

WEBVTT

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<v SPEAKER_1>In this episode of Defence Deconstructed, recorded September 12th, 2025, I'm sitting down with Lieutenant General Erick Simoneau and Chief Warrant Officer François Fleury from the Chief Military Personnel to discuss the recent major announcement made by the Prime Minister regarding new additions to the compensation and benefits of the Canadian Armed Forces.

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<v SPEAKER_1>We talk about being future ready and how to achieve this, the uniqueness of the military workforce, and how the announcements of the 8th of August will support the CAF growing, not just in terms of operational capabilities, but personnel as well.

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<v SPEAKER_1>As our guests discussed, defence investments include platforms and equipment, but also the people component, and as they outline, increasing the CAF's overall strength in terms of the number of personnel can only be done by improving both recruiting and retention initiatives.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Gentlemen, welcome to Defence Deconstructed.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Could I get you to introduce yourselves briefly, General, with you starting?

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<v SPEAKER_2>Absolutely.

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<v SPEAKER_2>My name is Lieutenant General Erick Simoneau.

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<v SPEAKER_2>I'm the Chief of Military Personnel, but also the Commander of the Military Personnel Command.

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<v SPEAKER_2>We can get into that if you wish, as to the difference between those two acts.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And with me is Chief Warrant Officer François Fleury.

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<v SPEAKER_2>He's my Command Team Partner, and he comes from a unique background of having served inside the Treasury Board Secretariat, one

of the three Central Agencies.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And he's been my Command Chief since I took the command in June.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So, François.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Good morning, David.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Happy to be here with you to help explain a little bit more about the comp and bend of the Canadian Forces.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Happy to be here.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Okay.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Well, fantastic.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Thank you both for joining.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Wanted to have this conversation because, as you mentioned, there's been a rollout of a pretty broad and significant initiative to change some of the ways that the Canadian government compensates members of the Armed Forces.

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<v SPEAKER_1>General, I guess maybe just get you to start just at a very high level, and then we'll dig into some of the specifics.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Could you sort of talk about what, broadly speaking, these changes are intended to do?

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<v SPEAKER_2>Certainly.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So I would coin it as it's about to be, it's all about being future ready.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So we as military leaders and being the force of last resort, we need to ensure that we anticipate the worst and prepare for it.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And therefore, all indications, following the news and looking at the global environment, everything points to instability and the highly volatile environment that we need to face in very near future.

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<v SPEAKER_2>It's about being future ready.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And to achieve this, I think there's a wide recognition throughout Canada by Canadians and our government with the announcement of 8th of August that we need to grow the CAF.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And that is not solely in terms of the operational capabilities, in other words, the platforms, the kit, but it's the personnel also.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So we need to grow the CAF in terms of strength, number of military inside the CAF.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And we, to achieve this, there's no other way than around to retain them as well.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Because one of my limiting factor right now is my training system.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So the more I intend to grow the CAF, the more I depend on retaining the ones that we actually onboarded.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Otherwise, I'm gonna saturate my recruiting system.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So we can dive into those specificities later, for sure.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But recruiting without retention will not see us to be future ready.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So we both need to work end-to-end.

00:03:36.200 --> 00:03:40.840

<v SPEAKER_2>And that talks to the suite of initiatives that were announced on 8th of August.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Thank you.

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<v SPEAKER_1>That's excellent.

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<v SPEAKER_1>So before we get into some of those specific changes, regular people basically just get a paycheck and maybe you get overtime and some other benefits.

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<v SPEAKER_1>But the pay structure or the compensation structure, I guess, to be more accurate for members of the Canadian Armed Forces is a lot more complicated than simply just pay and one or two allowances.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Could you just give a bit of a sense of prior to August 8th, so the existing way that members of the forces are compensated?

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<v SPEAKER_1>And I recognize that there's a whole bunch of different unique circumstances.

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<v SPEAKER_1>You could potentially have been moved somewhere.

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<v SPEAKER_1>But just simplistically, how does the compensation of members of the forces look?

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<v SPEAKER_2>So, pay is certainly an element of it, but it's attached in my book to recruiting.

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<v SPEAKER_2>It's to be on par with the industry to make sure that we can recruit in a very highly competitive environment.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But we were lacking retention tools in our toolkit.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And we were compensating our members, for example, when

we were posting them from Valcartier to Edmonton or from Ottawa to Borden.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But we didn't have something to actually lower the barriers or make the barriers more palatable to our members in order to incentivize our members to do what we're asking them to do.

00:05:11.160 --> 00:05:14.580

<v SPEAKER_2>And it's very difficult what we're asking them to do.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So, they were well compensated when we go abroad on missions for hardship and the danger and the risk that they had to endure.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But in a retention perspective, those tools didn't exist.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So, that's what we brought to bear on 8th of August.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Okay.

00:05:31.580 --> 00:05:36.820

<v SPEAKER_1>And then just to get into a few more of the specifics, and maybe if the chief wants to jump in.

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<v SPEAKER_1>So basically, my understanding and just in terms of pay, without touching the allowances, but in terms of pay, members have base pay, there's military factor pay adjustment, military service pay.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Could you maybe just situate for listeners what the different elements of just the pay specifically, how those different pieces fit together in terms of a total pay component for members of the forces?

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<v SPEAKER_2>Of course, we'll go with the chief on this one, is the expert.

00:06:04.360 --> 00:06:14.920

<v SPEAKER_3>So military pay is based of just pay, military factor, that equals to military pay.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So at present, when we brought in the military service pay, that's a completely different component that we didn't have before.

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<v SPEAKER_3>That is a rewarding time in the Canadian Forces and is basically for every year that you've completed in the CAF, you're going to get a lump sum amount, which is what you'll be getting, and that is going to be a pensionable service.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So military factor that we've increased, so I'll get into some of the details, but we've increased the military factor to be actually, we've modernized it, to be able to meet some of the necessary needs that we have in 2025.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we've brought these factors up to lead to members receiving for the privates, privates and S1s of the regular force to get a 20 percent raise, and for all the non-commissioned members, the remainder of them in the regular force and in the reserves, as well as the officers to the rank of left-hand colonel and commander to get to 13 percent, and the general officers in the Canadian Forces to get to 8 percent.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So that's, you know, it's obviously, it's a generational change that we've made, but it's a significant effort that was made on behalf of the government and the Canadian Forces.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Chief, could you just take a minute and talk about what is, why does the military have a military factor on its pay?

