



HOUSE OF COMMONS
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CANADA

A FORCE FOR CHANGE

CREATING A CULTURE OF EQUALITY FOR WOMEN IN THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

Report of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women

Karen Vecchio, Chair

**JUNE 2019
42nd PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION**

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OF EQUALITY FOR WOMEN IN THE CANADIAN
ARMED FORCES**

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the Status of Women**

**Karen Vecchio
Chair**

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NOTICE TO READER

Reports from committee presented to the House of Commons

Presenting a report to the House is the way a committee makes public its findings and recommendations on a particular topic. Substantive reports on a subject-matter study usually contain a synopsis of the testimony heard, the recommendations made by the committee, as well as the reasons for those recommendations.

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

has the honour to present its

EIGHTEENTH REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(2), the Committee has studied the treatment of women within the Department of National Defence and has agreed to report the following:

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LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of their deliberations committees may make recommendations which they include in their reports for the consideration of the House of Commons or the Government. Recommendations related to this study are listed below.

Recommendation 1

That the Government of Canada clarify behavioural expectations in relation to misconduct, including the legal consequences of such conduct, to potential recruits of the Canadian Armed Forces and provide training to members of the Canadian Armed Forces at all levels..... 11

Recommendation 2

That the Government of Canada provide mandatory comprehensive sexual harassment training for all Canadian Armed Forces members and recruits, with training follow-ups on a regular basis. 11

Recommendation 3

That the Government of Canada provide mandatory comprehensive awareness training regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit and other gender identities and sexual orientations questions for all Canadian Armed Forces members and recruits, and that this training be incorporated into regular roundtable discussions in each Canadian Armed Forces department and unit. 11

Recommendation 4

That the Government of Canada implement all 10 recommendations of the 2015 External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces..... 11

Recommendation 5

That the Government of Canada ensure that the definitions of harassment and sexual assault, including all forms of sexual misconduct as defined by the Canadian Armed Forces, are used consistently in the Canadian Armed Forces and are consistent with the definitions of criminal harassment and sexual assault in the *Criminal Code*..... 14

Recommendation 6

That the Government of Canada ensure that any member of the Canadian Armed Forces who wishes to file a complaint of harassment or discrimination can file it through the Canadian Armed Forces’ internal grievance system or through the Canadian Human Rights Commission; that Canadian Armed Forces members are aware of these options; and that the resolution process of the Canadian Armed Forces member’s complaint be resolved within a defined timeframe. 14

Recommendation 7

That the Government of Canada ensure that the person assigned to adjudicate cases of sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces is not part of the chain of command of the alleged victim..... 15

Recommendation 8

That the Government of Canada consider ways of providing funding for, or indemnifying, members of the Canadian Armed Forces for the cost of legal representation incurred during administrative dispute resolution proceedings within the Canadian Armed Forces. 15

Recommendation 9

That the Government of Canada create an external review board to increase accountability within the Department of National Defence Sexual Misconduct Response Centre with regards to providing support to victims of sexual harassment. 18

Recommendation 10

That the Government of Canada ensure a trauma-informed approach for victims of crime in the Canadian Armed Forces. 18

Recommendation 11

That the Government of Canada streamline support services for members of the Canadian Armed Forces transitioning to post-service life from active duty by designating one point of accountability and communication to manage the transitioning member’s file..... 18

Recommendation 12

That the Government of Canada examine the present mental health supports available to members of the Canadian Armed Forces and ensure that they are meeting the needs of all members..... 18

Recommendation 13

That the Government of Canada continue working to address gender bias in the delivery of veterans’ services and programs. 18

Recommendation 14

That the Government of Canada support families and single parents by providing accessible and affordable child care options to members of the Canadian Armed Forces..... 19

Recommendation 15

That the Government of Canada ensure that all members of Canadian Armed Forces receive equal benefits, specifically considering the specific needs of single-parent families as compared to traditional two-parent families. 19

Recommendation 16

That the Government of Canada make mobility between trades easier for members of the Canadian Armed Forces, including those who are dealing with changing family and/or personal circumstances..... 19

Recommendation 17

That the Government of Canada work to increase the number of women as well as of individuals identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit or as other gender identities and sexual orientations in leadership positions within the Canadian Armed Forces. 21



A FORCE FOR CHANGE: CREATING A CULTURE OF EQUALITY FOR WOMEN IN THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

INTRODUCTION

Workplace harassment, including sexual harassment, remains a significant problem in Canadian society, particularly for women.¹ In March 2015, the *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces* (the Deschamps Report) described “an underlying sexualized culture in the CAF [Canadian Armed Forces] that is hostile to women and LGTBQ members, and conducive to more serious incidents of sexual harassment and assault.”² According to the results of Statistics Canada’s 2018 Survey on Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces, 75% of women, 70% of men and 76% of gender diverse individuals in the Regular Force had witnessed or experienced sexualized or discriminatory behaviours in the 12 months preceding the survey.³ Furthermore, women in the Regular Force and the Primary Reserve are more likely than men to experience sexual assault in the military workplace or involving military members: 4.3% of female Regular Force members reported having been victims of sexual assault in the 12 months preceding the survey, compared to 1.1% of male Regular Force members,⁴ and 7% of female Primary Reserve members reported having been victims of sexual assault in the 12 months preceding the survey, compared to 1.2% of male Primary Reserve members.⁵

1 Darcy Hango and Melissa Moyser, “[Harassment in Canadian Workplaces](#),” *Insights on Canadian Society*, 75-006-X, Statistics Canada, 17 December 2018.

2 Marie Deschamps, C.C., Ad. E., External Review Authority, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, 27 March 2015, p. i.

3 These statistics are similar to the ones for women and men in the CAF Primary Reserve. See: Adam Cotter, “Sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force, 2018,” [Table 5: Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force members who witnessed or experienced sexualized or discriminatory behaviours in the past 12 months, by gender and types of behaviour, 2018](#), 85-603-X, Statistics Canada, 22 May 2019.

4 *Ibid.*, [Table 1: Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force members who were sexually assaulted in the past 12 months, by gender and type of sexual assault, 2016 and 2018](#).

5 Adam Cotter, “Sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Primary Reserve, 2018,” [Table 1: Canadian Armed Forces Primary Reserve members who were sexually assaulted in the past 12 months, by gender and type of sexual assault, 2016 and 2018](#), 85-603-X, Statistics Canada, 22 May 2019.



