

LORD STRATHCONA'S HORSE (ROYAL CANADIANS)



A SQN - OP ATHENA ROTO 9
FAMILY HANDBOOK

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IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>PHONE NUMBER</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>
POLICE	911	
FIRE	911	
AMBULANCE	911	
Deployment Support Group (DSG)	1-888-711-5533 www.army.gc.ca/lfwadsg/	DSC SO –CFB Edmonton
MFRC CFB Edmonton	(780) 973-4011 Ext 6300	MFRC Receptionist
Base Duty Officer CFB Edmonton	(780) 288-9348	Base Duty Officer
Base Duty Centre CFB Edmonton	(780) 973-4011 Ext 4666	Base Duty WO
Mission Information Line	1-800-866-4546 http://www.cfpsa.com	Automated System
Public Affairs Officer-CFB Edmonton	(780) 973-4011 Ext 4149	Public Affairs Officer
Area Social Worker CFB Edmonton	(780) 973-4011 Ext 5332	After hours thru the BDO who will contact duty chaplain
Military Chaplain CFB Edmonton	(780) 973-4011 Ext 4999	After hours contact the Base Operator for emergency contact
Reserve Unit Contact		
KOCR Adjutant	(403) 863-3165	
BCR Adjutant	(604) 666-4050	
LdSH (RC) Duty Centre	780-973-4011 Ext 3018	
LdSH (RC) Family Support Troop		
Front Desk	(780) 973-4011 Ext 3106	
Tp Sgt	(780) 973-4011 Ext 3040	
Emergency Pager	(780) 471-0647	After hours contact.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON THE DEPLOYING MEMBER

Service Number:		Rank:	
Name:		Troop:	
SIN:		Squadron:	A Sqn
Unit:	1 RCR BG (TF 1-10)	Camp:	Mas'um Ghar
Home Unit:	LdSH(RC)		

DEPLOYED MEMBER'S MAILING ADDRESS:

Service Number
Rank, Name, Initials
Op ATHENA ROTO 9
TF 1-10, 1 RCR BG
LdSH(RC), A Sqn, Deployed
PO Box 5058 Stn Forces
Belleville, ON
K8N 5W6

(Return address is required and must include full name and phone number)

CHAPTER 1

COMPASSIONATE COMMUNICATIONS TO AND FROM THE THEATRE OF OPERATIONS

SITUATIONS THAT ORIGINATE WITH THE MEMBER'S FAMILY/FRIENDS IN CANADA:

1. If an emergency situation occurs that involves a family member or friend in Canada and there is a requirement to contact a service member who is deployed, the family or friends should call or visit the Deployment Support Group and explain the situation.
2. The Deployment Support Group will then immediately contact the deployed unit via the Chain of Command and brief the unit/member on the situation or arrange for him/her to call home.
3. When calling with a concern, it is important that the information found at the front of the book labelled "**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON THE DEPLOYING MEMBER**", as well as the action you wish to be taken, is readily available.
4. Any action taken by the Deployment Support Group will be noted and passed to the individual who raised the concern. This will include:
 - a. who was contacted and when;
 - b. when the deployed service member was informed;
 - c. what action was taken; and
 - d. any dates and times that are significant.
5. This process is confidential in nature and only those personnel directly involved will be kept informed of the situation as it is resolved.

SITUATIONS THAT ORIGINATE WITH THE SERVICE MEMBER DEPLOYED:

6. In the event that an incident occurs which involves a deployed Canadian soldier, the Unit will contact the Next Of Kin (NOK) as quickly as possible and with as much information as is known at that time.
7. No information will be released to anyone for any reason until after the NOK is informed. For this reason, **if you are going to be away from the address provided on the soldier's NOK form for more than 24 hours, it is vital that you let the Unit know your temporary address and telephone number.**
8. Once the NOK has been informed of the incident, a summary of events will then be made available through the Deployment Support Group, the Unit, the Mission Information Line and the respective unit orderly rooms for general dissemination to any interested parties.

CHAPTER 2

DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT GROUP

1. There are a number of agencies that work with the Deployment Support Group to help provide advice and support to the families of deployed members. Experience has shown us that the most important aspect of this job is to provide information, advice and whatever assistance it can to the spouses, families and friends of the members of that unit who are away for extended periods of time. A brief description of these agencies follows.

2. *Family and Friends.* First and foremost is the family and friends of the deployed member. Experience and common sense has shown us that the best support group is your own family and close friends who are there for you when you need help, a sympathetic ear or a break from the added responsibilities of single-handed parenthood.

3. *Spousal Committees.* Spousal Committees are made up of spouses of deployed members who volunteer their time and effort to organise events and activities for the families and friends of the deployed unit. These committees are autonomous, meaning that the Deployment Support Group does not tell them how to conduct their business, rather the committee acts as an advisor to the Deployment Support Group who supports the activities and events of the committee by providing facilities, amenities and other support. Experience has shown that the success of the Spousal Committee depends entirely upon the efforts of its membership. If you are not living in the CFB Edmonton area we encourage you to consider forming your own local committees.

4. *Military Family Resource Centres (MFRC).* MFRCs are non-profit organizations, which exists to create and promote conditions that enhance and support the values, strengths and personal resources of the military family by providing information, services, programs and activities specific to the military community. During deployments, local MFRCs will assist the efforts of the Deployment Support Group and Spousal Committees. Details on the services and programs offered by the CFB Edmonton MFRC are contained in Chapter 4. Other MFRCs across Canada offer similar services and programs.

5. *Parent Units.* The Unit will normally form its own small Rear Party to provide you with a point of contact in the local area. We encourage you to stay in touch with the Rear Party.

6. *Deployment Support Group.* The mission of the Deployment Support Group is to provide an enhanced standardized bilingual level of support for Canadian Forces Defence Team families going through deployments or long periods of absence.

7. *Unit of Record Support (URS).* When a service member is deployed overseas, a URS is designated in Canada that will hold all of the military records of that member for the duration of the tour. The URS is responsible to make sure that the member's administration is up-to-date and correct. The typical functions provided by a URS during a tour include ensuring that the member's pay is correct, that arrangements for and reimbursement of leave are done and that information on the member's family address and/or Next of Kin address are correct and current.

8. *Wives Club.* The Strathcona Ladies hold a monthly social evening participating in a variety of events such as BBQs, wine tasting, game nights and more. The club gets together two

times a year, Canada Day and Christmas, to send packages to our loved ones who are currently deployed on operations. It is also a good opportunity to talk with other spouses who have lived through another spouse's deployment. The CO's secretary Mrs. Kathy Batty is the organizer. If you would like more information please contact her at kathy.batty@telus.net and she will be more than happy to answer any questions that you may have.

CHAPTER 3

FAMILY MATTERS

GENERAL

1. The extended absence of a father, mother, spouse or other person occasionally causes some oversights that can trigger minor or major administrative or personal problems. In order to help you plan the next few months and avoid unpleasant surprises, it is recommended that the family review this chapter prior to deployment.

MONEY MATTERS

2. *Pay Allotments.* All members who will participate in a deployment should have already taken steps to set up predetermined pay to their normal bank account in Canada. This will be deposited to the account on the 15th and end of each month.

3. *Access to Civilian Bank Accounts.* If the service member wishes for his/her spouse or family member to have access to his/her civilian bank account(s) during the deployment, it is essential that the service member complete a Power of Attorney prior to departing Canada. Banks will insist upon seeing the Power of Attorney before allowing anyone else to access that account. Some banks insist that their own formats be used – please check with your own bank. Arranging to issue a Power of Attorney once the member has deployed is extremely difficult. A Power of Attorney is not required for a spouse or family member to access any joint bank account(s) that they hold in both names.

4. *Access to Military Pay Accounts.* For a spouse or family member to be able to access the service member's military pay account in Canada it is necessary that the member complete a Power of Attorney prior to deployment. Details on how to complete a Power of Attorney are explained further on in this Chapter. Please understand that, like civilian banks, without the service member's Power of Attorney authorizing access, military pay clerks cannot provide information or make changes to a service member's pay account. Members need to let the clerk overseas know that the person with Power of Attorney will be going to Ops URS to get money. The clerk will then email Ops URS stating that the member's family member (i.e. Wife, Mother, etc.) will show up on a certain date and can only take out a specified amount of money. The reason that this is done is to ensure the financial safety and security of the members. **THE PERSON WITH THE POWER OF ATTORNEY STILL NEEDS TO BRING THE PAPER TO THE OPS URS.**

5. *Special Pay and Allowances.* During deployments, all members will receive extra pay and allowances as described below. The actual dollar value of each depends on the mission, and will be given to the member before deploying.

a. *Operations Foreign Service Premium (OPS FSP).* OPS FSP is paid as an incentive to serve outside Canada and recognizes previous service outside Canada. OPS FSP is a non-taxable benefit that becomes effective the day you leave. OPS FSP continues to be paid during periods of paid leave. You receive one point for every month you served outside Canada while posted or attached posted.