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<v SPEAKER_1>Like, what is the rationale?

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<v SPEAKER_1>Basically, my understanding in simple terms is it's trying to provide compensation for a whole bunch of unique characteristics of employment in the Canadian military that don't have other types of comparable analogies other where in the government of Canada or in the private sector.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Absolutely.

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<v SPEAKER_3>First of all, it's unlimited liability service before itself.

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<v SPEAKER_3>We don't get paid for overtime.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So and a whole bunch of other different factors, getting posted, missing your kid's birthdays and those kinds of things, because you're often not around the house and you are moved at times at the very last minute.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So military factors, factors all into this to have it being different than public service pay, let's say.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So those are in the military factors, the way they were calculated were really hadn't been modernized in about maybe 15 to 20 years.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So they were long overdue, except for the Reserve Force.

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<v SPEAKER_3>They hadn't been revised in a very long time.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we basically modernized and brought them into the 21st century, if I can say that.

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<v SPEAKER_2>I would go on it as no one else does what we do as military, and hence the term military factor.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So the chief described very well what it's comprised of.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And it's important to realize that historically we were being kept on par with the public service pay levels.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And there was that little addition to it to factor the military factor.

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<v SPEAKER_2>But as the chief suggested, we just modernized it.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So we increased by a great deal those factors to acknowledge the current global environment and what's to come.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Okay.

00:09:15.320 --> 00:09:27.920
<v SPEAKER_1>And so again, just before we get into the detail about the specific changes, and I don't know which one of you would like to take this, but again, so prior to the 8th of August, there was both pay and a different series of allowances.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Can you just speak in general terms about what allowances members were entitled to before and what conditions of employment they would receive, a few different types of allowances, just to give listeners an idea.

00:09:41.360 --> 00:09:42.820
<v SPEAKER_3>Want me to tackle that, sir?

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<v SPEAKER_2>So, yeah, chief, what I would ask is, we did not replace any allowances.

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<v SPEAKER_2>We topped them up with a suite of seven new initiatives.

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<v SPEAKER_2>One of the seven we've been discussing at length is the pay increase that the chief just described, the 8, 13, and 20%.

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<v SPEAKER_2>The other six initiatives are the ones that are new, and they're the ones that I think we should ask the chief to focus on.

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<v SPEAKER_2>Go ahead, chief.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Okay, so some of the initiatives that we brought in, as the commander just mentioned, there hasn't been significant changes as far as what they are, but how they are administered.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we brought in an instructor's allowance that was long overdue, so we made many improvements to our recruiting system.

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<v SPEAKER_3>But as far as an allowance to be received by, you know, we're trying to recruit our best and we want them trained by our best.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we've brought in a recruiter's allowance for, when I say recruiter, I sort of mentioned instructor's allowance.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Instructor's allowance for the people that are at CFLRS and at schools that we have our members going to the operational functional point to train them to that point, and as well as the staff that are at those schools.

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<v SPEAKER_3>We've modernized our environmental allowance.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Our environmental allowance used to be a monthly, you know, pay no matter what.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Now we've brought it back to a pay as you go, which is what we used to have before, which is \$100 for every day that you're exposed to those adverse conditions that the rest of even the military members aren't exposed to every day.

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<v SPEAKER_3>We brought in a domestic and an Arctic allowance.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And this has been introduced because we have a lot of members that are directly supporting in aid of Canadians through a whole bunch of different conditions that we have throughout the country, whether it's civil aid into the floods or forest fires and that kind of stuff.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we've done that.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And as well as for the people in the Arctic to assist in the sovereignty of the North.

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<v SPEAKER_3>We brought in a posting frequency mitigation measures.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we used to have a posting allowance that was basically a month of pay for a gentleman to move from the East Coast to the West Coast wherever the posting brings you.

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<v SPEAKER_3>But it wasn't exactly equitable or equal because a

corporal would obviously get less than a colonel to move across the country.

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<v SPEAKER_3>Yet basically the amount of money that you need to disperse to be able to do that is the exact same thing because you're buying new curtains and everything else like that.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we've tried to make sure that it was equal and it was fair for everybody in the Canadian Forces.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So now the frequency measures have been brought in by the number of moves and not necessarily by your rank.

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<v SPEAKER_3>We brought in a recruiting allowance that I mentioned as well, especially for some of the difficult trades that we're having a hard time recruiting.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And so the vehicle techs, marine technicians, aerospace controllers, that type of stuff.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we've brought in to be able to incentivize them to come into the Canadian Forces because sometimes some of the challenges we have is recruiting against the market and the market are paying a little bit more.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we brought that in as well as we've improved our IR, so imposed restrictions.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So when we have members that proceed to a, for whatever reason, the family can't accompany them.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So we'll reimburse some of those fees.

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<v SPEAKER_3>And if the moment the, so while they're on IR status, they'll get reimbursed for meals, they'll get reimbursed for travel.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So they can be reunited with their family, depending on the distance, once a month, a couple of times a month, and as well as incidentals as well.

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<v SPEAKER_3>So those are some of the things that we brought in to the Canadian Forces.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Okay, so if I reflect on that, it's basically, it's a combination of some enhancements to existing allowances that were already in place.

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<v SPEAKER_1>So that would be, example, the environmental allowance, which is, if I'm going to dramatically oversimplify, you have an allowance for people to have to go stand in the cold somewhere as part of their job.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Correct.

00:13:44.420 --> 00:14:05.540

<v SPEAKER_1>You had an existing allowance for imposed restriction, which to the extent that I understand this is basically, you are going to be moved in a situation, your family won't accompany you, so you have additional considerations, other than just you and your family has been posted from, say, CFP Petawawa to Gage Town.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Shiloh, okay, there we go.

