will be simplified and Defence Administrative Orders and Directives concerning casualty reporting have been reviewed and changes made where required. Those that may affect disability pension entitlement have been reviewed by VAC to ensure their effectiveness within the pension adjudication process. A revised CF98 "Report on Injuries" has been produced that improves the timeliness of injury notification and should improve the availability and quality of information required for VAC's disability pension process. This form will be in use by 1 May 2000. DND personnel will be advised on the importance of these processes, particularly those which affect disability pensions, and will be encouraged to monitor their own individual cases.

52. That the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs together with other agencies develop streamlined procedures to ensure quick and effective transfer of all relevant records of personnel leaving the Forces. A report on the progress achieved should be made to SCONDVA within a year.

An easily recognizable standardization request for medical records form with established turnaround times has been developed by VAC. A project plan to facilitate electronic access by VAC to DND non-medical records has been approved by the VAC/DND Steering Committee.

53. That the Departments of National Defence and Veterans Affairs and other agencies change their procedures to minimize the duplication of medical examinations and other requirements during the processing of disability pension applications. A report should be made to SCONDVA within a year.

A project plan to facilitate electronic access by DND and VAC non-medical records has been approved by the VAC/DND Steering Committee. A Working Group composed of DND, VAC, HRDC and SISIP are examining methods of reducing duplication of medical examinations by developing a medical examination information package for use when a CF member is being released. The Working Group is also developing a protocol for medical examinations during the pension application process. Recommendations for acceptance of these two items by DND, VAC, HRDC and SISIP will be made by 31 March 2000.

54. That the Department of Veterans Affairs pursue its vigorous actions to reduce as much as possible the time necessary to process disability pension applications and appeals. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

Further to legislative changes passed in 1995, VAC has already reduced the time necessary to process first applications for disability pensions from eighteen months to six months. The closer working relationships and co-operation between DND and VAC outlined in response to recommendations 52 and 53 should further shorten the time associated with preparing a disability pension application. Applicants can expect a decision within 18 weeks of completing a documented application.

55. That legislation be amended so that major deployments within Canada to deal with national and regional emergencies be designated as Special Duty Areas for disability pension purposes. Measures should also be taken to ensure that personnel who suffer major injuries while on duty in Canada have access to disability pension benefits.

VAC does not propose extending the insurance principle to domestic deployments, where it can readily be determined whether a disability is directly connected with such military service. However, other legislative amendments to the Pension Act have been proposed to provide benefits to still-serving Canadian Forces members who were disabled by service-related injuries regardless of where they served. Proposed Regulatory amendments will provide still-serving and former members with Veterans Independence Program services for their VAC pensioned conditions regardless of where they served. VAC has also conducted a study of the needs of its CF clients to determine what services they may require and whether existing programs are relevant and appropriate. A Report is expected by 31 March 2000 from which an action plan will be developed.

56. That military personnel who have served in Special Duty Areas overseas be recognized as veterans.

The question of what is meant by the term "veteran" is being examined, with special attention to the designation of veterans for Canadian Forces members immediately upon their return from service in a SDA. A preliminary investigation of possible legislative requirements and implications for VAC programs indicates that expansion of the use of the term "veteran" can be pursued independently of the issue of benefits for CF members. The use of the term "veteran" in like-minded countries is also being examined, and the position of various veterans' groups and organizations will be ascertained.

57. That programs be developed to better inform military personnel on disability compensation and other benefit entitlements for Reserve Force members. SCONDVA should receive a report on this on an annual basis.

VAC, in consultation with DND, has already developed information packages and is presenting seminars on VAC benefits and services at several levels. VAC has also produced and widely distributed a brochure entitled “Veterans Affairs: In Service to the Canadian Forces” that outlines the services and benefits available from Veterans Affairs to Canadian Forces members. A short video also entitled “Veterans Affairs: In Service to the Canadian Forces” has been produced, and will be distributed to VAC locations, Royal Canadian Legion Provincial Command Offices, and CF locations. For its part, DND had already designed and distributed a booklet which outlines all the disability entitlements and benefits which could accrue to a member. In this process, special attention has been paid to the needs of the Reserve Force.