Recognizing the importance of fostering a safe and inclusive workplace free of harassment, violence and discrimination for individuals who join the military and serve their country, the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women (the Committee) agreed on 19 June 2018 to undertake a study on the treatment of women within the Department of National Defence (DND). The Committee adopted the following motion:

It was agreed, – That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the Committee undertake a study that is four to six meetings in length on the treatment of women within the Department of National Defence; that the Committee use a gender-based lens to examine the prevalence of sexual harassment, and whether the current actions, programs and resources provided by the department are adequate to combat sexual harassment in the armed forces; that the Committee report its recommendations and findings to the House; and that the government provide a response to the recommendations made by the Committee.⁶

The Committee received testimony from 20 witnesses: nine of whom appeared as individuals, four who represented three organizations and seven who were representatives of DND. The testimony was received during five meetings held between 7 May and 28 May 2019. Appendix A includes a list of all witnesses.

This report focusses on the following elements:

- the need for cultural change within the CAF, including the need for training and education for CAF members on matters relating to sexual misconduct;
- the reporting and resolution processes for sexual misconduct incidents;
- supports and services available to victims and survivors of sexual misconduct, including health care services and family-related supports and services; and
- the recruitment and retention of women in the military.

The Committee would like to acknowledge the work done by DND and the CAF in recent years to try to eliminate sexual misconduct. However, much work still needs to be done to ensure all individuals in the CAF enjoy a safe and healthy workplace. The Committee's report intends to provide guidance to the Government of Canada on measures that

6 House of Commons, Standing Committee on the Status of Women (FEWO), [*Minutes of Proceedings*](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 19 June 2018.

could be implemented to help eliminate discrimination, violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, in the CAF.

Committee members greatly appreciate the contributions of witnesses who offered their time, knowledge and ideas to the Committee during its study, particularly those who courageously shared information about their experiences in the CAF.

CREATING CULTURAL CHANGE TO ELIMINATE SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

I was stuck in the military without a trade, without belonging to a unit fully, without any chance of promotion or advancement for four years. I was a pariah and it took a very big toll on my health.

Laura Nash, as an individual
FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0905.

The Committee heard testimony that was consistent with the findings of the Deschamps Report: many witnesses described a sexualized and male-dominated workplace where a culture of abuse, discrimination and harassment based on gender, gender expression and sexual orientation exists.⁷ Women and individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit or as other gender identities and sexual orientations (LGBTQ2+) are disproportionately affected by sexual misconduct and harassment in the CAF.⁸ The Committee was told that, although there is a belief that the CAF is a “gender neutral” workplace, it is not the case. While women can perform brilliantly in military roles, some do so by conforming to and adopting “highly masculine behaviours and, for some, masculine world views, attitudes and values.”⁹ For this reason, witnesses stressed the need for cultural change to create a more respectful and

7 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0850 and 0930 (Danielle Dewitt, as an individual); FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0900 and 0935 (Paula MacDonald, as an individual); FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0850 (Natalie MacDonald, as an individual) and 0920 (Julie S. Lalonde, as an individual); also FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0845 (Alan Okros, as an individual).

8 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1710 (Cmdre Rebecca Patterson, Director General, Canadian Armed Forces Strategic Response Team – Sexual Misconduct, Department of National Defence).

9 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0845 (Alan Okros).



inclusive workplace for all CAF members.¹⁰ Michelle Douglas, Chair of the LGBT Purge Fund, said:

I believe that the military's policy regarding inclusion, particularly towards women—both cisgender women and transgender women—is actually quite good. The military has, of course, all of the things that they must have: pay parity, access to career paths, family support and so on. The establishment of the Sexual Misconduct Response Centre is a good thing and so was the establishment of Operation HONOUR. Now what we know, though, is that policy is vital, but practice counts.¹¹

To achieve cultural change, witnesses stressed the importance of strong leadership.¹²

Representatives from DND described some of the initiatives undertaken by DND and the CAF to respond to the issue of sexual misconduct. In response to the 2015 Deschamps Report, the Chief of the Defence Staff launched Operation HONOUR to “eliminate harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour within the CAF.”¹³ Operation HONOUR has four lines of effort: understanding the issue of sexual misconduct, responding more decisively to incidents, supporting those affected more effectively and preventing incidents from occurring.¹⁴ A representative from DND told the Committee that although the CAF is committed to changing the culture within the military and has made progress in implementing the recommendations of the Deschamps Report, “sufficient progress” has not been made in all areas.¹⁵ The CAF considers that it has fully implemented two of the 10 recommendations of the Deschamps Report: acknowledging the problem of sexual misconduct and addressing the problem of sexual misconduct; as well as simplifying the resolution process for cases of harassment.¹⁶ As well, the CAF considers it has achieved the intent of a third recommendation: to allow “victims of sexual assault to request the transfer of the complaint to civilian authorities.”¹⁷ The Committee was told that victim support is the principal focus for the next stage of Operation HONOUR.¹⁸ However, witnesses

10 Ibid., 0920 (Kristine St-Pierre, Director, The WPS Group); and FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0955 (Julie S. Lalonde).

11 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0855 (Michelle Douglas, Chair, LGBT Purge Fund).

12 Ibid., 0930 (Michelle Douglas); FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0955 (Julie S. Lalonde); and FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0850–0855 and 0910 (Kristine St-Pierre).

13 Chief of the Defence Staff, *CDS OP ORDER – OP HONOUR*, 14 August 2015.

14 Department of National Defence, *The Operation HONOUR Manual (Interim Edition): A Comprehensive Guide to Information and Resources on Sexual Misconduct*, April 2019.

15 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1635 (Cmdre Rebecca Patterson).