00:14:10.700 --> 00:14:24.400

<v SPEAKER_1>For the sum of these other ones, and we'll come back in a little bit more detail, there have been previous ways that other parts of the forces were provided other compensation for skill sets or retention issues.

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<v SPEAKER_1>So ones that I'm aware of, there were a number of initiatives oriented around pilots as an example, and there's a different set of initiatives around people that are part of the Special Operations Forces community.

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<v SPEAKER_1>Were those allowances too?

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<v SPEAKER_1>Are these analogous to trying to provide an incentive for people to go into certain types of occupations within the CAF using similar types of measures?

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<v SPEAKER_2>So those Special SP that you are alluding to still exists, and they've not been affected or influenced by the recent announcement.

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<v SPEAKER_2>However, as you suggested also, we needed more tools to recruit in certain occupations that we call the critical occupation, the distressed occupation, those that were having a hard time to fill to the level of 70 percent.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And that caused a great stress inside those occupation when you have pockets of missing ranks and members, and they're mostly in the middle zone because they get tapped out.

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<v SPEAKER_2>A lot of our deployments recently have asked for instructors or specialists or HQ people, and they all have in common that they are the middle ranks of the NCM, non-commissioned members, as well as the officers.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So we burn through them at a faster rate, and we lose them.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So we even have a term for this inside the forces.

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<v SPEAKER_2>We call it the missing middle.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So that's what we needed to address.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And it also coincides at the end of the initial contract that we have with them, so they don't renew and they get out.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So although we treat at a reasonable rate, which is around 8 percent, once you are on-boarded, which is very comparable to our lives in the corporate sector, we do have retention issues at a certain rank and on certain occupations that we needed to address.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So one of the measures that the chief briefed was what we call the CORA, Critical Occupation Recruiting Allowance.

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<v SPEAKER_2>This is \$50,000 in three steps to on-board someone in

those specific occupations.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So that is directly tied to recruiting and retention up to a point.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And then the other incentives kick in.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So it's really important to realize that before we used to ask those middle rank, especially in the NCM, to move out of Pitawawa in Montaigne or Valcartier, for example, for the Army, and to go instruct in Saint-Jean and Borden.

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<v SPEAKER_2>To do so, they would be leaving their field duty allowance to go instruct.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And instruction is really important, because that's the first phase that the recruits will see from the Canadian Armed Forces, are those men and women that are our instructors.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So you want the best there, and you want them to be motivated not losing their field pay to go there.

00:17:15.560 --> 00:17:19.920

<v SPEAKER_2>So the instructor allowance has that in mind, is trying to make sure that they are not losing out.

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<v SPEAKER_2>We want to incentivize people to go to those schools to raise their hand and to go instruct the new recruits.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So they all work hand in hand.

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<v SPEAKER_2>The field duty allowance, C-duty allowance, if you accumulate it with a named operation, an uplantus, for example, go fight forest fire or an ice storm or floods.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So they accumulate.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So you get your field allowance plus your domestic allowance.

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<v SPEAKER_2>And that's how they work together.

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<v SPEAKER_2>So now we're really incentivizing people to actually conduct and be a good CAF member and deliver on the very important mission we asked them, because you would hear the CAF, the Canadian Armed Forces, the Chief Warrant Officer, Chief Manakhan and the CDS, Jenny Carignan.

00:18:11.180 --> 00:18:16.320

<v SPEAKER_2>And they always, they often talk about the sacrifice that their members are making.

00:18:16.320 --> 00:18:20.180

<v SPEAKER_2>We were talking about it, but we were not really doing something about it.

00:18:20.180 --> 00:18:25.100

<v SPEAKER_2>And now we are with that suite of benefits in order to retain those people.

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<v SPEAKER_2>We acknowledge we ask a lot of them, but to be future ready, we cannot afford to lose them.

00:18:31.880 --> 00:18:34.700

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay, so those are really helpful overview.

00:18:34.720 --> 00:18:45.000

<v SPEAKER_1>So basically a combination of incentives, and in some cases, removing disincentives financially for people to go from some activities to other activities like instructor's position.

00:18:45.060 --> 00:18:57.620

<v SPEAKER_1>A friend of mine walked me through, you could look at a sergeant posted in Edmonton and to go to become an instructor, they'd be losing a certain quantifiable amount of money because of the loss of those different allowances.

00:18:57.680 --> 00:19:14.460

<v SPEAKER_1>So you're trying to both provide incentives to go into things that you're trying to provide more priority and privilege because of the need for growth in the ranks, as well as to not make people lose money simply by going and taking that job versus the one they were doing before.

00:19:14.460 --> 00:19:18.620

<v SPEAKER_2>That's exactly the intent of the instructor allowance.

00:19:18.620 --> 00:19:27.640

<v SPEAKER_2>And I would also say that as the front end of the Canadian Armed Forces, the entry point is the recruit schools.

00:19:27.640 --> 00:19:34.220

<v SPEAKER_2>We're now focusing a lot of our time and effort and the allowances, the project that we're bringing to bear, to that window there.

00:19:34.220 --> 00:19:48.620

<v SPEAKER_2>But eventually we'll need to, and we have some of that already with the Domestic Operation Allowance and the likes, but we'll need to follow the pipeline, if you would, the spectrum of how we onboard people.

00:19:48.620 --> 00:19:56.380

<v SPEAKER_2>Because if we are to grow, we need to make sure that every window where we think and where we know we're losing people, we'll need to address in the future.

00:19:56.380 --> 00:20:07.120

<v SPEAKER_2>So this was the first salvo, if you would, of allowances that we needed in order to make sure we were onboarding people and being able to train them and launch them on operation.

00:20:07.120 --> 00:20:16.540

<v SPEAKER_2>So that was the first suite of initiatives that we thought we needed right now in order to set the conditions for the future.

00:20:19.040 --> 00:20:25.000

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00:20:25.000 --> 00:20:30.020

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00:20:36.560 --> 00:20:50.060

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay, I just want to drill into one more specific thing and then I'll get you to move to a couple of other issues, but the domestic operational allowance, there was previously an allowance for expeditionary operations, right?