The Military Family

58. That guidelines be developed to govern the operation of rear parties and other unit support groups in order to ensure a standard level of support to families of both Regular Force and Reserve personnel during deployments of units. These measures must also take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families. Special attention should be paid to the needs of personnel from other units deployed overseas with larger units. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

The term Deployment Support Group (DSG) has been coined to describe the universal Canadian Forces’ title for the already existing army “rear party”, naval “shore element” and air force “sponsor group”. Standards applicable to the formation and activities of DSGs have been established so that the families of all deployed personnel can expect the same level of support and service across the country. The Director of Military Family Services has issued guidance and funds to the Military Family Resource Centres for expanded support to Reservists, and the centres are now actively supporting Reserve Units / UN augmentees. A statistical data collecting software that includes the monitoring of MFRC delivery of services to Reservist and UN augmentees has been developed.

59. That a clearly defined policy on compassionate leave and travel arrangements be developed to ensure that military personnel and their families can be certain of being able to travel in an appropriate fashion as soon as possible whenever family emergencies occur. When compassionate leave is requested, padres and commanding officers should consult on appropriate arrangements. A report to SCONDVA should be made on an annual basis.

The CF's entire leave policy is currently under review by the Director of Pensions and Social Programs (DPSP). The Quality of Life (QOL) Project has provided DPSP with input that will ensure the consistent interpretation of criteria for the granting of compassionate leave. The criteria for granting compassionate leave requests are being modified to include "traumatic family situations." This new criterion provides local authorities a more consistent baseline for the granting of compassionate leave. The QOL Project will also be providing guidance to CF members and their commanding officers concerning the appropriate use of resources such as padres and social workers in supporting requests for compassionate leave. The QOL Project has completed an overall review of duty and non-duty travel, emphasizing measures to enhance the ability of families to be reunited in circumstances requiring compassionate leave. The QOL Project has assisted the Director of Compensation and Benefits Administration in developing a non-duty travel policy that gives priority to the compassionate traveller. Directives and programs to support the policy are being developed and implemented with effect from 01 April 2000.

60. That the commitment to support Military Family Resource Centres be reaffirmed and that policies governing their operations be reviewed to ensure that the implications of new housing policies and the changing complexion of the military community on and off bases are taken into account. The proposed measures must also take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

New policies have been developed regarding the CF Personnel Support Program (PSP) and these will be closely monitored and adjusted, where necessary, to ensure that they are responsive to the needs of all CF families. Additionally, a PSP study was completed in September 1999 and provides recommendations to improve services being provided to locations affected by downsizing. The CFPSA Study report and the "way ahead" have been published and presented to the QOL Senior Review Board (QOL SRB) in December 1999. Additionally, QOL funds have been allocated to PSP to assist those locations requiring immediate support.

61. That the Canadian Forces develop a military family policy to ensure better co-ordination and co-operation between all the elements of the family network and to guide decisions on matters which affect the quality of life of military families.

That this policy takes into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

A CF Family Policy has been developed. The policy recognizes the military family relationship, reiterates the CF's commitment to the family, and describes the core principles and areas of responsibility for program delivery. One of the goals of the policy is to establish a military family network that incorporates all of the elements of service and support to the family. The policy has undergone all legal reviews and is in its final stage of preparation. It is expected to be available in the Spring of 2000.

62. That special requirements of military families such as health and education be one of the major factors taken into consideration during preparations for postings of personnel. That these requirements take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families.

The Department has embarked on a process of re-engineering the entire CF Assignment System, and the resulting system will build in the flexibility to address the issues of health, education, and official language access to the family (refer to recommendation 75) while respecting the validated service needs. The Director General Military Careers is implementing the new processes which include: a revised procedure for planning the selection and posting of CF personnel; an administrative review; and different procedures pertaining to administrative inquiries and release. Validations of the CF Assignment System (CFAS) are on-going and expected to terminate in March 2000.