OPERATIONS FOREIGN SERVICE PREMIUM (in Canadian dollars)		PRIME DE SERVICE À L'ÉTRANGER – OPÉRATIONS (en devises canadiennes)		
LEVEL / NIVEAU	POINTS	1 PERSON/ 1 PERSONNE	2 PERSONS/ 2 PERSONNES	3 PERSONS OR MORE/ 3 PERSONNES OU PLUS
1A	0 to/à 6	701	878	1026
1B	7 to/à 12	760	958	1125
1C	13 to/à 18	818	1040	1224
1D	19 to/à 24	878	1121	1323
2A	25 to/à 30	937	1202	1422
2B	31 to/à 36	976	1256	1489
2C	37 to/à 42	1015	1310	1555
2D	43 to/à 48	1054	1364	1621
2E	49 to/à 54	1093	1418	1687
2F	55 to/à 60	1132	1472	1753
3A	61 to/à 66	1172	1525	1819
3B	67 to/à 72	1187	1544	1846
3C	73 to/à 78	1203	1562	1873
3D	79 to/à 84	1219	1582	1900
3E	85 to/à 90	1235	1600	1926
3F	91 to/à 96	1250	1618	1952
4A	97 to/à 102	1266	1637	1979
4B	103 to/à 108	1282	1662	2006
4C	109 to/à 114	1297	1686	2033
4D	115 to/à 120	1313	1711	2059
4E	121 to/à 126	1328	1736	2086
4F	127 to/à 132	1344	1761	2113
5A	133 to/à 138	1360	1785	2140
5B	139 to/à 144	1375	1807	2166
5C	145 to/à 150	1391	1828	2192
5D	151 to/à 156	1407	1850	2218
5E	157 to/à 162	1423	1872	2244
5F	163 to/à 168	1438	1894	2270
6A	169 or more/ou plus	1454	1916	2297

(Rates effective 1 Apr 2008 – 31 Mar 2009) (Taux en vigueur du 1^{er} avr 2008 au 31 mars 2009)

b. *Hardship Allowance (HA)*. The intent of the HA is to compensate for the living conditions existing at a specific post. There are seven levels of HA, from zero (no difference from a typical base standard) to six (very austere). The Chief of the Defence Staff approves the HA level for the post upon recommendation by the Departmental Hardship and Risk Committee. Once established, the HA Level is reviewed on a semi-annual basis or as required for each operation.

HARDSHIP ALLOWANCE							
Level	0	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Percentage	0	10	20	30	40	50	60

INDEMNITÉ DE DIFFICULTÉ							
Niveau	0	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Pourcentage	0	10	20	30	40	50	60

c. *Hardship Allowance Bonus*. The intent of the Hardship Allowance Bonus (HA Bonus) is to compensate a member for repeated deployments. The HA Bonus level to which a member is entitled is based on points accumulated for service on operations as follows:

HARDSHIP ALLOWANCE BONUS			
POINTS	Percentage	POINTS	Percentage
0 to 6	0	91 to 96	160
7 to 12	20	97 to 102	170
13 to 18	30	103 to 108	180
19 to 24	40	109 to 114	190
25 to 30	50	115 to 120	200
31 to 36	60	121 to 126	210
37 to 42	70	127 to 132	220
43 to 48	80	133 to 138	230
49 to 54	90	139 to 144	240
55 to 60	100	145 to 150	250
61 to 66	110	151 to 156	260
67 to 72	120	157 to 162	270
73 to 78	130	163 to 168	280
79 to 84	140	169 or more	290
85 to 90	150		

BONI D'INDEMNITÉ DE DIFFICULTÉ			
POINTS	Pourcentage	POINTS	Pourcentage
0 à 6	0	91 à 96	160
7 à 12	20	97 à 102	170
13 à 18	30	103 à 108	180
19 à 24	40	109 à 114	190
25 à 30	50	115 à 120	200
31 à 36	60	121 à 126	210
37 à 42	70	127 à 132	220
43 à 48	80	133 à 138	230
49 à 54	90	139 à 144	240
55 à 60	100	145 à 150	250
61 à 66	110	151 à 156	260
67 à 72	120	157 à 162	270
73 à 78	130	163 à 168	280
79 à 84	140	169 ou plus	290
85 à 90	150		

d. *Risk Allowance*. The intent of the Risk Allowance (RA) is to compensate for the risks associated with a specific post. There are five levels of RA, from zero to four. The Chief of the Defence Staff approves the RA level upon recommendation by the Departmental Hardship and Risk Committee. Once established, the RA level is reviewed on a semi-annual basis or as required for each operation.

RISK ALLOWANCE					
Level	0	I	II	III	IV
Percentage	0	10	20	30	40

INDEMNITÉ DE RISQUE					
Niveau	0	I	II	III	IV
Pourcentage	0	10	20	30	40

6. The Hardship Allowance Bonus is only granted to service members who are deployed within designated Areas of Operation. Service members deployed elsewhere in support of the operation are not entitled to this premium.

7. These allowances are non-taxable and are credited to the member's military pay account that is administered by the Military Pay Sections in theatre. It should be noted that these allowances might not be included in any pay assignment set up at the member's bank account in Canada. Individual members in theatre can make withdrawals from their pay account whenever they wish, and whatever balance has accumulated in this account is credited back to the soldier's regular pay account in Canada once the soldier has returned.

from the tour. Members can assign monies back to bank accounts monthly after in theatre and after earned.

LEGAL MATTERS

8. *Common Law Relationships*. If you are in a common-law relationship with a military member who will be serving overseas it is to your advantage to ensure that your partner has submitted a Statutory Declaration to his/her unit orderly room prior to departure. The extra benefits and allowances paid to a member or the common-law spouse of that member cannot be made without this declaration.

9. *Power of Attorney*. The Power of Attorney form is a legal document, which gives a person (usually the spouse) permission to conduct business or Personal affairs on behalf of a second Person (usually the soldier). It is generally used in situations where the signature of the second person is required to legalize a transaction (such as: depositing or withdrawing money from the second person's bank account; renewing a vehicle license or registration; or even something as major as buying or selling houses).

10. The Power of Attorney document can either list specific responsibilities (such as "home insurance", "car registration", etc), or give a general authority (such as "all financial matters"). It is for the two Parties concerned to determine the wording of the document. The Power of Attorney document does not have to be completed with the assistance of a lawyer, but it is recommended.

11. If you have Power of Attorney and you are completing a transaction where you are signing for the soldier, you must have the original document with you to prove that you have been given legal permission to conduct the transaction. A photocopy of the Power of Attorney document will most likely be taken, to be attached to whatever paperwork is being done, but you **MUST** ensure that you get the ORIGINAL back because you'll need that document for the next transaction.

12. Power of Attorney is a powerful document and therefore the key word is **trust**. The Deputy Judge Advocates (DJA) at major Canadian Forces Bases can provide free advice and assistance to service members preparing a straightforward Power of Attorney.

Notes:

(1) Some banks require a separate Power of Attorney (or other documentation) to permit one person to conduct financial transactions on behalf of a second person. **CHECK THIS OUT!**

(2) Some Provinces and Territories do not recognize a Power of Attorney prepared outside of their jurisdiction. Any member having property or other assets outside of the Province or Territory where they reside or where the Power of Attorney is being prepared should consult their civilian lawyer.

(3) A Power of Attorney **is not** a Will. All Powers of Attorney that a person may have are automatically cancelled at the instance that the person dies.

13. *Biological Testament*. This document is similar to a Power of Attorney except that it deals only with medical issues in the event that you are unable or incapable of making a

decision for yourself. You should consult a civilian lawyer if you wish to have a Biological Testament prepared.

14. *Delegation of Guardianship.* This document allows the person(s) you designate to exercise temporary legal guardianship over your children or dependants. **Both** parents must sign the document. The nearest DJA can provide free advice and assistance to help you to prepare this document. It is important for the guardian to know information such as Medicare numbers, family doctor contact information, allergy information, etc. A true example of where this document was essential is described below:

A couple decided to take advantage of the Leave Travel Allowance program and meet in Europe for a holiday. Their children were dropped off with the Grandparents. Halfway through the holiday, the couple received a frantic call from the Grandparents saying that one of the children had taken ill and was in the hospital. The illness, although serious, was not immediately life threatening. The hospital refused to treat the child until a legal guardian had authorized it. The Grandparents were not legal guardians of the child because the parents had not delegated temporary guardianship while they were both away in Europe. The parents' holiday was cut short, and they incurred large expenses, when the spouse of the service member had to immediately fly back to Canada in order to authorize treatment. Happily, their child recovered fully.