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

indicated that Operation HONOUR is not as effective as it could be and that CAF members need to receive more training regarding the initiative and its goals.¹⁹

The Committee heard about other initiatives developed by DND and the CAF to help change the culture within the military and create a safe and healthy work environment for CAF members. For instance, the Respect in the Canadian Armed Forces workshop is an initiative facilitated by civilian experts that allows participants to “look at everything from unconscious bias as it affects decision-making to how to consider the position of those affected by sexual misconduct and incidents.”²⁰ As well, the CAF’s new campaign plan intends to focus its efforts in areas such as prevention, engagement, policy development, cultural change and victim support. The plan “will be informed by advice from external experts” and “have clear lines of efforts, as well as dedicated resources to ensure success.”²¹ In addition, representatives from DND indicated that CAF members receive Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) training throughout their careers²² and that individuals at the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School receive 40 hours of training on Operation HONOUR and CAF ethics and values during their 10-week training program.²³ The CAF also created gender advisor positions; the advisors report to their commanders on gender and diversity issues.²⁴

More generally, witnesses shared observations, suggestions and recommendations regarding training offered to CAF members and possible improvements that would make the CAF a more inclusive and respectful workplace. The Committee was told that training offered to CAF members should:

- involve experts in the provision of training; ideally, training would be offered by both a man and a woman together;²⁵

19 Ibid., 1540 (Dr. Karen Breeck, Retired Military Physician, as an individual); and FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0910 (Danielle Dewitt).

20 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1715 (Cmdre Rebecca Patterson).

21 Ibid., 1635.

22 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 1005 (BGen Lise Bourgon, Defence Champion, Women, Peace and Security, Department of National Defence).

23 Ibid., 1005 (BGen Virginia Tattersal, Deputy Commander, Military Personnel Generation, Department of National Defence).

24 Ibid., 1010 (BGen Lise Bourgon).

25 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0935 (Julie S. Lalonde); and FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0945 (Martine Roy).



- be ongoing and available at all levels in the chain of command;²⁶
- include information on bystander intervention in cases of harassment or sexual misconduct;²⁷ and
- focus on the principles of equality, diversity and human rights²⁸ and cover the history of marginalized individuals in the CAF, such as those who identify as LGBTQ2+.²⁹

Witnesses also suggested holding round tables or town halls instead of regular training sessions.³⁰ As well, Alan Okros, who appeared as an individual, indicated that individuals in positions of power within the CAF must be equipped to deal with issues relating to misconduct and harassment and know how to use their power in a way that does not further marginalize women or other minorities.³¹ Finally, it was suggested that working groups, pride networks and positive space campaigns be created to ensure that CAF members who identify as LGBTQ2+ can access relevant resources, and that all CAF members can seek advice and guidance on how to positively support and engage with their colleagues identifying as LGBTQ2+.³²

Witnesses emphasized the importance of incorporating GBA+ and Sex and Gender-Based Analysis (SGBA) across all CAF initiatives, policies, programs and research.³³ DND officials stated that GBA+ can help “how things work for everyone in the defence team”³⁴ and shared some positive outcomes from applying GBA+ to CAF policies, such as purchasing

26 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1620 (Dr. Karen Breeck); FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0915 (Martine Roy); and FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0850 (Kristine St-Pierre).

27 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0935 (Julie S. Lalonde).

28 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0850 and 0925 (Kristine St-Pierre).

29 Ibid., 0900 (Alan Okros); also FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0900 (Michelle Douglas) and 0940 (Danielle Dewitt).

30 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0945 (Danielle Dewitt), 0945 (Martine Roy), and 0945 (Michelle Douglas).

31 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0915 (Alan Okros).

32 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0900 (Michelle Douglas).

33 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1530 (Marie-Claude Gagnon, Founder, It’s Just 700) and 1545 (Dr. Karen Breeck).

34 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0955 (Lisa Vandehei, Director of Gender, Diversity and Inclusion, Department of National Defence).

specific undergarments for female CAF members or changing some training requirements so that women do not suffer from preventable injuries.³⁵

To help create cultural change and eliminate sexual misconduct in the CAF, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 1

That the Government of Canada clarify behavioural expectations in relation to misconduct, including the legal consequences of such conduct, to potential recruits of the Canadian Armed Forces and provide training to members of the Canadian Armed Forces at all levels.

Recommendation 2

That the Government of Canada provide mandatory comprehensive sexual harassment training for all Canadian Armed Forces members and recruits, with training follow-ups on a regular basis.

Recommendation 3

That the Government of Canada provide mandatory comprehensive awareness training regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit and other gender identities and sexual orientations questions for all Canadian Armed Forces members and recruits, and that this training be incorporated into regular roundtable discussions in each Canadian Armed Forces department and unit.

Recommendation 4

That the Government of Canada implement all 10 recommendations of the 2015 External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces.

35 Ibid., 1000 and 1005 (BGen Virginia Tattersal).



RETHINKING THE REPORTING AND RESOLUTION PROCESSES OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT CASES

Policies and procedures must be developed so that incidents of gender-based violence can be resolved quickly, efficiently, and with the victim's interests in mind.

Paula MacDonald, as an individual,
FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0850.

The Committee heard concerns about the reporting and resolution processes of sexual misconduct cases in the CAF. Some witnesses said that they felt their complaints were not taken seriously by their chain of command, that consequences for offenders were light or that they felt they were retaliated against, including not being considered for promotions.³⁶ As well, some witnesses reported that their complaints were inappropriately handled by their chain of command, that they perceived conflicts of interests, or that alleged perpetrators were involved in the investigation or resolution process of their complaints.³⁷ Paula MacDonald, who appeared as an individual, stated:

I voluntarily released from the service because my chain of command refused to reasonably address the behaviours of superiors who discriminated against my abilities and sexually harassed and objectified me. I was subjected to increasing levels of violence from service members who behaved inappropriately, and I left to protect my physical safety.³⁸

To that point, a representative from DND told the Committee: “[I]f there is a case where someone in the chain of command is alleged to have committed an act, they will be removed and the focus is on supporting the person through the process.”³⁹

As well, witnesses stated that the duty to report misconduct for CAF members makes it difficult for individuals who experience violence or harassment to come forward.⁴⁰ Marie-Claude Gagnon, Founder of the organization It’s Just 700, explained that the duty to report is “extremely isolating because if you talk, things will take place without you

36 Ibid., 0850, 0910, and 0930; and FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0850, 0910 and 0925 (Danielle Dewitt).

37 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0850, 0900 and 0910 (Paula MacDonald); and FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0855 and 0925 (Natalie MacDonald).

38 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0850 (Paula MacDonald).

39 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1645 (Cmdre Rebecca Patterson).

