



National Defence

Défense nationale

Deputy Minister

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**AUG 27 2019**

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

Dear Mr. Sorenson,

As promised in the Government Response to the Forty-Sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, entitled *Report 6, Royal Military College of Canada – National Defence, of the 2017 Fall Reports of the Auditor General of Canada*, National Defence submits its final response to Recommendation 1, due 31 August 2019.

Sincerely,



Jody Thomas

Enclosures: 1

Canada 

## Response to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, Report 6: Royal Military College of Canada, of the Fall 2017 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada

### **Recommendation 1**

*That, by September 2018, National Defence provide the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a report detailing what progress has been achieved with regard to 1) clearly defining and strengthening military training of Officer Cadets at the Royal Military College of Canada so that it is relevant, practical, and provides value to operational units; and 2) integrating this improved military training with the academic education of Officer Cadets. A final report must also be submitted by 31 August 2019.*

### **Background**

In the Government Response to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts' *Report 6, Royal Military College of Canada*, National Defence committed to providing the Committee with an interim update on Recommendation 1 by 30 September 2018, and a final report by 31 August 2019.

In its Management Action Plan, National Defence committed to reviewing all aspects of Royal Military College (RMC)'s military training program, to ensure that training activities are more relevant and valuable to operational units, better integrated with academic education, and appropriately balanced against the Regular Officer Training Plan (ROTP)'s academic aspects. National Defence committed to consulting with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) leadership as part of these efforts, and to carrying out performance measurement using defence analytics methodologies. It committed to completing these activities by 1 August 2019.

### **Progress on clearly defining and strengthening military training**

In its interim report in September 2018, National Defence presented how it had already fully implemented five of its six measures to define and strengthen military training:

- National Defence aligned the requirements of the Military pillar with the CAF's Leadership Development Framework.
- National Defence improved the calibre of training instructors by putting in place new criteria for selecting RMC's Training Wing staff.
- National Defence enhanced the realism of Naval/Officer Cadets' military training by providing a more hands-on program of military training.

- National Defence improved the value of on-the-job opportunities, starting in summer 2018, by assigning Naval/Officer Cadets summer jobs based on their areas of occupational interest and opportunities for leadership development.
- National Defence increased engagement between RMC and CAF leadership by creating new opportunities for the Canadian Military College commandants to engage with the Chief of the Defence Staff.

National Defence continues to monitor and validate the impact of these measures to ensure they yield the intended impact in the coming years. Since September 2018, National Defence has fully implemented the sixth measure. To strengthen military training, RMC has adopted a new performance assessment framework for the Military pillar, which will be used this coming school year.

RMC is replacing the pre-existing pass/fail system with a university-style letter-grade system, which will make possible more nuanced evaluation of each Naval/Officer Cadet's military strengths and weaknesses. This new grading framework for military training will support the establishment of more tailored individual improvement plans for those cadets who do not meet RMC's standards and the assignment of more stimulating responsibilities to those in good standing.

To support this new performance assessment framework, RMC is gathering more detailed grading information on Naval/Officer Cadets' military training. National Defence is also building on the analytical capability of the performance measurement software to improve analysis of trends in Naval/Officer Cadets' grades across the four pillars of the ROTP, enhancing National Defence's understanding of how well cadets are absorbing military training. National Defence expects to implement the updated software over the next two years.

### **Progress on integrating and balancing military training with academic education**

In its interim report in September 2018, National Defence described its progress on implementing six measures to integrate and balance military training with academic education. Three measures had been fully implemented:

- National Defence improved co-ordination between military and academic programs through weekly meetings attended by staff and faculty of the Military, Academic and Athletic Wings.
- National Defence integrated the ROTP's academic and military dimensions by ensuring courses more systematically demonstrated their practical relevance, and making training more hands-on. National Defence continues to update training and educational course material to better address topics like communication and culture, cybersecurity, leadership, and mental health.

- National Defence balanced academic education and military training by, among other things, dedicating certain periods of the day for specific academic and military activities, and better protecting military training from the impact of extra-curricular academic activities.

Since September 2018, National Defence has made progress on implementing the remaining three measures to integrate and balance military training with academic education. Full implementation of these measures requires co-ordination and alignment between internal and external bodies, which will extend their implementation timeline beyond the 2019-20 school year.

National Defence has reviewed the Regular Officer Training Plan's structure to balance the Military and Academic pillars. The changes it is implementing increase the importance of the Military pillar as a component of the overall RMC degree – as well as the importance of the Athletic and Language pillars – so that all four pillars are equal elements of the ROTP. Full implementation of this measure involves engaging with provincial academic governance bodies, which National Defence will undertake this school year.

National Defence will complete its systematic review of the core curriculum once the CAF releases its updated officer standards, anticipated in the next two years. Using these standards will allow it to assess what changes, if any, should be made to the curriculum to ensure the ROTP continues to reflect the CAF's requirements.

Based on the work of the Canadian Defence Academy's Governance Review Committee, National Defence is in the process of making recommendations to the Minister of National Defence on the adjustment of authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities of key governance bodies and of certain key positions. These adjustments will better align RMC's long-term and day-to-day operations with the CAF's needs – especially as they relate to academic oversight in the evolution of RMC's programs to better serve the CAF. Full implementation of this measure will require amendments to the Queen's Regulations and Orders, a process expected to take several years.

## **Conclusion**

The measures National Defence implemented are defining and strengthening Naval/Officer Cadets' military training at the Royal Military College and better integrate it with their academic education. Important work continues, to ensure RMC's Regular Officer Training Plan produces the quality of cadet the CAF requires. National Defence will monitor the effects of these measures on an ongoing basis, recognising that the quality of Naval/Officer Cadets' training and education is integral to the strength of the CAF officer corps.