15. *Authorization for Children to Travel Abroad.* Certain countries have very strict anti-child abduction laws and require that a parent entering their country present a document signed by **both** parents saying that the children are authorized to travel with only one. This document is required in addition to Passports and Visas. The nearest DJA can provide free advice and assistance to help you to prepare this document. A true example of where this document was essential is described below:

A spouse of a service member deployed overseas had booked a package holiday to Disney World in Florida with her children. The US Customs at the Canadian airport refused her entry into the United States of America because she did not have an Authorization for Children to Travel Abroad. The spouse had a valid Canadian Passport and her children were on it. The authorization was eventually obtained by fax from the service member overseas. The family lost two days of their vacation and had to pay for new outward-bound airline tickets.

16. *Wills.* Everyone should have an up-to-date will. The Canadian Forces Will may be adequate for the young, single soldier; but for one who has a family or an estate, which includes property and/or investments, this simple document may not be what you require. In these latter cases we strongly advise that you have a lawyer assist in the preparation of your will. A spouse should also have a will, in the event that he or she dies before or at the same time as the soldier.

17. In a will, mention should be made of the appointment of a trustee or executor of the estate, and a guardian to care for the children should both parents die at the same time. If these questions are not dealt with (or if one or both parents does not have an adequate

will), there could be lengthy delays in settling the probate of the estate and/or the children could become wards of the Province until custody issues are resolved. Additional costs incurred in settling these issues could be taken from your estate, thereby reducing what is left to help care for the children.

18. Copies of a soldier's civilian will should be held on his personnel file at the unit, in order to assist in a speedy settlement should a tragedy occur.

INSURANCE MATTERS

19. *Provincial Health Care Coverage.* The provincial health card is the key that the family of a service member needs in order to obtain health care in the province where they reside. If your family members do not have health care cards please contact the Provincial Government where you live and obtain them before you depart for theatre.

20. *The Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP).* PSHCP (formerly GSMIP) provides additional medical coverage for a family, and is related to items and services **not** covered by the Provincial Health Plans. If you are not familiar with the PSHCP, an information booklet may be obtained through the soldier's parent unit, the nearest Canadian Forces Base, or by contacting the Deployment Support Group. You should be aware that PSHCP requires that you pay for the initial service or item that you receive, and you are reimbursed through the use of a claim. **You will require a PSHCP card and, unless you have Power of Attorney (a copy of which MUST be attached to each claim), the SOLDIER himself must personally sign the claim.** The cheque coming back will also be made out in the soldier's name (which, once again, shouldn't be a problem - **IF** the spouse has Power of Attorney!). You are reminded that an **original** receipt **must** be sent in for each item on the claim.

21. If the soldier and spouse decide against using a Power of Attorney, there is one other option. The soldier can write a letter to PSHCP, which authorizes them to make the cheque (for the one claim only) payable to the spouse. An **original** letter (example page 41), signed by the soldier, must be sent with each claim; so it is recommended that the soldier write out several of these before leaving, if this option is to be used.

22. *Completing A PSHCP Claim.* Claims may be submitted at any time during a calendar year. Claims must be received no later than six months after the end of the year in which the expenses occurred. The Administrator has no obligation to recognize claims received beyond the six months, however claims may be submitted for a longer period of time if the Administrator is satisfied **that the delay was unavoidable;**

- a. Separate your eligible drug expense receipts from those for other eligible expenses (supplies and/or services);
- b. Sort your receipts for drug expenses by family member;
- c. List each drug in PART A - DRUG EXPENSES;

(1) If all drug receipts for one family member are listed together, the DATE OF BIRTH need only be entered once for each family member; and

(2) For any prescription drug claim, it is preferred that you indicate the DIN (Drug Identification Number) on the claim form.

d. If your claim includes expenses for eligible services and/or supplies, which are not drugs, list them in PART B - NON-DRUG EXPENSES;

e. Complete PART C - MEMBER'S STATEMENT;

f. Please print your name and address carefully; and

g. Ensure that your CERTIFICATE NUMBER is shown correctly;

h. Re-check your form to ensure it is properly filled out:

i. Please ensure that the DATE OF BIRTH is shown for each family member. This is required to identify all family members and, if it is NOT shown, the claim could be returned to you to establish the relationship of the patient to your spouse;

j. Do not write in any shaded area of the claim; and

k. Your receipts must show the dates and details of the services rendered or purchases made.

l. Mail the claim together with the original receipts for each item claimed to the address shown on the back of the claim.

m. Should you require further assistance in completing these claims contact the soldier's unit or the nearest Canadian Forces Base.

23. *Dependent's Dental Care Plan.* Dependants of Regular Force personnel and Reservists on Class "C" service are automatically covered, provided that the Marriage Certificate or Common-Law Declaration, and the Birth Certificates of the children have been registered and placed on the soldier's personnel file. This is a very comprehensive plan, and it is to your benefit to become familiar with what is claimable and what is non-claimable dental work. To do this, a Dental Care Plan Guide Book is available from the soldier's parent unit or the nearest Canadian Forces Base.

24. When a member of your family has dental work, a claim is submitted to your dentist **when the work is done**. At the time of the appointment, fill in the appropriate areas of the claim (ensure you have both soldier's Social Insurance **and** Service numbers), and pay the portion of the fee not covered by the plan (this will be detailed by the dentist). If you don't pick up a claim **before** work is done, you have to pay the total bill and submit a claim to the insurance company (**ensure you go back to the dentist to have him complete PART 1**).

25. Unless you have your Power of Attorney (and attach a copy of that to the claim), the claim **must** be signed by the soldier.

26. Payment from the insurance company will be made by cheque **to the soldier**, unless the claim is accompanied by a letter (example at page 43) that authorizes payment to the spouse. As with the PSHCP an original letter must accompany each claim, so it is recommended that the soldier write several of these before leaving.

27. *Completing A Dental Care Plan Claim.* If you, or any other family member, are going to be having major dental work completed, it is in your best interest to have your dentist give you an outline of the work to be done and an estimate of the total cost. Send this in to the claims office with a note asking them to advise what they will cover. Different types of work are covered at different levels; knowing what your exact coverage will be can help you budget the payment.

28. A claim must be submitted within 15 months of the date on which the expense is incurred. Claims submitted after the 15-month period will be processed only under extraordinary circumstances, and will NOT be processed more than two years after the date of the work being done.

29. To complete the claim be sure to remember the following:

a. Have the dentist complete PART 1 - DENTIST. There is also a place in Part 1 that you sign: SIGNATURE OF PATIENT (PARENT/GUARDIAN);

b. You must complete PART 2 - MEMBER'S STATEMENT. Answer all the questions and be sure to include your spouse's Social Insurance Number, that is also part of the Plan Certificate Number; and

c. You can sign the Member's Signature portion; make sure you include the date. Note: Subject to agreement by the dentist, arrangements CAN be made for the soldier to submit the completed claim to the insurance company and, when the Service Member receives the cheque, you will then be required to pay the difference.

30. *The Canadian Forces Superannuation Act and The Pension Act.* The CF Superannuation Act and The Pension Act both provide benefits to the Regular Force or Reserve members on Class C service or to their beneficiaries if a service member is disabled or killed while in service. Further details of the specific benefits paid out under different circumstances can be obtained from your unit orderly room or your local SISIP representative. This information should be reviewed prior to your departure to theatre.

31. *The Canadian Forces Group Insurance Plan (SISIP).* SISIP offers disability, survivor income, optional group term insurance, dependant life insurance and coverage after release to both Regular Force and Reserve members. It is suggested that members review their insurance coverage prior to deploying. Further information and advice on SISIP can be obtained from your local SISIP representative.

HOUSE MATTERS

32. The scheduled departure for operations could occur at any time, therefore a great deal of work may need to be done around the family home. Many problems for the family at home can be easily avoided by putting arrangements into place prior to your departure.

33. *Snow Removal and Grass Cutting.* It is suggested that families consider arranging snow removal and/or lawn maintenance contracts during the tour if it is reasonable to assume that your family will not be in a position to do this work. The Deployment Support Group

provides lists of people/businesses who are willing to provide these services at reasonable cost.

34. *Homeowner Maintenance.* It is suggested that the family make arrangements for both routine and emergency maintenance of your home heating, plumbing and electrical systems during the winter months. The Deployment Support Group provides a list of people/businesses willing to provide these services.