40 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0930 (Paula MacDonald).

wanting it.”⁴¹ Victims and survivors might not want the incidents to be formally reported. Alan Okros recommended that the duty to report be transformed into a “duty to respond” for a witness or person told about a misconduct incident.⁴²

Some witnesses stated that the military does not have the expertise to respond adequately to sexual misconduct, including to sexual harassment.⁴³ To improve the reporting and resolution processes of sexual misconduct cases in the CAF, the Committee was told that there is a need to involve experts to address this violence⁴⁴ and to have an external and independent entity dedicated to investigating cases of sexual misconduct, as recommended in the Deschamps Report.⁴⁵ Marie-Claude Gagnon said:

No entity should be policing itself. It never works. It never has and it never will. Unless the Deschamps commission is fully implemented with complete external and independent oversight, a deep knowledge of the military and its structures and challenges, as well as an ability to hold the military and National Defence accountable for oversight, as I stated previously, I can't foresee impactful results for women.⁴⁶

A representative from DND told the Committee that “the role of the chain of command within that organization is absolutely essential” and that “[h]aving a complaint system that is completely external to the chain of command would certainly be challenging.”⁴⁷

Witnesses also stressed the need for support, including financial support, for individuals who are engaged in legal proceedings in relation to sexual misconduct in the CAF.⁴⁸ Paula MacDonald told the Committee: “The Canadian Armed Forces are represented by the Attorney General's office. They have publicly funded legal representation.... I have to

41 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1605 (Marie-Claude Gagnon).

42 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0910 (Alan Okros).

43 Ibid., 1030 (Sean Cantelon, Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, Department of National Defence); FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1610 (Marie-Claude Gagnon); and FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0915–0920 (Julie S. Lalonde).

44 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0915–0920 (Julie S. Lalonde).

45 Ibid., 0955 (Julie S. Lalonde) and 0925 (Natalie MacDonald); also FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0850, 0855 and 0925 (Paula MacDonald).

46 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1535 (Marie-Claude Gagnon).

47 Ibid., 1645 (Cmdre Rebecca Patterson).

48 Ibid., 1615 (Marie-Claude Gagnon); and FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0950 (Paula MacDonald).



fund that all on my own, whereas the perpetrators have unlimited funding for their legal expenses paid for by the country. I find that to be unfair.”⁴⁹

Furthermore, witnesses highlighted problems with the grievance process. The Committee was told that the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) can hear cases only when internal CAF grievance procedures have been exhausted, which can take years.⁵⁰ Natalie MacDonald, who appeared as an individual, recommended eliminating section 41.1(a) of the *Canadian Human Rights Act* to allow individuals to choose whether they want their cases to go through the internal grievance system or the CHRC.⁵¹ However, a representative from DND said that “[a]bsolutely nothing prevents a CAF member from going directly to the [CHRC] and making a complaint.”⁵²

To help improve the reporting and resolution processes for sexual misconduct in the CAF, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 5

That the Government of Canada ensure that the definitions of harassment and sexual assault, including all forms of sexual misconduct as defined by the Canadian Armed Forces, are used consistently in the Canadian Armed Forces and are consistent with the definitions of criminal harassment and sexual assault in the *Criminal Code*.

Recommendation 6

That the Government of Canada ensure that any member of the Canadian Armed Forces who wishes to file a complaint of harassment or discrimination can file it through the Canadian Armed Forces’ internal grievance system or through the Canadian Human Rights Commission; that Canadian Armed Forces members are aware of these options; and that the resolution process of the Canadian Armed Forces member’s complaint be resolved within a defined timeframe.

49 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0905 (Paula MacDonald).

50 Ibid., 0900 (Paula MacDonald); and FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0925 (Natalie MacDonald).

51 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0925 (Natalie MacDonald).

52 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1655 (Alain Gauthier, Director General, Integrated Conflict and Complaint Management, Department of National Defence).

Recommendation 7

That the Government of Canada ensure that the person assigned to adjudicate cases of sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces is not part of the chain of command of the alleged victim.

Recommendation 8

That the Government of Canada consider ways of providing funding for, or indemnifying, members of the Canadian Armed Forces for the cost of legal representation incurred during administrative dispute resolution proceedings within the Canadian Armed Forces.

INCREASING SUPPORTS AND SERVICES FOR MEMBERS OF THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

The next recommendation would be [to] ensure that you have a victim-centred approach in terms of having the appropriate mental health care supports and resources so that the victim can pick up their lives and keep moving.

Paula MacDonald, as an individual,
FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0930.

The Committee heard that supports and services offered by the CAF do not always meet the needs of women, particularly of women who experience sexual misconduct, and of families. Witnesses addressed three categories of supports and services where improvements could be made: supports and services for victims and survivors of sexual misconduct, health care, and supports and services for families.

Supports and Services for Victims and Survivors of Sexual Misconduct

The Committee was told that individuals who experience sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, need to have access to victim- and survivor-centered supports and services.⁵³ Members of the CAF who experience sexual misconduct can contact the Sexual Misconduct Response Centre (SMRC), which offers “confidential, bilingual, client-services to

53 *Ibid.*



members 24-7 ... no matter where in the world they may be.”⁵⁴ The Committee was told that SMRC counsellors have “expertise in working with survivors of sexual trauma and do not have a duty to report.”⁵⁵ However, a representative from DND acknowledged that while SMRC services fill an important gap, they do not fully address the complex needs of CAF members affected by sexual trauma; the representative stated that “better coordination of support services and specialized training for those who provide support” are required.⁵⁶ In particular, the Committee was told that the SMRC is working to add expertise with regards to LGBTQ2+ experiences and perspectives to the External Advisory Council (EAC) of the SMRC.⁵⁷ The EAC provides the SMRC with external advice and recommendations on the implementation of relevant policies and programs.⁵⁸

The Committee heard that a revised and expanded mandate has been drafted for the SMRC which will shift some responsibilities currently held by the CAF to the SMRC to ensure that those responsibilities are handled by subject-matter experts.⁵⁹ Under the revised mandate, the SMRC will:⁶⁰

- provide “a case management service” that will assist CAF members in navigating both internal and external services or processes, offer in-person support and accompaniment, and help in completing forms and victim impact statements;
- provide expert advice on sexual misconduct; and
- deliver comprehensive and evidence-based support services to monitor the CAF’s implementation of policies, programs and services.

