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**Call-Up Number: W8484-181026/001/CY**

**Contract Award Date: November 20, 2018**

**Report Delivery Date: February 13, 2019**

**Contract Value: \$34,210.00 (excl. taxes)**

## ***Recruitment Advertising Success Check***

### **~ Executive Summary ~**

**February 2019**

Submitted to:

Department of National Defence

Departmental Contact: For more information on this report,  
please email: [POR-ROP@forces.gc.ca](mailto:POR-ROP@forces.gc.ca)

*Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français*

Submitted by:

**Corporate Research Associates Inc.**

5001-7071 Bayers Road | Halifax NS B3L 2C2

T 902.493.3820 | F 902.493.3879 | W [www.cra.ca](http://www.cra.ca)

**Canada** 

## Executive Summary

Corporate Research Associates Inc.

Contract Number: W8484-181026/001/CY

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### Background and Objectives

To support recruitment objectives of filling priority occupations, increasing the number of women, meeting diversity targets and recruiting Reservists, the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) are launching a multi-pronged CAF recruitment campaign that includes both an overarching campaign and various components targeting niche audiences. Prior to launching the overarching awareness campaign in 2019, DND and CAF were interested in conducting a success check to ensure that the creative concepts are suitable.

Campaign material, targeting young people 17 to 25 years old who are seeking employment, were designed to present the CAF as a first-class, professional employer that offers rewarding and challenging careers, with competitive pay and benefits; as an organization offering long-term or short-term careers, on a full or part-time basis; with more than 100 different career opportunities; and focusing on its Defence mission to defend Canada and Canadian interests and values while contributing to international peace and security. The campaign materials tested during the focus groups included two videos, two soundtracks, and three taglines along with an overarching statement. The goal of the testing was to evaluate the efficacy of the advertising in attracting the attention of the intended audience, and identify images and/or features that provoke particularly strong reactions, either positive or negative. The results from the findings will allow for the refinement of key messages and identify suggested tagline(s).

A total of four (4) traditional, in-person focus groups were conducted in Montreal (January 30, 2019) and Toronto (January 31, 2019). Groups in Montreal were conducted in French while English was used in Toronto. In each location, one group was conducted with a mix of gender while the second group was conducted with females only. All participants were between the ages of 17 and 25 years old, had Canadian citizenship, shared a neutral or favourable opinion of the Canadian Armed Forces, and were planning to either look for a full-time job or change job in the next few years. At least half of the recruits in each group were from visible minority groups. A mix of education and occupation (among those employed) were also represented in each group. A total of twelve (12) participants were recruited per group (with a goal of 8-10 attending each session). Across locations, 36 participants actually attended the discussions. Each session lasted 2 hours and participants received a cash incentive of \$100 in appreciation for their time.

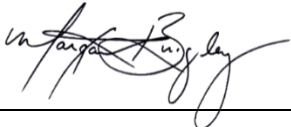
All participants were recruited per the recruitment specifications for the Government of Canada. Recruitment was conducted through qualitative panels stored on Canadian servers, with follow up calls to confirm the details provided and to ensure quotas were met. This report presents the findings from the study. Caution must be exercised when interpreting the results from this study, as qualitative



research is directional only. Results cannot be attributed to the overall population under study, with any degree of confidence.

### Political Neutrality Certification

I hereby certify as a Representative of Corporate Research Associates Inc. that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the ***Directive on the Management of Communications***. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signed 

Margaret Brigley, President & COO | Corporate Research Associates

Date: February 13, 2019

### Key Findings and Conclusions

Findings from the ***Recruitment Advertising Success Check*** reveal that the videos tested as part of the proposed overarching recruitment campaign are well-received and elicit some interest in learning more about career opportunities in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).

The creative approach is effective at communicating the intended message that the CAF offers diversity in career choices available to anyone interested and paid education. The CAF is positioned as a first-class, professional employer that offers rewarding and challenging careers in an environment that promotes teamwork. In addition, the approach effectively conveys the CAF's contribution to highlighting Canada's Defence mission by showing combat-related scenes.