35. *PMQ Maintenance.* For the residents of PMQs, there is both routine and a 24-hour/day emergency service provided by every Canadian Forces Housing Agency at each Base. Members must have persons appointed to look after their PMQ and name given to Housing.

36. *Home Insurance and Municipal Taxes.* All families, be they homeowners or PMQ residents are strongly advised to have home insurance. Prior to departure, make sure to renew the insurance, if applicable and to arrange to pay any municipal taxes that will become due during your deployment.

CAR MATTERS

37. Personal vehicles are often the cause of worry. It is crucial that those who drive but have limited mechanical skills obtain as much information as possible on this subject.

38. *Maintenance.* It is best to find a reliable garage or service centre that you trust and stick with them. It is important to comply to the terms of your car warranty, if it is still applicable. The owner's manual is the ideal source of information. You should familiarize yourself with the following routine maintenance checks on your car:

- a. How to check and top up fluid levels under the hood such as engine oil, transmission oil, power steering fluid, engine coolant, brake fluid, battery acid, washer fluid, etc;
- b. How to tell if the brakes are worn/require maintenance (squeaking noises, uneven braking, brake fading, etc);
- c. How to check and adjust tire pressure.

39. *Emergency Roadside Assistance.* Consider joining a club that will provide you with 24 hour-a-day roadside assistance, like the Canadian Automobile Association. The cost is not excessive and it provides you with a number of services (boosting your car, towing, unlocking doors if you accidentally lock your keys in the car, etc) at either no extra charge or at nominal cost.

40. *Insurance.* The date for insurance renewal may occur during your deployment. Make sure to discuss with your spouse the procedure for renewing the insurance.

41. *Driver's License and Plates.* If your driver's licence or plates will expire during your deployment you should consider either renewing them prior to your departure or leaving a specific power of attorney with your spouse or relative for this purpose.

SECURITY MATTERS

42. Simply by being "home alone", or travelling by yourself, you are very much a potential victim. The first principle of crime prevention is to try and avoid situations, which make you an easy target. While this is not an easy thing to do, here are some common-sense tips, which might help you avoid becoming a victim.

43. Residential:

a. House:

(1) If you go away on a trip, leave a key with a friend or neighbour so the mail can be picked up and the contents checked on a regular basis; and

(2) Make arrangements for someone to mow the lawn or shovel the snow.

b. Apartment:

(1) Never buzz anyone into the building you don't know;

(2) Don't put anything valuable in downstairs storage areas;

(3) Go to the laundry area during the day, when you know there will be someone else around; and

(4) Don't go to the garage area alone if you can avoid it. If you must, be alert and have your keys ready.

c. Both:

(1) If you've just moved into a new residence, get the locks changed or re-tumbled;

(2) Lock ALL your outside doors. If you have screen, storm, or patio doors, make a habit of locking them too. Keep your doors locked during the daytime as well, and don't forget to close and lock the windows when you leave;

(3) Do not leave notes on the door;

(4) Do not open your door to a stranger:

(5) If the person needs assistance, offer to make a phone call for them, but don't let them in;

(6) If it's a delivery and you have doubts, you can ask for ID or ask them to leave the parcel on the doorstep in front of the door; do not open the door until they are gone; and

(7) Try not to go out walking alone at night. If you must, plan your route and travel in well-lit areas. Steer clear of bushes and shrubs and stay alert. You may wish to carry a whistle, as these are much more effective than a scream.

(8) Try to have visitors. In addition to keeping you company, they will help with security simply by being with you.

44. *Travel:*

a. Don't forget to stop delivery of your newspaper and the mail. An overflowing mailbox is a dead give-away to a thief that there is nobody home;

b. At modest cost (\$15.00 or less), well-placed automatic switches give the impression that there is someone home by turning the lights on and off at irregular times;

c. Arrange for a friend or neighbour you trust to be able to enter your home to inspect it from time to time;

d. Make sure that your car is in good working order, and try to always have at least ¼ tank of gas;

e. When driving alone, make sure that ALL the doors are locked and the windows are up far enough so that no one may reach in through one. Many motorists are victimized by people who jump into cars at traffic lights or stop signs. If someone tries to get into your car in this manner, sound the horn to attract attention;

f. If your car becomes disabled at night while you're on a trip, raise the hood or tie a white cloth to the driver's door handle. Get back into the car, lock the doors, and roll up the windows. When someone stops, ask him or her to go for help but do NOT let them into your car;

g. If you see a disabled car, continue on and stop at a garage or a well-lit phone and get help; and

h. NEVER pick up hitch-hikers.

45. *Baby Sitters.* If at all possible, hire only those who have completed a certified course. Contact the nearest Military Family Resource Centre to see if they maintain a list of qualified sitters. Ensure the sitter has:

a. A list of emergency phone numbers;

b. Instructions on how to reach you; and

c. The phone number of a neighbour who can help if required.

46. Watch your child(ren)'s reaction to the sitter. Do not re-hire a sitter with whom the child(ren) clearly cannot get along with - in an emergency, the child(ren)'s life may depend on how quickly they respond to the sitters instructions.

47. Ensure that your home is "child-proof". All medicines, cleaning supplies and other hazardous or poisonous materials should be locked up or placed out of reach.

48. *Miscellaneous:*

- a. If you receive an obscene phone call - say nothing; just hang up. If the caller persists, contact the phone company or call the police;
- b. If you discover you have a "Peeping-Tom", make every attempt to act as natural as possible. Calmly walk to the nearest phone and call the police;
- c. Although the "Yellow Ribbon" (or similar) campaigns are nice, and help show solidarity, the wearing of such an identifier, or the hanging of one on your property can mark you as an easy victim;
- d. If you advertise in the newspaper, do not put your address in the ad. When prospective buyers call, give them the details, price, etc and if they are still interested, ask for their name and phone number and say you will call them back - don't give out your address yet! Check out their names in the phone book to ensure that everything is OK;
- e. It's not a good idea to tell someone you don't know (or don't know well) that your spouse is away. It's very tempting to tell a pushy salesperson over the phone: "My spouse is away and will be back in April, call back then."; but you have no way of determining the legitimacy of the call. A simple "NO", and then hanging up is the most effective way of getting rid of them. A similar approach to pushy sales staff in a store also works: "NO", and walk away.

49. *Conclusion.* If someone frightens you or has you otherwise concerned, call a friend or call the police. **REMEMBER: IT'S BETTER TO BE SAFE THAN TO TAKE AN UNNECESSARY RISK AND BECOME A VICTIM!**

CHAPTER 4

MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE (MFRC)

1. The Edmonton Garrison MFRC is a non-profit charitable organization that exists to foster and support individual, family and community well-being by providing services and supports to address the uniqueness of our military families. Both the Edmonton MFRC will work very closely with the Deployment Support Group and unit rear party to ensure that the full range of their expertise is available to support your requirements. The staffs of the MFRC consist of trained experts who are responsible to co-ordinate and act as facilitators for a wide variety of programmes and activities. If you do not live in the Edmonton area or the surrounding communities we serve, please contact your local MFRC (Contact information in back of this book), which will offer similar programs and services.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

2. *Deployment Services.* The MFRC deployment program provides resources, programs and support to CF families prior to, during and after a deployment. If you are, looking for a service not listed please contact the Resource Centre and we will make every effort to make it available to you.

3. Deployment Services Include:

- a. Resources and up-to-date mission/deployment information for children and adults
- b. Assistance during family-related difficulties
- c. Drop-in Centre for families
- d. Special events and activities for adults and families (i.e. social events, regular informal gatherings etc.)
- e. Family and reunification briefings
- f. Deployment related workshops
- g. Deployment child care
- h. Warm line phone service (for family members of personnel deployed two months and longer)

ONGOING MFRC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

4. *Child & Youth Programs.*

- Playgroups
- Parent/Tot Programs
- Infant to Teen Workshops
- Pre-Teen Programs
- Casual Child Care

- Children's Programs
- Teen Zone
- Outreach Programs

5. *Adult Education Programs.*

- Adult programs and workshops
- Self Care & self Improvement workshops
- Craft workshops

6. *Information and Referral Program.*

- Information on the services available to the community
- Referral to local services and agencies
- Documentation on existing resources
- Education on posting service
- Tourism information
- Information on resources for special needs
- Resource Library
- Outreach to newcomers

7. *Employment Assistance Program.*

- Job Search and Interviewing Skills
- Career Coaching/profile and Planning
- Up-to-Date Job Posting Board
- Assistance with resume writing and cover letters
- Career Resource Library
- Home-Based Business Information
- Work Transition

8. *Prevention Support and Intervention.*

- Short term counselling (individual or family)
- Prevention Programs
- Crisis Intervention
- Resource Library
- Parenting Programs

9. *Volunteer Program.*

- Youth and Adult Volunteering
- Placements designed for individual interests and talents
- On-the-Job training; develop new or existing skills
- Gain experience to enhance your resume
- Professional development courses and workshops available
- Volunteer Recognition Activities
- Help make a Difference – Join the Team!