A review the Canadian Forces' policy on Imposed Restriction (moving the CF member but leaving the family behind) is underway. The policy review intends to provide the member more control over what is very much a personal decision to move the family. The policy will need to remain equitable since it will be the member's choice and not the CF's.

63. That posting guidelines be modified to provide career managers greater flexibility to facilitate postings for special family needs without limiting the career prospects of personnel. That posting guidelines take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families.

In addition to the re-engineering of the entire CF Assignment System, several hundred cost contingency moves have been funded within DND's budget for moving personnel geographically. These cost contingency moves provide career managers with the necessary flexibility to post CF members in response to special family needs. In 1999 there were 127 members moved using cost contingency funds. The CF's Compassionate Posting Policy has been revised and a Defence Administrative Order and Directive (DAOD) has been written. Additionally, recommendations for the formalization of the

cost contingency moves were accepted in principle at the December 1999 QOL Senior Review Board (SRB).

64. That all military personnel with children be required to prepare a plan according to predetermined criteria to ensure that whenever they deploy, their child care requirements will be met.

By August 2000 all Canadian Forces members, with children or other family members for whom they are financially responsible (e.g., elders or disabled), will be required to submit a Family Care Plan (FCP) form in anticipation of deployments and emergencies. The FCP will ensure that CF members have thoroughly considered and put in place appropriate arrangements for those family members who are dependant on them (children, elder parents, etc.). In addition, a Family Care Assistance (FCA) plan is being prepared. This would provide some form of financial assistance to help service couples and single parents who incur additional family care costs when faced with an absence away from home overnight due to military requirements.

65. That the Department develops a plan to ensure emergency childcare when military members must deploy with less notice than provided for in their child care plan submitted to their commanders. That the Department's plan takes into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families. A report should be made to SCONDVA within one year.

This initiative is complete. Effective 1 April 1999 Deployment and Emergency Childcare Co-ordinators were put in place at all Military Family Resource Centres. Contingency funding is in place to reimburse CF members for emergency childcare costs. The activation of the Family Care Plan (for Deployments and Emergencies) will confirm not only to parents but also to unit Commanding Officers that CF members and their families will be properly taken care of when the member deploys.

66. That programs for teenage members of military families be given special attention in the development of policies. Efforts should be made to recognize special education needs and to encourage the development and use of programs such as the Individual Educational Plan. That these programs take into account the need for access to services in both official languages for military personnel and their families.

Existing programs at Military Family Resource Centres will be reviewed with new attention being given to the teenage members of families. Special education needs and the use of individual education plans will be considered as part of the review. In addition, a National Youth Summit (NYS) was held between 23-26 August 1999 to seek youth input into the types of programs that the CF should pursue in the future. A report from this NYS describes the recommendations of CF youth. This report is now being disseminated by the Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency (CFPSA). The next step

will be for CFPSA and QOL to prepare a plan that incorporates the NYS recommendations. SCONDVA will be advised on what course of action has been taken in a future report.

67. That military spouses with professional qualifications be reimbursed up to 50% to alleviate costs of taking exams and renewing licences for the purpose of seeking employment when they have to move to a new province or return to Canada.

This recommendation has been accepted and implemented effective 1 April 1999. The spousal expenses referred to above are currently reimbursable on return to Canada under the Military Foreign Service Regulations. Under the “Customized Component” of the Integrated Relocation Pilot Program (IRPP), appropriate spousal employment search expenses such as travel to interviews and preparation of resumes will be reimbursed. The “Customized Component” may also be used to pay for required licences and professional qualifications; however, in accordance with the Income Tax Act, reimbursement for these expenses is subject to tax. Reimbursement of additional expenses will be examined under the Relocation Process re-engineering project.