As well, the Committee heard that the CAF has established 16 Centres of Excellence across Canada to help CAF members access relevant supports and services to address issues they are facing, including sexual misconduct. The Centres of Excellence are staffed with civilians who do not have a duty to report misconduct cases.⁶¹ In addition, a

54 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1640 (Denise Preston, Executive Director, Sexual Misconduct Response Centre, Department of National Defence).

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid., 1645.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid., 1725.

60 Ibid., 1640.

61 Ibid., 1650 (Alain Gauthier).

representative from DND explained that Military Family Services is assisting individuals affected by violence by providing supports and services, including with regards to violence prevention, education and awareness.⁶²

Health Care Supports and Services

Witnesses also indicated that improvements to health care services and supports available to CAF members are necessary. For instance, members of the CAF may have difficulty accessing certain health services, such as counselling and other mental health-related services.⁶³ Furthermore, the Committee was told that CAF members who are survivors of “military sexual trauma” should be provided with the relevant in-house health services, instead of being referred to civilian support groups for victims and survivors of sexual assault in the closest community.⁶⁴ A witness explained that health care for CAF members should be holistic and focus on prevention and early diagnosis, as well as immediate care and rehabilitation.⁶⁵

Supports and Services for Families

Witnesses stressed the need for greater supports and services for diverse military families, in particular for greater availability and affordability of childcare services on all CAF bases.⁶⁶ Without access to adequate childcare services, female members of the CAF, particularly single mothers, may have to make a choice between caring for their children or advancing their military careers.⁶⁷ As well, witnesses suggested other initiatives to support diverse CAF families, for example:

- implementing more consistent and predictable deployment schedules where possible;⁶⁸

62 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0955 (Sean Cantelon).

63 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0930 (Natalie MacDonald).

64 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1530 (Marie-Claude Gagnon).

65 Ibid., 1540 (Dr. Karen Breeck).

66 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0900 (Natalie MacDonald) and 0920 (Laura Nash).

67 Ibid., 0905 (Laura Nash) and 0940 (Sandra Perron, as an individual).

68 Ibid., 0945 (Laura Nash).



- allowing CAF members with specific childcare needs to switch trades more easily;⁶⁹ and
- changing certain family-related policies that may have negative effects on families, including on single mothers or parents, such as the leave travel assistance policy, and the furniture and effects policy.⁷⁰

To help improve the supports and services offered to members of the CAF, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 9

That the Government of Canada create an external review board to increase accountability within the Department of National Defence Sexual Misconduct Response Centre with regards to providing support to victims of sexual harassment.

Recommendation 10

That the Government of Canada ensure a trauma-informed approach for victims of crime in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Recommendation 11

That the Government of Canada streamline support services for members of the Canadian Armed Forces transitioning to post-service life from active duty by designating one point of accountability and communication to manage the transitioning member's file.

Recommendation 12

That the Government of Canada examine the present mental health supports available to members of the Canadian Armed Forces and ensure that they are meeting the needs of all members.

Recommendation 13

That the Government of Canada continue working to address gender bias in the delivery of veterans' services and programs.

69 *Ibid.*, 0925.

70 *Ibid.*, 0910 (Laura Nash) and 0930 (Natalie MacDonald).

Recommendation 14

That the Government of Canada support families and single parents by providing accessible and affordable child care options to members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Recommendation 15

That the Government of Canada ensure that all members of Canadian Armed Forces receive equal benefits, specifically considering the specific needs of single-parent families as compared to traditional two-parent families.

Recommendation 16

That the Government of Canada make mobility between trades easier for members of the Canadian Armed Forces, including those who are dealing with changing family and/or personal circumstances.

IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF WOMEN

It was only one career length ago, 30 years, that CAF was very legitimately a workplace and culture designed by men, for men and about men.

Dr. Karen Breeck,
FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1545.

As of 1 February 2019, women accounted for 15.7% of the CAF workforce. However, women's representation was much lower in some areas within the CAF, such as in combat arms where they represented 4.8% of the workforce as of February 2019.⁷¹ The CAF has committed to increasing the representation of women in the military by 1% annually to reach 25% representation by 2026.⁷² Representatives from DND stressed the importance for the military workforce to reflect the diversity of the Canadian population: "Diversity is a strength. Women and men think differently. They bring different perspectives. The more diverse your workforce, the better the solutions will be."⁷³ The CAF's recruitment strategy for women "focus[s]es on raising awareness of career opportunities," in particular through engagement, outreach, advertisement, media partnerships (including social media) and

71 Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces, *Women in the Canadian Armed Forces*.

72 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0945 (BGen Virginia Tattersal).

73 *Ibid.*, 1025 (BGen Lise Bourgon).



individual recruiters' efforts.⁷⁴ As well, military colleges are giving priority to female applicants who meet the recruiting standards.⁷⁵

The Committee was told that one of the challenges faced by the CAF in recruiting individuals is that Canadians are not aware of the full extent of the career opportunities offered in the CAF.⁷⁶ Witnesses indicated that the CAF should highlight the many qualities necessary to work in the military (such as soft skills, communication skills, empathy and resilience)⁷⁷ and different career options in the CAF besides working in combat arms to prospective recruits.⁷⁸ It was also suggested that the military consider implementing special measures to address the underrepresentation of women, and other designated groups under the *Employment Equity Act*, as well as following a recruitment, promotion and appointment principle of selecting individuals amongst a wide group of equally qualified candidates.⁷⁹ As well, witnesses suggested that the CAF should analyse their recruitment, training and selection practices to ensure that they are gender-sensitive, as that can allow women to have a better experience in the CAF and help retain more women in the military.⁸⁰ A representative from DND indicated that the CAF had undergone a review of its recruitment practices, including reviewing language used in advertisements.⁸¹

The Committee heard that the culture of abuse, discrimination, and harassment that exists in the military stems partly from women's underrepresentation in its workforce.⁸² As well, fear of experiencing discrimination and harassment based on gender, gender expression and/or sexual orientation can also prevent some women from entering or

74 Ibid., 0945 (BGen Virginia Tattersal).

75 Ibid.

76 Ibid., 1010.

77 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1550 (Grazia Scoppio, Associate Professor, Canadian Defence Academy and Royal Military College of Canada, Department of National Defence, as an individual).