00:20:50.060 --> 00:20:50.620

<v SPEAKER_2>That's correct.

00:20:51.040 --> 00:21:29.740

<v SPEAKER_1>Is this trying to basically provide a similar or maybe not similar, but provide an additional recognition that increasingly the CAF is engaging in domestic operations and you had a structure prior to these changes where you had people that would be away from home for three months and if they cross the Atlantic Ocean, they were eligible for certain types of allowances, whereas maybe they didn't go for three months before on a domestic operation, but if they were away for several weeks from home and they didn't happen across the ocean and they stayed within Canada, they'd still be away from home but they wouldn't be compensated basically for the fact that they were deployed and not at home anymore.

00:21:29.740 --> 00:21:44.580

<v SPEAKER_2>That was the case before and that's what we were we solved with the new domestic operation to include the Arctic because on the Arctic I would tell you that for having gone to the Arctic this is an abroad operation to go there.

00:21:46.640 --> 00:22:25.540

<v SPEAKER_2>It is home, it is domestic, but it's an expeditionary operation to get to the Arctic and to sustain operation in the Arctic but that's true as well for more conventional domestic operation across the provinces because fighting an operation is an operation is an operation so fighting a forest fire or floods or an ice storm or helping Canadians in need, you're deployed away from your family, you are doing 24-7 work, you are working really hard, so just the same as our troops deployed the expeditionary abroad.

00:22:25.540 --> 00:22:35.020

<v SPEAKER_2>That said, some, and that's true abroad as well, some operation have higher risk, like the Ukraine for example, so therefore they get additional benefits.

00:22:35.020 --> 00:22:47.840

<v SPEAKER_2>But I think, and the government agreed, that domestic operation also brings its load of hardship and risk, and therefore we're now compensating for this.

00:22:47.840 --> 00:22:49.860

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay.

00:22:49.860 --> 00:23:01.380

<v SPEAKER_1>If I could, I'm going to come back to the military service pay issue, which I confused as being a prior form of compensation that existed before the 8th of August, and you corrected me on that.

00:23:01.380 --> 00:23:24.100

<v SPEAKER_1>But could you just talk a little bit about, so that is an additional, as I understand this, you're adding additional funds that

would provide a benefit or reward for certain length of years of service, and essentially providing an additional incentive for people to stay longer, which impacts not just their pay, but would also impact their pension upon retirement?

00:23:25.560 --> 00:23:31.080

<v SPEAKER_2>So we need to incentivize deployability, employability, commitment.

00:23:31.080 --> 00:23:32.500

<v SPEAKER_2>Commitment is one of it.

00:23:32.500 --> 00:23:38.060

<v SPEAKER_2>So Chief, if you would talk to this specific allowance in detail.

00:23:38.060 --> 00:23:45.800

<v SPEAKER_2>But the goal of it is to ensure that we're not losing people at certain windows, and it's when that's the difference between attrition and retention.

00:23:45.800 --> 00:23:51.540

<v SPEAKER_2>So we're not retaining the experience at certain window because they have no incentive to stay there.

00:23:52.780 --> 00:23:58.560

<v SPEAKER_2>We're operating in an environment where people are on high demand, right?

00:23:58.780 --> 00:24:03.680

<v SPEAKER_2>So we need to be on par with our suite of tools in order to address this.

00:24:03.680 --> 00:24:07.740

<v SPEAKER_2>But Chief, go ahead with the retention and the military service pay, please.

00:24:07.740 --> 00:24:08.960

<v SPEAKER_3>Yeah, thank you, sir.

00:24:08.960 --> 00:24:20.500

<v SPEAKER_3>Actually, the initiatives that we've brought in the last few years have mostly been gauged towards the people that are joining the Canadian Forces, which is totally right because we did have a bit of a recruiting crisis, and we needed to get that up.

00:24:21.180 --> 00:24:28.940

<v SPEAKER_3>But at the same time, as the boss previously mentioned, we need to work on that missing middle and the people that are getting out once they reach.

00:24:29.180 --> 00:24:35.160

<v SPEAKER_3>We've trained them, but we need them for the long run and to stay in and to be contributing many of the Canadian Forces.

00:24:35.160 --> 00:24:44.940

<v SPEAKER_3>So we brought in this allowance, and it's going to be based on years of service as a lump sum and encouraging and valuing the number of years you have in the Canadian Forces.

00:24:44.940 --> 00:24:49.040

<v SPEAKER_3>So to start off, the allowance doesn't go from zero to five years.

00:24:49.180 --> 00:25:01.660

<v SPEAKER_3>There's nothing, and five to ten years after that, the amount increases every five years to get to past 21 years, and then you get that for the remaining of your service as a lump sum on your anniversary of your enrollment.

00:25:01.660 --> 00:25:14.560

<v SPEAKER_3>So I think it's a great initiative to value the members that are seeing all these initiatives coming in for the new folks, while there's a little something for the people that are continuing the service and perpetuating the good service in the Canadian Forces.

00:25:16.080 --> 00:25:23.240

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay, and so if I guess I see a common theme across several of these different incentives.

00:25:23.240 --> 00:25:26.380

<v SPEAKER_1>I guess you asked you to talk a little bit about the posting frequency allowance.

00:25:26.380 --> 00:25:32.820

<v SPEAKER_1>Is that aimed at, it would seem to me that the longer you've served, the greater the likelihood it increases that the more times you've moved.

00:25:32.820 --> 00:25:47.660

<v SPEAKER_1>Is that tried to both compensate frequency as well as recognizing that you kind of have a, if you've moved twice is one thing, but by the time you've moved 22 times, it's a different level of imposition on both members and their families?

00:25:47.660 --> 00:25:55.200

<v SPEAKER_3>So many of these senior and even the junior people get to move every, get to move is a big word, but are moving every two to three years.