68. That the Department develop a program to encourage greater awareness among local and national employers of the problems faced by military spouses seeking jobs and to explore opportunities to make more jobs available. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

This initiative is complete. Employment Assistance Counsellors have been established at all Military Family Resource Centres effective 1 April 1999. Significant inroads have been made with civilian employers at the national and local levels, such as banks, the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires and others through a national employment advisor employed at the Directorate of Military Family Services (DMFS).

69. That all bases offer employment counselling through the Military Family Resource Centre to assist military spouses find employment. That counselling services be made available in both official languages for families of military personnel.

This initiative is complete. Military Family Resource Centres have completed the hiring and are employing Employment Assistance Counsellors using guidance issued by the Director of Military Family Services.

70. That the period of leave allocated to military personnel to visit an area prior to a posting to find accommodation and make other arrangements be increased to seven days to, among other things, give more time to military spouses to start job searches.

This recommendation has been accepted and implemented effective 1 April 1999. The existing pre-posting house-hunting trip can be extended beyond five days under the Integrated Relocation Pilot Program (IRPP). In addition, under the “Customized Component” of the Integrated Relocation Pilot Program children may accompany parents on house-hunting trips and appropriate expenses will be reimbursed.

71. That in exceptional circumstances, prior to the move to a new location, military spouses be reimbursed for the reasonable costs of travel and accommodation to that area to participate in job interviews which cannot otherwise be held during the trip to find accommodation.

This recommendation has been accepted and implemented effective 1 April 1999. These spousal expenses may be reimbursed under the “Customized Component” of the Integrated Relocation Pilot Program (IRPP).

72. That second language training policies be amended to ensure that military spouses can have access to language courses on bases when requested. A report on developments should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

An initial series of pilot courses commenced in the Fall of 1999 utilizing Military Family Resource Centres to provide second language training to spouses in nine locations throughout the CF. A second series of pilot courses in 15 locations is scheduled to run from January to March 2000. Full implementation is expected in the Fall.

73. That in the future, all services and programs offered by the Department of National Defence to military personnel and their families be available in both official languages.

This initiative is complete. In support of the overall need to provide services and programs in both official languages, the Department began reviewing the content of the existing NDHQ Policy Directive P1/97 on basic services provided in both official languages to military families. All base/unit annual service delivery reports have arrived at the Directorate of Official Languages (DOL). The overall success of the services provided in both official languages based on the return was 85%. DOL staff continues to study and assess the effectiveness of language services provided to families.

Transitions (including recognition, work expectations and terms of service)

74. That the Canadian Forces re-examine the relevancy of its alcohol policy and consider deleting it entirely.

With respect to the *alcohol policy*, it is clear that military operations and alcohol cannot mix; consequently, alcohol consumption by deployed members must be strictly controlled. The requirement to provide adequate opportunity for rest and relaxation (R&R), however, is recognized as essential to the quality of life of our members, and is integral to the Contingent Commander's planning process. With this level of scrutiny and the care and well being of CF members in mind, the alcohol policy is considered fair and appropriate at this time.

75. That the Department of National Defence examines the feasibility of adopting a longer planning cycle whereby members could be given greater notice of their next posting. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

The Director General Military Careers has undertaken a review of the planning cycle and is developing policies and practices to address this recommendation. The Canadian Forces Assignment System is currently under evaluation, and is scheduled for implementation for the Year 2000 Active Posting Season.

76. That CF personnel be able to have reasonable access to consult directly and privately with their career managers. That this measure take into account the need for military personnel to have access to service in the official language of their choice.

This has always been and will continue to be the normal practice. On occasion it is appropriate that the supervisor be present; however, the individual may ask to speak privately with the career manager during an interview. If a supervisor were present, the individual would be aware of the issues raised and discussed between the career manager and the supervisor.

77. That the Canadian Forces ensure that the career management component remains adequately staffed, to meet both human resources and operational requirements.

The Canadian Forces Assignment System is designed to improve the overall planning and delivery of career management to members of the Canadian Forces.

78. That as soon as Alternative Service Delivery (ASD) is being considered, those affected be informed and consulted.

79. That those wishing to make an in-house bid be provided with adequate time and resources to ensure that their bid is professional and competitive. Personnel should be given a realistic chance to prepare bids.