78 Ibid., 1550; FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0930 (Martine Roy); FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0955 (Julie S. Lalonde); and FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0920 (Alan Okros).

79 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0920 (Alan Okros).

80 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1605 (Marie-Claude Gagnon) and 1620 (Dr. Karen Breeck); FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0900 (Paula MacDonald); and FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1010 (Julie S. Lalonde).

81 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 1010 (BGen Virginia Tattersal).

82 FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0905 (Martine Roy).

staying in the military.⁸³ Julie S. Lalonde, who appeared as an individual, told the Committee: “I wouldn't encourage more women to join the CAF at this point. I think that's the wrong goal to have. You have to fix the problem. You can't just add women and stir, which has traditionally been the approach.”⁸⁴ Creating an inclusive and safe working environment, free from harassment and discrimination, could contribute to better recruitment and retention of women in the CAF.⁸⁵

To help improve the recruitment and retention rates of women in the CAF, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 17

That the Government of Canada work to increase the number of women as well as of individuals identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit or as other gender identities and sexual orientations in leadership positions within the Canadian Armed Forces.

83 Ibid., 0930; and FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0850 and 0920 (Kristine St-Pierre).

84 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0955 (Julie S. Lalonde).

85 FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1550 (Grazia Scoppio) and 1720 (Cmdre Rebecca Patterson); FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0915 (Michelle Douglas); and FEWO, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1005 (Laura Nash).

APPENDIX A LIST OF WITNESSES

The following table lists the witnesses who appeared before the Committee at its meetings related to this report. Transcripts of all public meetings related to this report are available on the Committee’s [webpage for this study](#).

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
As an individual Danielle Dewitt	2019/05/07	141
LGBT Purge Fund Michelle Douglas, Chair Martine Roy, President	2019/05/07	141
As an individual Paula MacDonald	2019/05/09	142
As individuals Julie S. Lalonde Natalie MacDonald Laura Nash Sandra Perron, Senior Partner A New Dynamic Enterprise Inc.	2019/05/14	143
As individuals Dr. Karen Breeck, Retired Military Physician Grazia Scoppio, Professor, Dean of Continuing Studies Royal Military College of Canada	2019/05/14	144
Department of National Defence Alain Gauthier, Director General Integrated Conflict and Complaint Management Cmdre Rebecca Patterson, Director General Canadian Armed Forces Strategic Response Team – Sexual Misconduct Denise Preston, Executive Director Sexual Misconduct Response Centre	2019/05/14	144

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
It's Just 700 Marie-Claude Gagnon, Founder	2019/05/14	144
As an individual Alan Okros	2019/05/28	146
Department of National Defence BGen Lise Bourgon, Defence Champion Women, Peace and Security Sean Cantelon, Chief Executive Officer Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services BGen Virginia Tattersal, Deputy Commander Military Personnel Generation Lisa Vandehei, Director of Gender, Diversity and Inclusion	2019/05/28	146
The WPS Group Kristine St-Pierre, Director	2019/05/28	146

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this Report.

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos. 141, 142, 143, 144, 146 and 149](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Vecchio
Chair

Supporting Survivors of Abuse in the Canadian Armed Forces

An Integral Role

It is the belief of the Conservative Party of Canada that the participation of women in the Canadian Armed Forces is of great importance to Canadian society. Women have much to offer. As BGen Virginia Tattersal said during the committee hearing, “Why do women join the military? For the same reasons as men; the chance to serve their country, to have a respected, challenging and rewarding profession with good pay and benefits, and friendships that last a lifetime.”¹

The Conservative Party of Canada believes that women should be respected in their choice to serve Canada, that their autonomy must be valued, and their freedom must be protected.

Over the 100+ years that women have been a part of the Canadian military, they have offered critical and unique contributions that have enhanced the capacity of the Armed Forces. The number of women in uniform who have served Canada has fluctuated over the years, but their presence continually enhances and improves Canada’s military.

As one witness said, “Diversity and inclusiveness is about ensuring that all members feel welcome in our organization. It is imperative for the Canadian Armed Forces to foster a culture based on trust, respect and dignity for everyone.”²

Those who serve in the Canadian Armed Forces make great sacrifices to serve our country and deserve the very best from their government in recognition of their service.

Liberal Failures

When self-proclaimed “feminist” Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was elected in 2015, he made many promises to financially support and improve working conditions for female members of the Canadian Armed Forces. These promises included, but are not limited to:

- Protect[ing] the well-being of Canadian Armed Forces members while in service, including a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment, adequate mental health support services, and high-quality career counselling and support;³

¹ FEWO, *Evidence*, May 28, 2019, 0945, BGen Virginia Tattersal (Deputy Commander, Military Personnel Generation, Department of National Defence)

² FEWO, Submitted Brief, May 17, 2019, Commodore Rebecca Patterson (Director General, Canadian Armed Forces Strategic Response Team – Sexual Misconduct)

³Strategic Priorities, Chapter 5: Security and Opportunity, Real Change: A New Plan for a Strong Middle Class, Liberal Party of Canada, 2015, Page 71

- Ensur[ing] that no veteran has to fight the government for the support and compensation they have earned;⁴
- Achiev[ing] the goal of one in four members [of the Canadian Armed Forces] being women.⁵

The testimony provided by numerous witnesses reveals the Liberal's commitments were nothing more than empty election promises.