10. *Emergency Childcare Service*. The emergency childcare service provides timely, affordable and regulated childcare for CF members and their families in time of emergency. Funding of emergency childcare is available for up to 72 hours. For more information please contact your nearest MFRC.

11. *Emergency Respite Childcare Service* - Is available to CF families when it has been determined that a period of respite is absolutely essential for the family's continued health and well-being, (i.e. critical to the mental health of the child or caregiver). For more information please contact you nearest MFRC.

CHAPTER 5

OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES AND COUNSELLORS

COMMUNITY RECREATION ASSOCIATIONS

1. Should a spouse intend, or wish to use any of the facilities at a Base during the deployment, particularly the Base Gymnasium or Base Clubs, he or she will require a Recreation Association card. The card identifies you as paying Community Recreation membership fees and may be required for presentation prior to using any military facility. This should be arranged **BEFORE** the soldier deploys.

2. Membership fees in CFB Edmonton are \$9.50/month for a family or \$114.00 lump sum payment. The monthly payment can be initiated at the pay office through monthly allotment. All dependants must have their own ID card. (This program may not be available in your area)

FAMILY COUNSELLORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS

3. *Area Social Worker Office (ASWO)*. The staff of the ASWO is available to assist with individual, marital, and family counselling. Other preventative services are also offered. Sometimes just being able to talk about your concerns can help you overcome, or at least reduce, feelings of being overwhelmed by the demands of the military life-style. The ASWO can be contacted by calling your nearest Base or Deployment Support Group.

4. *MFRC Crisis Intervention Coordinators*. Intervention services are provided by MFRCs at major Canadian Forces Bases across Canada. Please contact your local MFRC for more details.

5. *Civilian Social Work Agencies*. Families and friends of military members are not obliged to use the social worker services provided by either the ASWO or the MFRC if they do not wish to. A listing of the civilian social services available in your local area can be found in the Yellow Pages of your telephone directory.

6. *Military Chaplains*. Working hand-in-glove with the MFRC, the ASWO, and the Deployment Support Group are the Base Chaplains who will continue to support the families of our military community during the deployment. Well-versed in the problems likely to be encountered by the families of our soldiers, Base Chaplains are available, 24-hours a day, to provide any assistance required. Padres can be contacted either during or after normal business hours by phoning the local Base Operator or by contacting the Deployment Support Group.

7. *Financial Counsellors*. Financial Counselling services are provided by MFRCs at major Canadian Forces Bases across Canada. Please contact your local MFRC for more details. SISIP also operates the 'Towards Financial Independence' (TFI) service for members of the CF. They have branch offices in Bases across Canada. TFI offers financial, budget, and investment counselling at reasonable cost and is not affiliated with any financial institution or investment company. CF Credit Unions also provide this service.

DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT GROUP (DSG)

Aim: The aim of the Deployment Support Group (DSG) is to ensure that a consistent level of support is provided to the deployed CF Members and their families during all phases of deployment. This aim will be accomplished by establishing personalized and confidential services to support military families experiencing difficulties due to the constraints of military life and deployments. Deployments also include temporary duty (TD) over 28 days and imposed restriction posting (IR).

Mission: The mission of the Land Force Western Area Deployment Support Group is to provide an enhanced standardized bilingual level of support for Canadian Forces Defence Team families going through deployments or long periods of absence.

Tasks:

1. The CFB Edmonton Deployment Support Group is housed within the Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC). It will provide a standard for the delivery of support services to the families of deployed personnel. In conjunction with the units of the Deployment Support Group will provide an un-exhaustive list of services to these families. The tasks of the Deployment Support Group will include, but are not limited to:

- a. Coordinate the pre-deployment and post-deployment briefings to the soldiers and their families;
- b. Conduct liaison with all units on Base with deployed personnel with the aim of ensuring a standard level of service to the families of all deployed members;
- c. Be the 24/7 Point of Contact for incidents concerning deployed personnel and their families; and
- d. Develop family deployment handbook and handouts.

2. The Reserve Formation Deployment Support Coordinators. All Reserve Canadian Brigade Groups have established a Reserve Deployment Coordinator responsible for Reserve augmentees. The Coordinator will assist in providing the delivery of support services to the families of Reserve Force personnel. The tasks of the Reserve Formation Deployment Coordinator will include, but are not limited to:

- a. The Military Interface between the Reserve Formation Chain of Command, the Deployment Support Group Headquarters and the Regional Deployment Support Centres;
- b. Ensure assignment of Reserve augmentee family support and consistency of services throughout the formation;
- c. Ensuring families are aware of the programs and services offered by the military network, including MFRC professional and referral services;
- d. Routinely liaising with MFRCs, community partners, internal/external support agencies; and

e. Participate in Unit family briefings determining the special needs of individuals and families.

3. *Communications*: Communication will take place during all phases of deployment as follows:

a. Between unit Adjutants and Chief Clerks and the Deployment Support Group Staff Officer;

b. Between the Deployment Support Group and Rear Parties of the units;

c. Between the Deployment Support Group 2I/C and the Unit Welfare Representatives;
and

d. Between the Deployment Support Group and the families of deployed soldiers based on a privileged and confidential relationship.

CHAPTER 6

COMMUNICATIONS

COMPASSIONATE COMMUNICATIONS

1. *From Theatre.* In the event that an emergency involving a service member occurs overseas, the Unit will be contacting the Next of Kin (NOK), as quickly as possible, and with as much information as is known at the time. The Unit will either contact the NOK of the member directly by visit or arrange for a representative to do so, if the NOK lives beyond the range of the Unit.

Notes:

(1) It is vital that the service member checks that the NOK form held by the Unit is up to date.

(2) If you are going to be away from the address on the NOK form for any extended period of time (24 hrs or more), like a holiday or a weekend at the cottage, it is vital that you let the Deployment Support Group know your temporary address and telephone number. Alternatively, you can provide the Deployment Support Group with a contact number of a friend or relative who can quickly reach you if necessary.

2. *From Canada.* If a situation arises with a family member or friend in Canada where the member in theatre must be contacted without delay, the family or friend should call the Deployment Support Group and explain the situation. The Deployment Support Group will then contact the Task Force HQ in theatre via the Chain of Command that will either brief the deployed member on the situation or arrange for him/her to call home.

Notes:

(1) The Deployment Support Group will need the all available details concerning the soldier, such as his/her Service Number, Rank, Surname, Initials, Unit, Squadron and Troop.

(2) Should you experience an emergency or other problem, and you want assistance, we urge you to contact the nearest DSG at **1-888-711-5533** or the nearest MFRC. Referral specialists are available through these services and you need not identify yourself to seek assistance. It is important to remember, however, that the MFRC is not able to contact a soldier. This MUST be done via the Deployment Support Group.

MISSION INFORMATION LINE (MIL)

3. *Automated System.* The automated system can be contacted at **1-800-866-4546**. You require a touch-tone phone to access the automated system, selecting a pre-recorded briefing by following the instructions given when you call the MIL. You may choose from a variety of menu options, which provide information from a number of different locations. This service is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You may call as often as you wish to listen to the briefings/messages. (Ensure your receiver is set on "tone" and not "pulse" in order to use this system). If you wish to speak to a person, you may press "0" at any time to access the Personalized System; and

4. *Personalized System.* This system is accessible during standard working hours (Ottawa time) Monday to Friday, statutory holidays excluded. At all other times you will be asked to leave your name and telephone number (including the area code) and MIL personnel will return your call as soon as possible. All callers may speak confidentially to MIL personnel for a variety of reasons. In addition to all of the information available on the automated system, use of this system enables families to request maps and background information on a particular mission, as well as to seek moral support, reassurance, and assistance in addressing administrative or personal problems. Although families may not use the MIL to directly contact their loved one, urgent messages may be relayed by MIL personnel to the individual's unit in-theatre. Also, many soldiers use the MIL while home on leave to keep up-to-date with their unit's activities abroad.

5. *MIL Personnel.* MIL personnel work for the Director Military Family Support (DMFS). They are experienced professionals, familiar with Canadian Forces policies and operating procedures. MIL personnel are able to respond immediately to families' requests for information or assistance with administrative or personal problems. They travel extensively, providing briefings upon request to families and military units throughout Canada. MIL personnel have access to a full range of resources for families. Some examples of these resources are:

- a. Summaries and maps of individual missions;
- b. Booklets on Critical Incident Stress, Deployment Stress, and Reunion Stress;
- c. Dates and arrival times for UN/NATO flights;
- d. Names and phone numbers for Family Resource Centres and Family Support Cell personnel; and
- e. Strategic contacts which enable MIL personnel to quickly verify news reports, or to provide appropriate crisis intervention.