80. That when job cuts or mandated relocations are an inevitable consequence of the introduction of ASD, those affected be provided with fair compensation and benefits.

Effective internal communication is mandated for every ASD review to ensure local personnel are aware of the progress.

The Department is both responsible for and committed to providing sufficient resources to support management-initiated in-house bids.

The Department has in place a framework to maximize employment opportunities for employees affected by ASD. The framework for civilian employees includes the maximization of employment continuity for affected employees with the new service provider. In the case of military personnel, similar HR management tools are available to address any surplus personnel resulting from ASD reviews.

81. That the Second Career Assistance Network be made available to CF personnel at an earlier date in their careers and that adequate funding be sustained in order to ensure its effectiveness. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

The Second Career Assistance Network (SCAN) program, which is part of the Personal Enhancement Program, is under review, including the issue of accessibility and funding of the program. The program is currently available to all CF members who have achieved career status and to those who are released due to injury on duty.

82. That the Canadian Forces give consideration to increasing the number of UTPO positions made available each year and consider expanding the Royal Military College's Distant Education Program. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

The University Training Program for Officers (UTPO) program remains one of the means for an officer to pursue an undergraduate degree. The Department has also introduced additional measures to improve the access to university training for officers. For example, the benefits for academic upgrading under Canadian Forces Administrative Order (CFAO) 9-2 have been expanded for serving Regular Force officers. As a result, Regular Force officers who start and complete an undergraduate (baccalaureate) degree

credit course after 1 September 1999 are eligible to request reimbursement of 100 per cent of the tuition and other mandatory costs. In addition, each of the Environmental Commanders has initiated separate programs to send selected officers to university on a full-time basis to complete undergraduate degree programs.

Furthermore, CFAO 9-2 is under review through a Defence Administrative Order and Directive (DAOD 5031-3). The aim is to provide limited financial support to eligible CF members who wish to either achieve personal learning goals or prepare for the transition to civilian life. The DAOD improves CFAO 9-2 in several areas. Major enhancements include a revised orientation, which enables the member to consolidate and deal with all educational and training reimbursements in one account, support for more mandatory ancillary costs and a clear Reserve force policy. Additionally, to ensure equitable access to the available funds, effective 1 Jan 2000, all eligible members may access a fixed account of \$5,000, over the period of their CF career, at a reimbursement rate of 50% per course/qualification.

The Canadian Forces Military College Office of Continuing Studies was established in 1996 and offers degree program courses to all members of the CF (Regular and Reserve). The Minister's Monitoring Committee indicated that they "have found the work being undertaken at RMC commendable, and feels compelled to remark on the dedication, hard work and genuine concern for the CF officer corps that individuals at the institution have exhibited."

83. That the Canadian Forces facilitate increased access to academic upgrading for Non-Commissioned Members to meet personal as well as military requirements.

All members of the Regular Force, with limited exceptions, are eligible for reimbursement of tuition and book expenses related to courses taken to improve or expand a member's educational qualification in secondary school, university, community college, or in pursuit of a professional designation. There are no limitations for access to this program based on rank. The Continuing Studies division of Royal Military College offers degree programs to all occupation-qualified members of the Canadian Forces, both Regular and Reserve Force. There are also continuing education programs offered through the Canadian Forces Continuing Education Program (CFCEP) for all ranks.

The University Training Plan for Non-Commissioned Members (UTPNM) program will continue as a means of providing NCMs with the opportunity to obtain a degree. The aim of this program is to address military requirements by permitting NCMs to complete the program and to be commissioned as officers.

84. That the Department of National Defence increase its efforts to facilitate the provision of appropriate civilian accreditation to military personnel for their military training and appropriate recognition for their civilian training.

The Director Recruiting, Education and Training (DRET) has undertaken to increase the scope of military training for which equivalent civilian accreditation is granted and to develop a program to recognize military equivalents for civilian training. They are currently building the Canadian Forces Equivalency Database to provide information to members regarding equivalencies that have been granted. DRET will continue to conduct an analysis of Canadian Forces training and seek appropriate accreditation with civilian agencies.