The Hon. Harjit Saijan, Minister of National Defence, said in February of 2018:

"Inappropriate sexual behaviour of any kind is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the Canadian Armed Forces. Every person who willingly serves their country deserves to have a professional environment to be able to grow and serve. We have more work to do, and we are going to get it done."⁶

However, the Liberals have failed to address the problems within Operation Honour and have failed to implement the recommendations from both the Marie DesChamps report and the Office of the Auditor General report on sexual misconduct in the Canadian Military. The Statistics Canada report that was released in May 2019 proves the Liberal's failure to implement these recommendations is negatively affecting members of the Canadian Armed Forces.⁷

One specific case that should be highlighted is that of Laura Nash, as Ms. Nash was treated unfairly and forced to choose between her family and her job within the military. When the Prime Minister became aware of Ms. Nash's case, he said:

"It's very simple: The choice Laura had to make is not acceptable. It is not acceptable in Canada. This is a very difficult situation for Laura, but we also know it's one that has to end. It's not the first time, I can only imagine, in the history of the Canadian military [that] this has happened, but I certainly hope it will be one of the very last times."⁸

Natalie MacDonald, Ms. Nash's lawyer, explained to the Committee that:

"I wrote in September 2017 following the segment on *The National* that we had both appeared in, to advise him that I wanted to refresh his memory as to Ms. Nash and what she had done. I asked specifically for his assistance in bringing the matter to a resolution, because we were stuck in limbo with the Canadian Human Rights Commission. We hadn't been able to get anywhere, as Ms. Nash and I have referenced. I needed some help. I needed someone to be able to do something, and I'd hoped that Prime Minister Trudeau would be that person. Unfortunately, we didn't hear back from him or his office."⁹

⁴The Future We Owe Our Veterans, Chapter 4: A Strong Canada, Real Change: A New Plan for a Strong Middle Class, Liberal Party of Canada, 2015, Page 49

⁵Leveraging Canada's Diversity, Chapter 1: Well- Supported, Diverse, Resilient People and Families, Department of National Defence, 2017, Page 23

⁶<https://www.ourcommons.ca/documentviewer/en/42-1/house/sitting-260/hansard>

⁷<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190522/dq190522a-eng.htm>

⁸FEWO *Evidence*, May 14, 2019, 0900, Ms. Natalie MacDonald (as an individual)

⁹FEWO *Evidence*, May 14, 2019, 1000, Ms. Natalie MacDonald (as an individual)

Clearly, as much as the Prime Minister “hope[s] [that what happened] will be one of the very last times”¹⁰, neither he, nor his staff members are willing to do anything concrete to ensure this result.

Additionally, the Liberal Party has affirmed the Chief of Defence Staff’s commitment to increase female representation in the CAF to one in four by 2025, which requires an increase of 1% per year.¹¹ Current statistics, issued by the Government of Canada in March of 2019, indicate the Canadian Armed Force’s representation of women is at 15.7 percent.⁴ Furthermore, there was only a four-percent increase in female enrollment to the Canadian Armed Forces in the four years since Prime Minister Trudeau took office.

A fundamental change is needed within the Canadian Military to ensure the success and safety of its female members. The previous Conservative government was committed to making real change for women within the Department of National Defence, whereas the current Liberal government has done nothing more than make empty promises with no substantive attempts to make changes.

Recommendations

The Conservative members of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women wish to draw special attention to a number of points made by witnesses who presented to the Committee.

Based on testimony provided, the Conservative members offer the following recommendations:

Rebranding

1. That the Government of Canada rebrand and market the Canadian Armed Forces to accurately reflect its modern-day function and practice.¹²

Definition

2. That the Government of Canada ensure the definition of sexual assault used by Canadian Armed Forces is applied uniformly and consistently throughout the organization.¹³

Victim-Centred Approach

3. That the Government of Canada ensure a victim-centred approach to victims of crime in the Canadian Armed Forces.^{14, 15}

Amending the Canadian Human Rights Act

¹⁰ FEWO *Evidence*, May 14, 2019, 0900, Ms. Natalie MacDonald (as an individual)

¹¹ FEWO, *Evidence*, May 28, 2019, 0945, BGen Virginia Tattersal (Deputy Commander, Military Personnel Generation, Department of National Defence)

¹² FEWO, *Evidence*, May 14, 2019, 0955, Ms. Julie S. Lalonde (As an individual)

¹³ FEWO, *Evidence*, May 14, 2019, 0925, Ms. Natalie MacDonald (As an individual)

¹⁴ FEWO, *Evidence*, May 9, 2019, 0930, Ms. Paula MacDonald (As an individual)

¹⁵ FEWO, *Evidence*, May 14, 2019, 0930, Ms. Natalie MacDonald (As an individual)

4. That the Government of Canada ensure the Canadian Armed Forces grievance process has appropriate checks and balances, that grievances filed by members of the Canadian Armed Forces are addressed within a defined timeframe, and that additional measures for accountability are instituted.¹⁶

Funding Allowance

5. That the Government of Canada streamline support services for members of the Canadian Armed Forces transitioning to post-service life from active duty by designating one point of accountability and communication to manage the transitioning member's file.

External Review Board

6. That the Government of Canada create an external review board to increase accountability within the Sexual Misconduct Response Centre with regards to providing support to victims of sexual harassment.

Reporting

7. That the Government of Canada examine ways to mitigate situations where victims of sexual misconduct are reporting their abuse to the perpetrator by creating an alternative reporting mechanism that enables victims of sexual assault or harassment to find recourse outside their chain of command.

Training

8. That the Government of Canada examine ways the Canadian Armed Forces can enhance education and awareness among members on issues of sexual misconduct including the legal consequences of such conduct.

¹⁶ FEWO, *Evidence*, May 14, 2019, 0925, Ms. Natalie MacDonald (As an individual)

SITUATION CRITICAL: Experiences of Women in the Department of National Defence

*A Minority Report submitted by the New Democratic Party of Canada
To the Government of Canada*

FORWARD:

In our opinion, the overly-ambitious schedule adopted by the Liberal majority on this committee at the beginning of the Parliamentary session was designed to create the illusion of Liberals working diligently for Canadians rather than producing a fulsome document with substantive recommendations and real change for Canadians. As a result, this dissenting/supplementary report is being drafted before the committee has received a draft report from the analysts on the Experiences of Women in the Department of National Defence. This lack of consideration in planning ahead does not serve the witnesses who provided testimony in the hopes of contributing to a substantive and meaningful report; nor does it respect the staff, analysts, translators who are required to produce these reports with inadequate time and resources. In the future, we hope that this standing committee take this into consideration when setting future agendas.

Because of inadequate time, the NDP report takes the form of a short summary with proposed recommendations.

It is our sincere hope that the 43rd Parliament and its Committees address this critical issue in a timely and effective manner. Women in the Department of National Defence are waiting, and the hoped-for result can only be an enhanced, more diverse and responsive Department.

Experiences of Women in the Department of National Defence:

It has been four years since 2015, when Supreme Court Justice Marie Deschamps released her report ¹ on military sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) including recommendations for addressing the crisis and calling for broad scale cultural reform within the CAF. In response the CAF launched Operation Honour in 2017 and commissioned a survey under Statistics Canada to examine the issue of MSM.