6. *Confidentiality.* MIL personnel rigorously respect the confidentiality of each MIL call. Everything that is discussed on the MIL is kept confidential. Although callers may be asked to give their names and telephone numbers, they are not required to provide this information if they choose not to. Callers may be asked to provide the location of their military family member so that pertinent information can be provided.

CHAPTER 7

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

MAIL

1. The Canadian Forces Postal System is the only way that mail can be delivered to or received from members in theatre. The addresses are different for each deployment.

MAILING ADDRESS

2. The mailing addresses will be given to each member prior to each mission.

SENDING MAIL TO THEATRE

3. To send mail to a member in theatre you can:

a. Drop off **letters** to any Post Office in Canada free of charge. Be advised no insurance coverage is available for this service. During this free service provided by Canada Post you can still drop off your letters at the Deployment Support Group, Garrison Mail Room, and Base Duty Centre (on weekends). If the member is deployed to Kandahar the mission address will be as follows:

Service Number
Rank, Name, Initials
Op ATHENA ROTO 9
TF 1-10 1 RCR BG
LdSH(RC), A Sqn, Deployed
PO Box 5058 Stn Forces
Belleville, ON
K8N 5W6

b. Parcels can be dropped off at the Deployment Support Group collection box located at the CFB Edmonton MFRC, CFB Edmonton Garrison Mail room, or to the Base Duty centre. If you cannot make it to one of these locations you can mail from any Canada Post outlet at the regular parcel rate.

c. **Please note:** No charitable donations and/or humanitarian aid is permitted to be sent through this service. Parcels addressed to any Canadian soldier will not be accepted.

SENDING MAIL FROM THEATRE

4. All letters, except letters over 30 grams and all packages, will be sent free of charge from the theatre of operations to Canada. Deployed members will have to pay proper Canadian postage for letters over 30 grams or parcels when they hand these in to the military postal clerks in theatre. The postal service of the contingent will take all the steps required to forward the mail as quickly as possible to Canada.

MAILING PARCELS

5. Parcels may be sent both to and from theatre through the military postal service. A parcel from theatre must have correct postage to get from Belleville, Ontario to its Canadian destination. The cost varies with the weight of the package. The maximum permitted weight is 20 Kilograms. The length, width or depth of the parcel must not exceed 1 metres and the combined measurement of length plus width plus girth must not exceed 2 metres. A Canada Customs declaration form is required with every parcel departing or entering Canada. Gifts to friends and relatives sent from theatre are admitted duty free if the value of the each gift does not exceed \$60.00 Canadian. Customs regulations permit a number of gifts in the same parcel with a total value of over \$60.00 Canadian if the gifts are being sent to more than one person. The soldier should list the value of each gift and whom it is for on the Canada Customs Declaration.

MAIL REGULATIONS

6. No articles may be sent by mail if their nature or packaging may expose postal employees to hazards, or damage the other items of mail. Mailing of the following items is strictly prohibited:

- a. Alcohol, Beer and Wine;
- b. Explosives, Radioactive Materials or Ammunition;
- c. Matches;
- d. Flammable liquids or Solids;
- e. Compressed gas;
- f. Propane cigarette lighters;
- g. Corrosive fluids;
- h. Obscene magazines or pictures;
- i. Illegal or prescription drugs: and
- j. Perishable items.

7. The Customs authorities of the destination country may examine all mail and any prohibited item may be confiscated by them. Mailing such items may lead to criminal charges being laid against the sender.

SUGGESTIONS ON MAIL

8. Given the limited telephone communication facilities in Theatre, mail remains a good means of maintaining contact between the deployed member and family and friends back home . Moreover, letters can be kept and read several times, which is a great help when things are slow. The following are a few ideas when you send mail:

a. Number the envelope of each letter; in this way, if several letters arrive simultaneously, it will be easier for the reader to keep them in order;

b. Send photographs, drawings and even newspaper clippings;

c. Have the children write.

9. Another effective means of communication is to send the occasional audio and even videocassette (VHS). There are VHS and DVD players at all of the Canadian camps in theatre.

10. Care packages are always appreciated and excellent for morale. Non-perishable foodstuffs and magazines are items you may wish to include.

TELEPHONE CALLS

11. Given the status of the civilian telephone systems in theatre, it may not be possible for someone in Canada to make a long distance call directly to a civilian telephone number in theatre. The Canadian camps have military satellite telephones that can be used by soldiers to make personal calls, at no cost, to their families and friends in Canada from time to time. Please bear in mind that these satellite phones are not secure, and it is possible for someone else to deliberately or accidentally eavesdrop in on a conversation.

E-MAIL AND FAXES

12. The deployed members may have internet accounts once they have deployed to theatre. The MFRC are providing computers that are connected to the internet at the CFB Edmonton MFRC. These computers are intended to be used by the families and friends of deployed members who wish to send or receive e-mail from theatre. Please note that these elements will probably have only one internet account each, located at each camp. This system is the best that can be arranged but it is not entirely private. Users should therefore exercise discretion and not put intimate or private details into their e-mail letters. Please refrain from sending e-mails with large attachments as this will slow down the e-mail system in theatre (check your local area for availability).

VIDEO TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

13. The Deployment Support Group located at the MFRC will offer real-time, two-way TV talk with your loved one by appointment. There is no cost and the children think it's great! They can see and talk to Mom or Dad, and Mom or Dad overseas can see and talk to them, too. (Note: this service is not offered at all MFRC locations. Please contact your local Deployment Support Group or MFRC for availability or the nearest location to you). Also, the member may not have access to this service in theatre.

MEDIA ISSUES

14. The media will no doubt take greater interest in the contingents' deployment as the departure date approaches. Newspaper, radio and television reporters will focus on the operation itself and its impact on military families. The Canadian Forces cannot control the action of the media. Families are neither obliged to speak with the media, nor are you

discouraged from doing so. Should a representative of the news media contact you, however, the following is a list of points for your consideration:

a. If you do NOT wish to be interviewed, decline graciously. Your privacy is important!

b. If you DO agree to participate:

(1) Be yourself;

(2) Stay within your area of expertise and experience; and

(3) DO NOT BLUFF! If you don't have the factual answer to a question, say so. Reporters will respect your honesty.

c. Depending on the type of media conducting the interview, you may be asked for:

(1) An on-camera interview;

(2) A taped or live radio interview; either in-person or by telephone, or

(3) An interview with a newspaper reporter; either in-person (with or without photographs), or by telephone.

d. In their search for the story, reporters may make initial contact with you by simply using a city directory (which lists names and occupations), or by just calling into the neighbourhood where Service families are known to reside. REMEMBER: You do NOT have to be the subject of an interview if you do not wish to be!

e. Finally, those of you who do not mind speaking to the media can really help reduce the "random" approach of reporters, by making yourselves known to either the soldier's parent unit, or to the Base Public Affairs of the closest Canadian Forces Base.

CHAPTER 8

LIVING WITH SEPARATION

STRESS

1. Research has revealed a special set of stress factors that are harmful to the well-being of CF members and their families. The worst of those factors is undoubtedly the situation of a member who must be involved in a war or go to a part of the world where violent combat is occurring. Military deployments to dangerous or unknown areas cause additional stress for the spouse left behind. Stress factors include:

- a. The fact that your main source of support and strength (your spouse) is absent;
- b. Uncertainty as to the length of deployment;
- c. Questions and fears regarding the seriousness of the situation and the safety of your spouse;
- d. Lack of accurate information;
- e. The fact that it is difficult to establish personal contact with your spouse;
- f. Loneliness; and
- g. Problems with your children's behaviour.

2. The separation is a difficult time for the entire family. It is very demanding, both physically and emotionally, for the CF member, the spouse and the children. By identifying some of the difficulties related to the deployment of your spouse, the situation can be improved and made easier. The spouse who stays behind must not only change his/her emotional and physical behaviour, but also carry out additional tasks for the home and family.

3. Each separation follows a cycle with 3 separate stages, namely:

- a. *Pre-deployment* - this is the physical and emotional preparation for the departure of the member;
- b. *Deployment* - facing separation on a day-to-day basis; and
- c. *Post-deployment* - the return home, and the relations that are re-established between the family members.