00:25:55.200 --> 00:26:08.720

<v SPEAKER_3>And I mean, if you're moving from places, different places, and not as one thing, but to go to, from Shiloh to Gage down, Gage down for the entire family to move, we needed to compensate for that, you know, for that, those changes to be made.

00:26:08.720 --> 00:26:21.880

<v SPEAKER_3>And if we want corporals and master corporals to be, eventually be filling my seat, and officers to be filling the boss' seat, we need to, you know, we needed to incentivize those, those, the movement of people in the Canadian Forces.

00:26:21.880 --> 00:26:27.480

<v SPEAKER_3>And sometimes you get ingrained into the place you're posted in, which is totally normal, and your family get used to it.

00:26:27.480 --> 00:26:38.880

<v SPEAKER_3>But for you to be able to gather some more experience at different levels, and to be, you know, a more of a contributor up the chain of command, we're incentivizing that, that behavior.

00:26:39.020 --> 00:26:49.760

<v SPEAKER_3>So if people are moving more often, the more often you move, the more money you get to compensate for the fact that it's not always easy picking up an entire family and moving to a different province.

00:26:49.760 --> 00:27:01.460

<v SPEAKER_2>And I would add that before the announcement of this new measure, we used to compensate movement by allowing a month of pay.

00:27:01.460 --> 00:27:03.860

<v SPEAKER_2>So that's what the compensation was.

00:27:04.220 --> 00:27:13.900

<v SPEAKER_2>The assumption was that the higher in rank you are, therefore, you would have moved more times, therefore, you earn more money.

00:27:13.900 --> 00:27:16.480

<v SPEAKER_2>You should have more money because to be compensated.

00:27:16.480 --> 00:27:18.900

<v SPEAKER_2>But a move is a move.

00:27:18.900 --> 00:27:26.280

<v SPEAKER_2>So if some corporals and some chief foreign officers, they move maybe more times than I would have moved in my whole career.

00:27:26.280 --> 00:27:35.320

<v SPEAKER_2>So it ought not to have been attached to a month of pay, but more to the frequency of those moves, which we just rectified with the announcement.

00:27:35.880 --> 00:27:39.860

<v SPEAKER_3>So independently of your rank, you get the exact same amount, which didn't use to be the case.

00:27:39.860 --> 00:27:41.520

<v SPEAKER_3>So it truly is fair now.

00:27:41.520 --> 00:27:48.800

<v SPEAKER_3>So if a corporal is moving and General Simoneau is moving, they are getting the exact same amount if they have the same amount of moves to the next location.

00:27:48.800 --> 00:27:51.520

<v SPEAKER_2>It's about being equitable to everyone.

00:27:51.520 --> 00:27:52.820

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay.

00:27:52.820 --> 00:28:00.360

<v SPEAKER_1>With a couple of these, the way that you're characterizing the thinking behind this, is it safe to say or how would you characterize it?

00:28:01.260 --> 00:28:09.560

<v SPEAKER_1>What are you trying to create in terms of an employment model or intent for the Canadian Armed Forces?

00:28:09.560 --> 00:28:18.160

<v SPEAKER_1>A lot of these seem to be oriented towards wanting to bring people in and keep them for a long and quotes period of time.

00:28:18.160 --> 00:28:34.580

<v SPEAKER_1>Are you aiming at trying to get, I don't know, something like 50 percent of your force serving for 20 years, or is there a specific objective that you're trying to create in terms of what the composition in terms of average time of service would look like as a whole?

00:28:34.580 --> 00:28:39.560

<v SPEAKER_2>There's no real, we have what we call in very technical term the rank to rank ratio.

00:28:39.560 --> 00:28:46.840

<v SPEAKER_2>We want to build a pyramid to have one CDS at the top with enough of underneath to, it needs to look like a pyramid.

00:28:46.840 --> 00:28:57.840

<v SPEAKER_2>We do annual analysis of every of the 108 occupation to that effect to make sure that we monitor the health of every of those 108 occupation.

00:28:58.000 --> 00:28:59.920

<v SPEAKER_2>So, it needs to look like a pyramid.

00:28:59.920 --> 00:29:13.560

<v SPEAKER_2>We didn't set a set window, but writ large, as you look at the population, we were at reading at the 10 year point where we're seeing people that would not renew for up to 25 years of service, for example.

00:29:13.980 --> 00:29:18.260

<v SPEAKER_2>And we wanted to retain those because those are the middle of our ranks.

00:29:18.260 --> 00:29:21.500

<v SPEAKER_2>No one else does what we do, as I mentioned earlier.

00:29:21.500 --> 00:29:25.880

<v SPEAKER_2>I would say that we need to grow people from below and then we grow them up.

00:29:25.980 --> 00:29:33.800

<v SPEAKER_2>I cannot go to Global Affairs and ask for a Level 1 EX1 executive and bring them on board as one of my DG.

00:29:33.800 --> 00:29:39.120

<v SPEAKER_2>We could in certain HQ settings, but not to deploy abroad and to do uniform work, for example.

00:29:39.120 --> 00:29:42.540

<v SPEAKER_2>So we have to grow our personnel from below.

00:29:43.340 --> 00:29:54.120

<v SPEAKER_2>So therefore, we need to retain them because if we lose them, it's overeating the recruiting system as well as the training, the basic training system.

00:29:54.540 --> 00:29:57.680

<v SPEAKER_2>And it's very expensive to train someone.

00:29:57.680 --> 00:30:01.440

<v SPEAKER_2>Just thinking of pilots, for example, it takes a lot to train a pilot.

00:30:01.440 --> 00:30:02.820

<v SPEAKER_2>So you want to retain them.

00:30:02.820 --> 00:30:09.500

<v SPEAKER_2>So that's why we adjusted their pay, not in this endeavor, but they got the percentage, but it was done separately.

00:30:09.500 --> 00:30:15.900

<v SPEAKER_2>Because we are operating in a highly competitive environment and we need not to lose our people.

00:30:15.900 --> 00:30:25.360

<v SPEAKER_2>So the whole suite of seven initiatives, they have in common recruiting and retention, and working in tandem in order to be future ready.