Unfortunately, there has been little change in the culture of the Canadian Armed Forces to address military sexual misconduct and sexual harassment since then. ²

The Parliamentary Committee for the Status of Women heard from witnesses over the course of five meetings between May 7 and 30 2019, most of whom gave heart wrenching testimony

¹ Government of Canada, [External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces](#); 27 March 2015; Marie Deschamps, External Review Authority

² Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; Sexual misconduct persists in military despite efforts to curb assault, StatsCan reports; [Online News Item](#), 22 May 2019

about the culture of misogyny and abuse prevalent in the CAF to this day. The failure of the CAF to effectively address this issue has resulted in a diminished Department lacking diversity and inclusion.

The New Democratic Party of Canada makes the following list of recommendations, with references to the testimony justifying each:

1) That the Government of Canada direct the Department of National Defence to implement all of the recommendations of the Marie Deschamps report on military sexual harassment as follows:

1. Acknowledge that inappropriate sexual conduct is a serious problem that exists in the CAF and undertake to address it.
2. Establish a strategy to effect cultural change to eliminate the sexualized environment and to better integrate women, including by conducting a gender-based analysis of CAF policies.
3. Create an independent center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment outside of the CAF with the responsibility for receiving reports of inappropriate sexual conduct, as well as prevention, coordination and monitoring of training, victim support, monitoring of accountability, and research, and to act as a central authority for the collection of data.
4. Allow members to report incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault to the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment, or simply to request support services without the obligation to trigger a formal complaint process.
5. With the participation of the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment:
 1. Develop a simple, broad definition of sexual harassment that effectively captures all dimensions of the member's relationship with the CAF.
 2. Develop a definition of adverse personal relationship that specifically addresses relationships between members of different rank, and creates a presumption of an adverse personal relationship where the individuals involved are of different rank, unless the relationship is properly disclosed.
 3. Define sexual assault in the policy as intentional, non-consensual touching of a sexual nature.
 4. Give guidance on the requirement for consent, including by addressing the impact on genuine consent of a number of factors, including intoxication, differences in rank, and the chain of command.
 5. With the participation of the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment, develop a unified policy approach to address inappropriate sexual conduct and include as many aspects as possible of inappropriate sexual conduct in a single policy using plain language.
6. Simplify the harassment process by:

- Directing formal complaints to COs acting as adjudicators in a grievance
 - Reducing emphasis on ADR.
7. Allow victims of sexual assault to request, with the support of the center for accountability sexual assault and harassment, transfer of the complaint to civilian authorities; provide information explaining the reasons when transfer is not effected.
 8. Assign responsibility for providing, coordinating and monitoring victim support to the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment, including the responsibility for advocating on behalf of victims in the complaint and investigation processes.
 9. Assign to the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment, in coordination with other CAF subject matter experts, responsibility for the development of the training curriculum, and the primary responsibility for monitoring training on matters related to inappropriate sexual conduct.³

2) That the Government of Canada direct the Department of National Defence to provide comprehensive training regarding LGBTQ2S+ awareness as mandatory for all members and recruits, and that this training be incorporated into regular roundtable discussions in each department and unit.⁴

3) That the Government of Canada direct the Department of National Defence to provide comprehensive sexual harassment training as mandatory for all members and recruits, with follow ups within six to eight months on the role of peer and bystander support and intervention.^{5 6}

4) That the Government of Canada direct the Department of National Defence to provide legal assistance to cover the costs of a service person filing a sexual harassment complaint.⁷

5) That the Government of Canada direct the Department of National Defence to immediately cease and desist mandatory pregnancy tests prior to being accepted for basic or leadership training.⁸

³ Government of Canada, External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces; 27 March 2015; Marie Deschamps, External Review Authority

⁴ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 7 May 2019, 0945 (Michelle Douglas).

⁵ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0939 (Julie Lalonde).

⁶ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1719 (Rebecca Patterson).

⁷ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 May 2019, 0905 (Rebecca Patterson).

⁸ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0940 (Natalie MacDonald).

6) That the Government of Canada ensure anyone filing a sexual harassment or discrimination case within the Department of National Defence be made aware of their option to go directly to the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) at any time in the process. ⁹

7) That the Silver Cross Mother appointment be extended to all parents and family members regardless of gender, with a name change to Silver Cross Parent or Silver Cross Family. ¹⁰

8) That the Government of Canada ensure the culture of toxic masculinity and patriarchy within the Department of National Defence be addressed immediately with zero tolerance policies, comprehensive training on the issues, and by targeting diversity in recruitment. ¹¹

9) That the Government of Canada direct the Department of National Defence to support its families and single parents with accessible and affordable child care options onsite. ¹²

10) That the Government of Canada ensure the department of National Defence recognize practices that discriminate against single parents (such as the leave travel assistance policy and the furniture and effects policy) and correct them. ¹³

11) That the Government of Canada ensure the Department of National Defence recognize child care needs as a legitimate reason to switch trades within the military. ¹⁴

12) That the Government of Canada direct the Department of National Defence to adopt the same definition and treatment of sexual assault as exist in the Criminal Code of Canada. ¹⁵

13) That the Government of Canada identify the ways in which it can eliminate gender bias in delivery of veterans' services and programs. ¹⁶

⁹ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1655 (Alain Gauthier).

¹⁰ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0950 (Sandra Perron).

¹¹ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0854 (Kristine St-Pierre).

¹² House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1000 (Laura Nash).

¹³ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0930 (Natalie MacDonald).

¹⁴ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0925 (Laura Nash).

¹⁵ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 0929 (Natalie MacDonald).

¹⁶ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1545 (Karen Breeck).

14) That the Government of Canada ensure the Department of National Defence applies GBA+ in the development of all policies, programs and research without exception. ¹⁷

15) That the Government of Canada ensure the Department of National Defence to include peer support and face-to-face consultation as policy under its Sexual Misconduct Response Center (SMRC). ^{18 19}

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the New Democratic Party

¹⁷ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1530 (Marie-Claude Gagnon).

¹⁸ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 14 May 2019, 1534 (Marie-Claude Gagnon).

¹⁹ House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women FEWO, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 28 May 2019, 0925 (Alan Okros).