PRE-DEPLOYMENT

4. Communicate. It is normal for the couple to experience a tenuous situation during this period. It is also quite legitimate to feel anger and resentment, since it is easier to leave someone when you are angry with him/her. On the other hand, there may be little conflict

but the couple must remember that it is easier to settle emotional problems by talking about them. Communication within the couple can be improved by:

- a. Expressing feelings as frankly as possible. It is important that you show love and express comforting thoughts when you discuss the concerns you may have about the upcoming events;
- b. Encouraging your spouse to express his/her feelings; and
- c. Planning activities surrounding the departure in order to have nice things to remember.

DEPLOYMENT

5. At the time of deployment, the spouse who stays behind must deal with different reactions. After spending days and weeks worrying about the departure, the spouse may feel relieved that the other party has left and that he/she can now "get down to work". Some depressive symptoms are usually noted, such as loss of sleep and appetite as well as physical aches and pains. Some spouses end up with a fanciful train of thought, ascribing to the absent person everything that is going wrong. They may also feel overloaded because they find themselves in the position of a single parent. Others, on the contrary, may increase their level of activity and become extremely busy. Separation may have positive effects in that the spouse becomes aware of his/her independence and realises that he/she is able to cope, but he/she may subsequently cause problems. Here are a few tips to help reduce the impact of deployment:

- a. Stay in touch;
- b. Become aware of your feelings;
- c. Try to understand and accept your doubts and fears;
- d. Talk about your feelings to someone you trust;
- e. Join the unit support group and use the services it provides;
- f. Ask for professional help if you feel crushed by your emotions;
- g. Monitor your children's feeling;
- h. Take good care of yourself;
- i. Take good care of your children; and
- j. Do not neglect safety.

POST-DEPLOYMENT

6. *Difficulties.* Many people believe that there are no problems during post-deployment, since the family is back together. In fact, this period can be just as difficult because most adults fantasize about it for weeks prior to the spouse's return. You plan the meals, buy new

clothes, and try a new hairdo. Reality is seldom in line with fantasy. The roast is maybe overdone, or your spouse may note that you have exceeded the \$200.00 budget before noticing the new changes. The issue of personal space may also arise. You are happy about the return of your spouse, but that return is a disturbance as well. The expression of your feeling of love, sidelined for so long, may take a while to come back.

7. The CF member deployed also fantasises about the perfect spouse. He/she no longer thinks of the noise, disorder and the usual bedlam he/she has left behind. He/she may feel threatened not only by the independence of his/her children but also by that of his/her spouse.

8. *False Expectations*. The reunion is a magic moment, which requires, however, certain adjustments. This period may be rendered easier if you:

- a. Do not think that everything will be perfect. Was the situation perfect prior to the deployment?
- b. Realise that time changes people; try to spend pleasant moments together without expecting miracles;
- c. Remember that open, frank communication can help solve problems and conflicts; and
- d. Remember that roles change.

9. The returning spouse may want to resume his/her traditional roles within the family. Take the time to discuss the new roles and responsibilities.

CHAPTER 9

SUGGESTIONS AND ADVICE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

GENERAL

1. Separation is never pleasant but it does not have to become a catastrophe. All people live through separation differently. Here are some suggestions that have been useful to other people and might be useful to you.
2. The best advice one could give is to COMMUNICATE. By talking to your loved one about your feelings, you will be able to avoid many misunderstandings. The better your communications the easier it will be to maintain them when you are apart and to get used to each other once again when you return.
3. Do not try to shunt your loved one aside. Remember that the more you try to control things you cannot control the less able you become to deal with the things under your control.
4. Remember that your loved one will also feel lonely. In some ways, his/her situation is worse. While your environment stays virtually the same, he/she finds himself/herself in a part of the world alien to him/her. The children, who may sometimes seem to be a burden, express to you the love and affection that your spouse or loved one misses.
5. Remain as positive as possible when communicating and in general. When you write to your love one or talk to him/her, try not to unburden yourself of all your problems but tell him/her the good news as well. Do not hide important information. If you have already talked to each other about a problem, tell the other party where things are at.
6. One of the best investments you can make is to get inexpensive tape recorders, particularly if you have young children. For instance, a father has bought 2 copies of the same book for his son. He left a copy at home and he took the other one with him. From time to time, he reads the story and records it on a cassette that he sends to his son who can then read the book, turn the pages and hear his father tell the story.
7. Do tell your loved one that he/she is still a crucial part of the family. Encourage the children to write letters, even if they do not know how to write!

PRE-DEPLOYMENT

8. *Preparations.* If every family member makes thorough preparations to live through the separation, the problems may be fewer. In some families it may happen that the issue of separation is not raised because they believe that it would be worse if they talked about it. Although broaching the subject might be difficult, it is crucial that you talk about it.
9. *Discussion.* The discussion enables the family to prepare mentally for the separation, to imagine what will happen, to identify potential problems and to find solutions as well as to eliminate any confusion about the separation. Such a discussion is particularly important for the children who may not be able to fully grasp what is going on.

a. CF member:

- (1) Be honest with your family from the outset as regards to the type of schedule you will have.
- (2) Explain to your family your role in the CF. Describe your work to your spouse and children or family members. Talk about the importance of your work for the overall mission of the Canadian Forces.
- (3) Prepare your luggage early enough to be able to spend the last evening peacefully with your family.
- (4) Tell your family that even though you like your work, it is hard to leave them. Tell them that you are going to miss them as much as they are going to miss you.

b. Spouse or Family Members:

- (1) Begin to think of yourself not only as a member of a couple, but also as an independent individual. Set up the budget, mow the lawn, go to the garage and carry out other tasks while the family is complete. Thus if you have problems, you will be able to talk about them.
- (2) Create a support network for yourself. Meet your neighbours, other spouses or families within the unit and other families living in the area that may be experiencing similar separation.
- (3) Set yourself objectives. Think of participating in an activity you like. Do something you have always wanted to but for which you have never had time.

c. Children:

- (1) Talk to your children about the separation well in advance, except if they are too young to understand. Explain to them the importance of the mission and let them know how much you are going to miss them.
- (2) Let the children tell you how they feel about the separation. Do not ignore them.
- (3) Schedule several special family activities prior to the separation.
- (4) Read to your children some of their favourite stories and record them on cassette.
- (5) Ask someone to take a picture of you while you are doing some work around the home, playing with the children, horse-riding, etc.

DEPLOYMENT

10. Communication between family members is probably the most important factor that enables families to stay united emotionally in spite of the physical separation. Communication helps maintain the link that unites the family members and it allows them to grow together within the separation experience, rather than growing apart.

11. By talking regularly about everyday matters, everybody realises that no one has to "come out ahead". The advantages and disadvantages of separation are there for everyone, and each individual must make additional efforts for the family to continue to function well.

a. CF member:

(1) *Letters*. Try to write regularly. Several weeks' letters often arrive at the same time. Mark the date clearly on the envelope so that your spouse or family will be able to open the letters and read them in the order in which you wrote them. Send letters regularly to each of your children instead of ending every letter with "Say hello to the kids for me". Children love to receive mail addressed to them. It makes them feel special.

(2) *Cards*. Before leaving, go to the local store and pick out some "special" cards. If you do not have the time to write the letter or if a special event occurs during your absence, you will be all set to mail a card.

(3) Another nice gesture that shows your family that you are thinking of them consists of leaving, on the day of your departure, a card or note at home, so that your family discovers this pleasant surprise when they come home. You can also mail a card or note that your family will receive next day.

(4) *Postcards*. Whether you are in Canada or abroad, postcards will allow your family to travel a little with you.

(5) *Photographs*. Photographs of your place of work or the sites you visit make it possible for your family to visualise that "remote place". Remember, "A picture is worth a thousand words".

(6) *Cassettes*. A cassette is a pleasant substitute for a letter. Speak spontaneously. By speaking to your family, you can make it share your world. For example, describing to your family the noise during an exercise or the strength of the wind blowing through your remote post is one thing, but being able to actually hear it brings the thing home.

(7) *Telephone calls*. Nothing can really replace the voice of somebody you love. A call can brighten your whole day or, on the contrary, could cause problems if things do not happen the way you expect it. Everybody seems to agree on one point: you must not "fight over the phone", because you could be left with regrets for many days.

(8) If something is not going well at home, try not to immediately blame your family by saying "What have YOU done wrong this time?" Your family is undoubtedly doing their best under the circumstances, but the car needs new parts and bank accounts are overdrawn. Try instead to find solutions and discuss various ways to solve the situation if it recurs, rather than making reproaches. Try to end the conversation on a positive note.

b. Spouse:

(1) *Isolation*. Avoid being isolated during the separation. Go out regularly, if only to window shop or to pick up groceries. Meet other people.

(2) *Time for your personal needs.* Set aside some time for yourself, without your children, at least once a week.

(3) *Rewards.* It is difficult to live through a separation day after day. Congratulate yourself by getting for yourself something you like.