00:30:26.840 --> 00:30:31.340

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay, so that was a great sort of shaping on the overall force.

00:30:31.340 --> 00:30:36.120

<v SPEAKER_1>If I could, I was just going to come back to the specific recruitment allowances.

00:30:36.120 --> 00:30:44.960

<v SPEAKER_1>And maybe I'll just use as an example, marine technicians, which has, I think for something like 20 years been, I don't know, is it a stress trade, de-stress trade?

00:30:44.960 --> 00:30:46.380

<v SPEAKER_1>Maybe it depends on the time.

00:30:46.900 --> 00:30:52.180

<v SPEAKER_1>But that has been a chronic point of concern for a very long period of time.

00:30:52.180 --> 00:30:53.180

<v SPEAKER_1>Could you just kind of walk through it?

00:30:53.920 --> 00:30:59.820

<v SPEAKER_1>You've got incentives to try and get people in into those trades, to then qualify and then to stay.

00:30:59.820 --> 00:31:05.440

<v SPEAKER_1>Just kind of walk through what that might look like for somebody that wants to join the Navy as a marine technician now.

00:31:05.440 --> 00:31:06.900

<v SPEAKER_2>The Chief will address this one.

00:31:06.900 --> 00:31:11.120

<v SPEAKER_2>I would say that it's a critical stress and de-stress

trade.

00:31:11.120 --> 00:31:15.460

<v SPEAKER_2>So everybody in the forces have their eyes on that particular trade.

00:31:15.500 --> 00:31:16.800

<v SPEAKER_2>But go ahead, Chief.

00:31:16.800 --> 00:31:21.140

<v SPEAKER_3>So yeah, we need a maritech every time a ship goes at sea, as you know.

00:31:22.020 --> 00:31:33.520

<v SPEAKER_3>So the way that the allowance works is basically when members are going to have completed basic training, let's say maritech joins tomorrow morning, he finishes basic training, he's going to get \$10,000.

00:31:33.520 --> 00:31:40.840

<v SPEAKER_3>Once he's qualified in his trade, so once he's done the qualification in Halifax, he's going to get \$20,000.

00:31:40.840 --> 00:31:42.480

<v SPEAKER_3>So that's up to 30.

00:31:42.480 --> 00:31:50.740

<v SPEAKER_3>And then once he finishes his first period of service and he signs into the next period of service, that's going to be an additional \$20,000.

00:31:50.740 --> 00:32:07.160

<v SPEAKER_3>So right off the bat, after a couple of years, a couple of few years, he's going to get \$50,000 as the commander already mentioned to get him on the road and as well as the qualifications and serving into a trade that we deeply, deeply require in the Canadian Forces.

00:32:07.160 --> 00:32:12.160

<v SPEAKER_3>And we certainly, it is at the top, as you mentioned, David, of the crisis trades that we have in the CAF.

00:32:12.940 --> 00:32:20.180

<v SPEAKER_2>And on boarding, those new members also benefit from the 20% because they're entry rank in the S1 level.

00:32:20.180 --> 00:32:29.460

<v SPEAKER_2>So therefore, it's really important to realize that in the industry, maritime, every ship that sail, civilian or military, needs a MARTEC on board.

00:32:29.460 --> 00:32:33.460

<v SPEAKER_2>So that's as we dive into the specific occupation.

00:32:33.460 --> 00:32:38.060

<v SPEAKER_2>And so our frigates when sail out without a MARTEC on board.

00:32:38.060 --> 00:32:38.860

<v SPEAKER_2>So it's really important.

00:32:38.980 --> 00:32:46.360

<v SPEAKER_2>So in the industry, they were paid 106,000 entry level annually every year.

00:32:46.360 --> 00:32:54.400

<v SPEAKER_2>And ours were paid \$4,300 and asked to go in the Strait of Taiwan to on operation.

00:32:54.940 --> 00:33:07.600

<v SPEAKER_2>So now with the pay increase, we're bringing them on bar with an additional incentive to actually come to the Canadian Armed Forces and sign and stick for a while in order to build back the experience that we're bleeding.

00:33:09.660 --> 00:33:14.800

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay, so that was thanks very much for walking through this suite of changes.

00:33:14.800 --> 00:33:17.720

<v SPEAKER_1>I get just as a couple of additional questions.

00:33:17.880 --> 00:33:26.840

<v SPEAKER_1>How would you connect these initiatives announced on the 8th of August with some of the wider changes that are happening with both recruiting and retention?

00:33:26.840 --> 00:33:30.040

<v SPEAKER_1>You touched on that a little bit, but just a bigger picture.

00:33:30.040 --> 00:33:34.520

<v SPEAKER_1>We're coming through a period where there's been a significant shortage that's been widely reported.

00:33:35.080 --> 00:33:45.180

<v SPEAKER_1>Some of that is being, it seems it's on a better trajectory with hitting the Strategic Intake Plan for the first time in a little while, which is positive.

00:33:45.180 --> 00:33:59.800

<v SPEAKER_1>But there's a need to grow the forest both to get to the existing authorized strength, that's now several years old, that it was set, as well as presumably with the new environment the government's in, path to 2% and beyond.

00:34:00.960 --> 00:34:08.880

<v SPEAKER_1>I presume that the strength set in 2017, when that was not at all the resource level, isn't going to be the one that carries forward indefinitely into the future.

00:34:08.880 --> 00:34:21.880

<v SPEAKER_1>So I guess, how does the, how does these compensation benefit changes, how does that fit into that wider picture of what you're trying to do with recruiting retention and the personnel element of the CAF holistically moving forward?

00:34:21.880 --> 00:34:24.200

<v SPEAKER_2>There's lots to unpack in there.

00:34:24.200 --> 00:34:25.580

<v SPEAKER_2>I'll try to be brief.

00:34:25.580 --> 00:34:36.260

<v SPEAKER_2>The Strong Security Engage that you alluded to authorize the Canadian Armed Forces to reach 101, 500, both reserve and regular force.

00:34:36.260 --> 00:34:40.500

<v SPEAKER_2>On the Reg Force side, it's 71.5 thousand.