The videos are considered to be well-produced although the transition between everyday life scenes and CAF training/work scenes should be improved to show how both scenarios relate to each other. Referencing a personal passion in both personal and work scenes would also heighten the focus on the CAF offering a career option for those who have a passion that can transition into a career.

While the videos generally presented the CAF as an employer that featured some of the values appreciated by the audience – high-energy, collaborative work, helping people, making a difference, valuing professional development – they also featured what were perceived to be less desirable attributes – namely jobs that are physically and mentally demanding, disciplined, structured, lacking flexibility and with poor work-life balance. As such, the campaign left the impression that the CAF is an employer requiring a higher degree of commitment from its employees than perhaps other organizations would. In part because of this, the CAF is primarily seen as being different than other employers. Nonetheless, there is a perception that a career in the CAF offers the possibility to make a difference and help people, aspects considered important to having a meaningful career. That said, the videos left the impression that CAF employees have little flexibility or control over what they do, or



“freedom to choose”, attributes considered important in developing a sense of fulfillment or happiness in a career.

There appears to be a lack of awareness of the diversity of careers available in the CAF, with that of a combat soldier being the most top-of-mind. While showing science-related careers made sense to participants and elicited a certain level of curiosity, it was believed that the campaign would have wider appeal if careers not traditionally associated with the CAF – such as lawyers, psychologists, etc. – would be included in the campaign.

The videos were considered effective at eliciting curiosity, but they did not provide all of the information the target audience is looking for, notably the inclusion of a URL in the advertisement. It should be noted that the final version of the advertisements would include a call-to-action directing viewers to take action or go to the website. Participants believed that the online platform should include practical information such as the number and diversity of career options, the salary and benefits, advancement opportunities, working conditions, and the type of employment offered, among other things. Apart from turning to general online searches for information to assist with their post-secondary education and career decisions, young adults report that they trust the advice of people they know.

Two soundtracks for the videos were tested for appeal. There were little perceived differences between the two versions, although the “Golden Bay” soundtrack was slightly preferred over the “Straight Up” soundtrack. Personal preference was driven by a perception that the tempo/tone of the soundtrack better aligned with the images shown in the videos, suggesting that either soundtracks could be used with the final videos without concerns.

Of the three taglines tested, “Discover Your Potential / Découvrez votre plein potentiel” was deemed most compelling to participants as it evoked opportunities for personal and professional growth combined. It also implied that CAF values professional development. By contrast, the tagline “Find the Career That Fits You / Trouvez la carrière qui vous convient” implied career diversity to some, though it was deemed too factual and not sufficiently inspirational. The question format of the third tagline “What Are You Training For? / Répondrez-vous à l’appel?” invited self-reflection, although the use of the words “training” and “appel” were seen as too limitative. Indeed, the English tagline’s focus on the concept of training was considered as misaligned with the videos’ broader focus on careers. The French tagline’s focus on the “calling” (“appel”) positioned a career in the CAF as an engagement far too serious than what participants are looking for.

In addition to the three taglines, comments were solicited on an on-screen statement that preceded each tagline (“Get the best training for your true calling / Votre vocation mérite la meilleure formation”). There were two issues with this statement: the meaning of the word “vocation” in the French tagline was not well understood; and the term “vocation” in French or “true calling” in English implied that a career in the CAF requires a far greater engagement than what participants are looking for.

Overall findings from the research suggest that the overarching recruitment campaign is generally effective at communicated the intended message and would likely elicit curiosity in the CAF. That said, it does not effectively address some of the pre-existing perceptions of employment in the CAF as being a



demanding and inflexible employer, which were considered as barriers to joining the CAF. As such, collateral campaign materials should be developed to position the CAF on a more equal footing with other employers.

