

Minister  
of National Defence



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de la Défense nationale

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K2

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Mr. John E. Melbourne  
National Vice President  
Air Force Association of Canada  
PO Box 2460, Station D  
Ottawa ON K1P 5W6

Dear Mr. Melbourne:

Thank you for your letter of 31 May 2006 and the position papers entitled "Airlift for the Canadian Forces" and "Towards an Effective Supplementary Reserve."

An examination of Canadian Forces air mobility requirements was recently conducted. It provided a foundation for studying a range of options to satisfy future airlift requirements, both domestic and international, for the Department of National Defence (DND). This study addressed areas such as strategic, tactical, and utility airlift, fixed-wing search and rescue, and the potential replacement options for our ageing Canadian Forces aircraft fleets such as the CC-130 Hercules. Many of the points presented in the airlift position paper you provided are similarly addressed in our examination of Canadian Forces air mobility requirements. Let me assure you that airlift capability remains a top priority for DND. Recently announced initiatives demonstrate that the Department is committed to acquiring the right mix of strategic and tactical transport capabilities to meet the Canadian Forces requirements for domestic, global, and in-theatre airlift.

With regard to the Supplementary Reserve, as you are aware the Supplementary Reserve was restructured in 2003 to make it more operationally focussed. In keeping with this operational focus, members must have valid operational training, meet age and minimum fitness and medical standards, and be available for service when attached, seconded or transferred on consent to the Regular Force or Primary Reserve. The 2003 restructure shifted the Supplementary Reserve role from that of a mobilization force to one of providing individuals for augmenting, voluntarily, the Regular Force and the other Reserve Force sub-components—the Primary Reserve, the Cadet Instructor Cadre, and the Canadian Rangers.

Recent transformation activities emphasizing the Canadian Forces operational focus have confirmed the wisdom of the 2003 Supplementary Reserve restructure. To ensure the availability of fit Canadian Forces members to support operations, members of the Regular Force and Primary Reserve must meet the universality-of-service principle. This principle holds that all Canadian Forces members are liable to perform general military duties as well as common defence and security duties, not just the duties of their military occupation or occupational specifications, and that all Canadian Forces members must be physically fit, employable, and deployable for general operational duties. Supplementary Reserve members employed in support of the Regular Force and Primary Reserve must meet similar standards.

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The restructure of Supplementary Reserve administration is an ongoing process involving many issues, some of which you have identified. The Canadian Forces requires a good situational awareness on availability—thus the recent Supplementary Reserve reduction from 57,000 members to less than 30,000 to which you referred was important in giving the Supplementary Reserve a more operational focus. The Canadian Forces now retains those members who have maintained contact with the Supplementary Reserve staff by keeping their mailing addresses up to date (done through the e-mail address, a toll-free telephone number, or mailing address provided in all correspondence). It is essential that the Supplementary Reserve members remain militarily current and that only those who are serious about availability and willingness to serve are retained.

With respect to employment, Supplementary Reserve members are currently being informed of the opportunities available since the creation of new operational commands. There are plans to issue an annual letter and to create an Internet employment opportunity site. These initiatives would allow Supplementary Reserve members to access various employment opportunities throughout Canada. In addition, the Supplementary Reserve responds to queries from potential employers to assist in finding possible applicants.

I agree that the Supplementary Reserve is well-placed to provide a pool of talented and experienced members and to meet Canadian Forces requirements. Indeed, the Canadian Forces has taken steps to reduce the Supplementary Reserve membership to those having occupational currency. Consequently, the Supplementary Reserve has become a real augmentation force and a part of the Canadian Forces transformation.

Should you wish to contact the Supplementary Reserve personnel, you can contact Director Personnel Generation Policy 5-5 as follows:

Director Personnel Generation Policy 5-5  
National Defence Headquarters  
Major-General George R. Pearkes Building  
101 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa ON K1C 0K2

Telephone: 1-800-558-3566

E-mail: [SuppRes@forces.gc.ca](mailto:SuppRes@forces.gc.ca)<mailto:SuppRes@forces.gc.ca>

I trust this information is of assistance and thank you again for writing. I appreciate the efforts of the Aviation Affairs Committee of the Air Force Association of Canada in drafting the position papers on airlift requirements for the Canadian Forces and on the Reserves.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Gordon J. O'Connor, PC, MP