00:34:40.500 --> 00:34:48.840

<v SPEAKER_2>But there's wide recognition that in the 5 percent GDP context, that we'll need more capabilities, therefore more people.

00:34:48.840 --> 00:34:54.840

<v SPEAKER_2>And there's always that fixed people tax that we need to apply as we grow an institution.

00:34:54.840 --> 00:34:58.780

<v SPEAKER_2>And we're factoring this, we're planning as we speak on what the number will be.

00:34:58.780 --> 00:35:07.300

<v SPEAKER_2>I'm working closely with CFD, our chief force development, in order to really understand what the aim point will be.

00:35:07.300 --> 00:35:12.400

<v SPEAKER_2>But it'll be in the, on the Reg Force, it'll be in the 100,000 somewhere.

00:35:12.400 --> 00:35:17.940

<v SPEAKER_2>So more to follow on this, we can do another podcast at some point once we have greater clarity.

00:35:17.940 --> 00:35:22.540

<v SPEAKER_2>But you're right, we did achieve our strategic intake plan last year.

00:35:22.540 --> 00:35:24.540

<v SPEAKER_2>We even surpassed it by a couple of hundreds.

00:35:25.520 --> 00:35:39.480

<v SPEAKER_2>So we on-boarded 6,706, to be precise, new CAF member from the streets, which was great success on scene before the past, the prior 15 years.

00:35:39.480 --> 00:35:42.500

<v SPEAKER_2>However, we achieved a number.

00:35:42.500 --> 00:35:59.640

<v SPEAKER_2>We did not meet our SIP, our strategic intake plan, because the strategic intake plan, in a very technical term, is the accumulation of what every of the 108 occupation needs for the year, how many they need to on-board, and we rolled that number up to what we call the SIP.

00:35:59.640 --> 00:36:21.840

<v SPEAKER_2>So we did achieve a number, but we on-boarded more people in certain occupation where we didn't need that exact amount of number in order to allow us the time to rectify, to course correct, to improve our internal processes, to seek money for the distressed occupation, such as MARTECH that we discussed before.

00:36:21.840 --> 00:36:31.080

<v SPEAKER_2>Because we didn't meet our number from MARTECH specifically, we on-boarded probably too many logistic officers because it's a very popular trade occupation that people want to join in.

00:36:31.080 --> 00:36:34.060

<v SPEAKER_2>So, and the chief is laughing because he's one of them.

00:36:34.060 --> 00:36:37.200

<v SPEAKER_2>He comes from that, so that background.

00:36:37.200 --> 00:36:40.120

<v SPEAKER_2>So, but we cannot do this year after year.

00:36:40.120 --> 00:36:57.240

<v SPEAKER_2>So this year, we're applying a lot of effort and the CORA, the Critical Occupation Recruiting Allowance, and all the marketing we're doing towards those distress occupation in order to incentivize people joining the forces and those occupation as a matter of priority.

00:36:57.240 --> 00:37:09.960

<v SPEAKER_2>In terms of the future that you were alluding to, I would describe that we need not only to fight attrition, which is about 8% every year, as I mentioned earlier, but we need to grow.

00:37:09.960 --> 00:37:13.300

<v SPEAKER_2>So therefore, we need to beat attrition and then some more.

00:37:13.840 --> 00:37:17.580

<v SPEAKER_2>So, the limiting factor is my training system.

00:37:17.580 --> 00:37:24.200

<v SPEAKER_2>It's currently 7,300 and I'm tracking this at my level because it's so important to me.

00:37:24.200 --> 00:37:26.420

<v SPEAKER_2>So, I know those stats.

00:37:26.420 --> 00:37:29.580

<v SPEAKER_2>So, I need to grow this, but it's going to take time.

00:37:29.580 --> 00:37:35.920

<v SPEAKER_2>So, therefore, to allow me and regardless the time I need, I need to retain people.

00:37:35.920 --> 00:37:51.880

<v SPEAKER_2>Because if we train people and we lose them in the first five years, I'm going to, like, it's going to turn, the training system won't follow the requirement, won't deliver.

00:37:51.880 --> 00:38:00.120

<v SPEAKER_2>So, I need to keep people to always grow beyond the 8% attrition in order to grow the CAF towards the next number.

00:38:01.480 --> 00:38:03.000

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay.

00:38:03.000 --> 00:38:14.900

<v SPEAKER_1>Thanks both for joining today to walk through these changes and the overall direction of what you're trying to do with the CAF's personnel writ large.

00:38:16.920 --> 00:38:27.080

<v SPEAKER_1>I guess maybe I'd come back, you mentioned a little bit about the difference between your command and chief, so the differentiation between your two different hats.

00:38:27.080 --> 00:38:32.160

<v SPEAKER_1>You want to maybe just take a minute to talk about that and how that factors into some of this journey?

00:38:32.160 --> 00:38:33.900

<v SPEAKER_2>Certainly.

00:38:33.900 --> 00:38:55.100

<v SPEAKER_2>My Chief of Military Personnel, CMP, has to do with all the policy development around military personnel, career management, to include recourses, as well as other types of support, such as the Spectrum of Care Committee that I operate with the Surgeon General.

00:38:55.100 --> 00:38:57.320

<v SPEAKER_2>It's the Compemen that we're discussing.

00:38:57.480 --> 00:39:01.680

<v SPEAKER_2>They're all the policies around how we manage our personnel.

00:39:01.680 --> 00:39:05.960

<v SPEAKER_2>The Military Personnel Command includes that, but it's more.

00:39:06.720 --> 00:39:16.500

<v SPEAKER_2>It goes from recruiting to transitioning people out with all the in-between, which is the training, the education, the support of our personnel.

00:39:16.500 --> 00:39:22.460

<v SPEAKER_2>So we have medical clinics throughout Canada, as you would know.

00:39:22.460 --> 00:39:28.120

<v SPEAKER_2>And so they belong to me with that hat, with the Commander of Military Personnel Command.