(4) *Activities.* Take part in activities that you like and that keep you busy throughout the day. It may be difficult to initially call or find out about the activities at the base or within the community. It is by getting involved in some activities that you will probably discover others.

(5) *Countdown.* Do not think of the separation as a whole because you may find it discouraging. Instead, divide it mentally into smaller units. For example, a separation of 120 days may become 16 weeks, or 4 months, or the third of a year, or a college term. Take the time to pick out the day that marks one-half of the separation. Use vacations, holidays and special occasions as milestones.

(6) *Mail.* Try to write regularly, every day if you can. The distribution of mail is the highlight of the day for CF members who are away. The letters are their link with family life. You may also decide to send a postcard, a special event card, a newspaper or magazine clipping, The Sunday newspaper comics, or a photograph. Keep in a box the items you want to mail. In the meantime, if you do not have time to write a long letter, write a "continuous letter" adding something every day and mail it at the end of the week. Remember to write the date on the envelope, because several weeks' mail may arrive at the same time. You may want to place the cards and postcards received here and there throughout the house; they are a happy souvenir. In some families, the letters and cards exchanged during separation periods are kept. Years later, it may be interesting to look at them and remember things.

(7) *Cassettes.* Taping family members engaged in various activities is surely one of the best means to share the family life with your spouse.

(8) *Telephone Calls.* As already stated, telephone calls may be very pleasant, or they may be very disappointing if they do not go as expected. You often get the phone call late at night, the line is poor, you are cut off in the middle of a conversation, or you have just had one of those days where nothing goes right. It is easy to blame the other for all your problems.

(9) *Emergencies.* A family emergency is a difficult time for you (because you have to cope with it alone) as well as your spouse, who is too far away to help you. Assess the situation before deciding to communicate with your spouse. However, you must not hesitate to contact him/her when a family member is in critical condition or there has been a death, because he/she must then request emergency leave. However, if one of the children has suffered a fracture or must go to emergency for stitches, it is perhaps better for you to wait until the situation has stabilized before phoning your spouse. You may have a feeling of powerlessness and frustration when you are unable to act. It is sometimes as difficult to do nothing and wait for a telephone call as to take care of the emergency yourself. However it is always important to keep your spouse up to date about what is happening to your family. Do not make the mistake of withholding information in order not to worry your spouse. This causes resentment and may embarrass your spouse, for he may get the news from someone else or find himself/herself, upon his/her return, in a situation for which he/she was not prepared. It is very important for you to select the most appropriate time to inform

your spouse. If you happen to have very strong emotional reactions following serious incidents (a serious illness or death in the family, or Canadian losses abroad) do not hide your feelings and do not deny them. Talk about them and ask for professional help.

(10) *Social Life*: Do not think that you must reject all invitations extended to you while your spouse is away. Keeping up good social relations will help you feel good and have a positive attitude during the separation.

c. Children:

(1) Children need a regular schedule, particularly when the family is living through a separation. Keep the same rules regarding the time to go to bed, household chores, homework, etc. If you relax discipline, the children may be disappointed by the return of your spouse, which means rules and orders in the home like before. Avoid telling your children "wait until your father/mother is back" as a method to enforce discipline.

(2) Encourage the children to communicate directly with the spouse who is away. They may write him/her themselves and send him/her things and drawings they made at school. If they know how to write, let them address the envelope and help you mail it.

(3) Like military families, children are not alike. Expect your children to experience the separation in very personal fashion, and respond accordingly to their needs. While some children become very helpful and independent, others may adopt infantile behaviour such as wetting their bed, clinging to you or using baby talk for a while. Expect some behavioural changes to occur, and expect the children to try to "test the limits" in various situations. It is their way of discovering whether other parts of their lives will also change now that one of the parents is away. Be patient, even though this may sometimes be difficult. Understand, but be as firm as possible. The child will then know that some things remain unchanged, and he/she will feel reassured.

POST-DEPLOYMENT

12. The reunion of a family following a separation can be as difficult as the separation itself. If that moment was a source of tension for your family, tell yourself that you are no exception. You have perhaps wondered why a time that should normally be romantic and exciting turns out to be difficult.

13. The important thing is to talk to each other and to share the situations that confront the family each day. You must not try to do everything on the very day when you get together again. Take the time to share pleasant moments. Everyone needs some time to get acquainted again before thinking about solving the problems.

a. CF member:

(1) Gradually resume your place within the family. If you come back like a Leopard tank and try to bulldoze everything in order to get back into family life, the others may resent this. Consider yourself a 'special guest' for a while.

(2) Take the time to check out how the family functioned during your absence. Maybe you will want to say, "Now that I am back, there are going to be some changes here". Your

presence at home will inevitably bring some changes. If you disagree with what has happened during your absence, wait a few days and talk about it frankly with your spouse.

(3) Do not be astonished if your spouse has changed. You are no longer the same people as a few months or even a few weeks before. Separation triggers a role change to which one may become accustomed. Your spouse was forced to learn to manage alone. Circumstances force him/her to take over some tasks. Try not to feel threatened if, upon your return, you have an independent person before you. The fact that your spouse has managed to get organized in your absence does not necessarily mean that he/she wanted it.

b. Spouse:

(1) Remember that your spouse has worked in a regulated environment where he/she had to conform to a daily schedule. He/she needs some time to readapt to family life. He/she may tend to manage the family like a military unit or, on the contrary, to refuse any kind of schedule or planned activity that you have planned. Be patient! Initially, he/she may also have trouble sleeping, particularly if he/she has worked shifted or irregular hours.

(2) Do not be offended if your spouse thinks about his/her work instead of mentioning the wonderful meal you have prepared or the new curtains in the family room. During his/her absence, your spouse has lived in an environment exclusively focused on work. He/she needs some time to leave that frame of mind behind, even though he/she is happy to be home.

(3) Do not be upset if your spouse has changed. Remember to what extent you have probably had to change yourself in order to adapt to the situation. Work pressures, the discovery of a new culture in other parts of the world, and the time spent away from the family have changed his/her behaviours, beliefs, and feelings.

c. Children:

(1) Some children will avoid the returning parent for awhile.

(2) On the other hand, other children will "cling". That reaction will disappear over time as they realize that you leave and then come back.

(3) Spend some time with each of your children doing an activity they are particularly fond of. You can thus re-acquaint yourself with each child within an environment where the child feels comfortable. Each child thus feels that he/she is special and appreciated for what he/she is.

(4) Expect your children to have changed as well, both physically and emotionally. The changes in your children are sometimes barely discernible, but if you leave for awhile you will note upon your return that your youngest one is walking, that your fourth grader learned the multiplication table, and that your teenage daughter has a new boyfriend.

CHAPTER 10

THINGS TO DO CHECKLIST

DONE	TO DO	DATE
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family Support Cell informed of how to contact you when you are not staying at your normal residence?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parents, in-laws and other relatives/friends made aware of new address?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	All banking and other finances in good order?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget prepared, including accounting for savings for leave, phone calls, etc?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Insurance policies up to date (including life, home and vehicle)?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wills current and location known to all applicable parties?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Power of Attorney initiated (if required)?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Guardianship papers initiated (if required)?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	All important papers and other documents in safety deposit box?	

DONE	TO DO	DATE
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Family medical/dental records up to date?</p> <p>Have you signed extra medical/dental forms?</p> <p>Have you discussed your absence with your children?</p> <p>Home and auto maintenance understood (phone number of service agencies etc.)?</p> <p>What to do in case of an emergency (understood and written down) for both?</p> <p>Who to contact (friends, relatives or neighbours) in the event of an emergency?</p> <p>Important records check list filled out (bank account #, credit cards, investments, etc.)?</p> <p>Passport and Visas (if required) applied for?</p> <p>International drivers licence (if required) applied for?</p> <p>Are your spouse and children's vaccinations (if required) up to date, in the event of a reunion abroad?</p>	

CHAPTER 11

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

If you are going to be away from your usual place of residence for any extended periods of time, please complete this information sheet and return it to the LdSH (RC) Family Support Cell either in person or by mail at the following address:

Family Support Cell
Headquarters Squadron
Lord Strathcona's Horse
(Royal Canadians)
PO Box 10500, Station Forces
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4J5

(please print legibly)

MILITARY MEMBERS INFORMATION

LAST NAME: _____ FIRST NAME: _____
RANK: _____ SERVICE NUMBER: _____
UNIT: _____ SECTION: _____

YOUR INFORMATION

FULL NAME: _____
CURRENT TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____
CURRENT ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ PROV: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____

I will be absent from my usual place of residence:

FROM: _____ UNTIL: _____
NEW CONTACT NUMBER: _____
NEW ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ PROV: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____