85. That the Canadian Forces intensify their efforts in ensuring that all military members are aware of what constitutes a poisoned work environment for women and visible minorities and what constitutes harassment. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

86. That the Canadian Forces continue to emphasize and make known to all members the serious nature and consequences of not respecting harassment and discrimination policies. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

The first Canadian Forces Employment Equity plan was adopted on 20 December 1999. It is a comprehensive effort to maximise human potential. The Plan strives to ensure fair treatment of all persons based on merit and capability, which supports teamwork, unit cohesion and ultimately operational effectiveness.

Although the CF has not been previously subject to Employment Equity (EE) legislation, it has been proactive in putting in place programs and initiatives in support of EE and Gender Integration. This plan is based on information gathered by the CF administered 1995 self-identification survey. This survey allowed statistical information to be gathered on women, Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities serving in the CF. As persons with disabilities were not considered in this survey, comparative information was not available to assist in the planning of activities for this designated group. This will be corrected in the next survey to be administered in FY 2000/2001.

Revisions to the plan will follow to meet the requirements of the CF EE Regulations now in final draft. Once the Regulations have received departmental approval, a government Order-in-Council will bring the CF under the Employment Equity Act.

In CANFORGEN 053/98 of May 1998 concerning the establishment of the Sexual Assault/Harassment Complaint Service, the CDS stated:

I want to remind all CF personnel that it is their personal and professional responsibility to be vigilant and to take necessary action when inappropriate behaviour is observed. Turning a blind eye and hoping the problem will go away is not an acceptable approach and individuals at all levels will be held accountable for their actions. Sexual assault and harassment are not acceptable behaviours in the CF.

In addition to the initial training provided to CF members through the Standard for Harassment and Racism Prevention (SHARP) program, there is continuing emphasis by the chain of command placed on the consequences of not respecting the stated policies.

87. That the Department of National Defence make every effort to ensure that, in future, there be no supply problems with respect to proper fitting and issuance of clothing and personal kit. Uniforms, environmental clothing, and specialized kit such as boots for tank crews must be suitable for the work and training undertaken and be issued when required. A report should be made to SCONDVA on an annual basis.

An injection of funds was provided for national procurement in 1998 to address the immediate critical shortfalls of clothing. The army continues to introduce new clothing through the "Clothe the Soldier" program. Similarly, the air force and the navy continue to introduce new clothing or modify the scale of issue to address requirements. The air force introduced, in 1998, new winter environmental clothing to rectify a long-standing deficiency; all air force personnel at Wings have been issued with this kit. The navy has recently introduced a set of Naval Combat Dress that will be issued shortly.

The Future

88. That the Chief of the Defence Staff table with SCONDVA an interim report within one year and a comprehensive report within two years on the progress made with respect to quality of life issues in the Canadian Forces.

The Committee asked for follow-up reports on several of its recommendations. An Interim Report was submitted to the Committee in December 1999. This 2000 Report is the first annual report. The Deputy Minister and the CDS will continue to provide verbal briefings and written reports to the committee on decisions and on progress, as appropriate. There will be a survey conducted in 2000 to obtaining opinions from personnel in the field; additionally, there will be similar regular performance measurement surveys conducted in the future to ensure that QOL-issues are discovered and corrected as soon as possible.

In addition, the CDS will continue to address quality of life issues in his annual report. As recommended by the Committee, the Government still believes that this kind of continuing dialogue on the vital issues raised in the Report is the best way of informing Parliament about what is being done. It will also serve to remind all concerned Canadians of the valuable contribution made to the Canadian Forces by Members of Parliament through their work on the issue of Quality of Life.

89. That SCONDVA be empowered, when it deems it appropriate, to visit selective bases to enquire into the effectiveness of reforms made with respect to quality of life issues in the Canadian Forces.

As per comment at Recommendation 88.