00:39:28.120 --> 00:39:33.660

<v SPEAKER_2>All the transition groups across Canada, all the recruiting centers across Canada, this is not a CMP hat.

00:39:33.660 --> 00:39:36.780

<v SPEAKER_2>It is a true commander of military personnel.

00:39:36.780 --> 00:39:40.260

<v SPEAKER_2>So we are a command, just like the Army, Navy, Air Force

are a command.

00:39:41.300 --> 00:39:48.900

<v SPEAKER_2>And I get the CMP authorities to exercise, which are very consequential, as we discussed this morning.

00:39:49.000 --> 00:40:01.040

<v SPEAKER_2>We can do lots of things with the CMP hat, but it is the full spectrum that I come at the table with when I go in governance with the CDS and the Deputy Minister.

00:40:01.080 --> 00:40:17.080

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay, and I guess just to think about that simplistically, you've got in one hand both the ability to design some of the incentives and create some of the policy instruments, as well as the execution to then go see how those things line up in practice.

00:40:17.080 --> 00:40:21.460

<v SPEAKER_2>To do the force, I would call it the personnel generation.

00:40:21.620 --> 00:40:32.240

<v SPEAKER_2>I would not go into force generation, aside from the health services that we do force generation, because then the Army and Navy Commander, they do real force generation and readiness.

00:40:32.520 --> 00:40:33.260

<v SPEAKER_1>That was a bad term.

00:40:33.260 --> 00:40:36.360

<v SPEAKER_1>I meant both design and delivery, if that's a better term.

00:40:36.360 --> 00:40:36.840

<v SPEAKER_2>That's fair.

00:40:36.840 --> 00:40:37.380

<v SPEAKER_2>That's fair.

00:40:37.380 --> 00:40:39.080

<v SPEAKER_2>It's exactly it.

00:40:40.220 --> 00:40:50.320

<v SPEAKER_1>Well, we'll be looking forward to having you back on at some point down the road to see how that delivery is going, based on some of the design that were very helpful in helping walk through.

00:40:50.320 --> 00:40:52.960

<v SPEAKER_1>Thank you both for joining us today on Defence Deconstructed.

00:40:53.180 --> 00:40:56.720

<v SPEAKER_1>The last question I'd ask both of you, General, I'll start with you.

00:40:56.720 --> 00:40:58.280

<v SPEAKER_1>What are you reading?

00:40:58.280 --> 00:41:03.320

<v SPEAKER_2>So what I just finished reading is Think, Fast And Slow from Daniel Kahneman.

00:41:03.320 --> 00:41:05.540

<v SPEAKER_2>I think it was a really great book.

00:41:05.540 --> 00:41:06.200

<v SPEAKER_2>Long overdue.

00:41:06.200 --> 00:41:07.740

<v SPEAKER_2>I should have read that ten years ago.

00:41:07.740 --> 00:41:15.900

<v SPEAKER_2>It's not that of a recent book, but it's really interesting with the complexity of our world to not trust your guts feel.

00:41:15.900 --> 00:41:25.440

<v SPEAKER_2>And it talks to where the Canadian Armed Forces have gone in the last five years to being more inclusive force to nurture diversity of thoughts.

00:41:25.440 --> 00:41:26.340

<v SPEAKER_2>It's so important.

00:41:26.340 --> 00:41:32.020

<v SPEAKER_2>That book I should have read like at least five years ago, because our instincts are often wrong.

00:41:32.020 --> 00:41:48.020

<v SPEAKER_2>It's when you surround yourself with diversity of thoughts and you look into the solution space, you realize that if you would trust your instincts upfront, it will guide you and point you in the right direction, but you may not have the perfect solution that you would get with inclusion.

00:41:48.720 --> 00:41:55.360

<v SPEAKER_2>My next book that I'm eyeing right now is The AI Driven Leaders.

00:41:55.360 --> 00:42:00.640

<v SPEAKER_2>I think how to be 10 times faster and more effective as a leader.

00:42:00.640 --> 00:42:04.580

<v SPEAKER_2>I think it's something that I ought to read, so that's my next one.

00:42:04.580 --> 00:42:05.200

<v SPEAKER_1>Okay.

00:42:05.200 --> 00:42:07.140

<v SPEAKER_1>Chief, how about you?

00:42:07.140 --> 00:42:14.960

<v SPEAKER_3>Actually, I just came back from Saint-Germain a couple of, actually, yesterday and two days ago, I started Conquering Crisis.

00:42:14.960 --> 00:42:18.400

<v SPEAKER_3>It's the most recent Admiral McRaven book.

00:42:18.400 --> 00:42:23.180

<v SPEAKER_3>It's kind of Lessons Before You Need Them, and it's his most recent book.

00:42:23.520 --> 00:42:31.480

<v SPEAKER_3>It's a small book, easy to read, and sometimes some good thoughts to be able to, especially as we're implementing the changes that we are right now.

00:42:31.480 --> 00:42:41.000

<v SPEAKER_3>It's just a little bedside reading that keeps my military mind as sharp as I can, and to follow in the footsteps of the general there, which is a full-time job.

00:42:42.040 --> 00:42:45.320

<v SPEAKER_1>General, Chief, thanks both for joining us today on Defence Deconstructed.

00:42:45.440 --> 00:42:46.580

<v SPEAKER_2>Our pleasure.

00:42:46.580 --> 00:42:47.980

<v SPEAKER_1>Thank you.

00:42:47.980 --> 00:42:50.180

<v SPEAKER_1>Thanks for listening to Defence Deconstructed.

00:42:50.180 --> 00:42:55.660

<v SPEAKER_1>For more of our work, go to cgai.ca or follow us on LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook.

00:42:55.660 --> 00:43:02.240

<v SPEAKER_1>If you like what we do and want to keep us going, think of donating to us at cgai.ca slash support.

00:43:02.240 --> 00:43:04.240

<v SPEAKER_1>Defence Deconstructed is brought to you by our team in Ottawa.

00:43:04.900 --> 00:43:08.500

<v SPEAKER_1>Music credits go to Drew Phillips, and this episode was produced by Jordyn Carroll.