



Poirier
Communications

Views of the Canadian Forces
Among Aboriginal Peoples

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2008, Poirier Communications conducted five (5) consultations with 33 Aboriginal participants in 4 provinces/territories on behalf of the Department of National Defence/Canadian Forces (DND/CF).

The objectives of the consultations were to:

- Explore knowledge levels of the Canadian Forces
- Explore attitudes and views towards the Canadian Forces
- Explore likelihood to join / recommend the Canadian Forces
- Explore drivers and barriers impacting impressions of the CF as a career choice

In developing a consultation process with Aboriginal Peoples, it is important to understand the approach will differ dramatically from the mainstream, just as the day-to-day lives of Aboriginal people differ from those of non-Aboriginal Canadians. The Aboriginal feeling for the land, historical traditions, indeed the very role of humans in the scheme of things, stands in sharp contrast to mainstream concepts. When consulting with Aboriginal people, it is important to understand the community protocols and respect community input on how to achieve the objectives.

In order to meet the research objectives, Poirier Communications proposed organizing consultations, known as Dialogue Circles. These Circles employ standard focus testing techniques within an environment and methodology that is appropriate to Aboriginal customs.

For this research, Dialogue Circles were held at the following locations:

- Montreal, QC
- Iqaluit, NU
- Saskatoon, SK
- Whitecap Sioux / Dakota First Nation, SK
- Algonquins of Pikwakanagan, ON





These venues provided a balanced representation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit participants.

These Circles reveal that:

- The findings were generally consistent, regardless of Aboriginal ancestry, location, age or gender.
- Aboriginal youth rely heavily on the experiences and knowledge of their family, friends and extended family when it comes to making career choices.
- Participants feel that the Forces is increasingly engaging in war and combat. Opposition to this new role appears to be growing. Participants showed preference for a Forces that maintains peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. A large number of participants qualified the continuing combat role as an “endorsement” barrier and indicated they would not encourage individuals to consider the Canadian Forces as a career opportunity.
- Participants believe that the Forces would make a good choice for Aboriginal youth that are looking for:
 - (Free) Education
 - Employment
 - An opportunity to see the world.
- Additional barriers that face potential Aboriginal youth include:
 - Fears of culture shock (adapting to non-Aboriginal and military ways)
 - Becoming a minority (for the first time) in a large, non-Aboriginal, community/environment
- Traditional recruitment vehicles like Aboriginal radio and print as well as outreach materials like posters and pamphlets can be effective.
- Information on career opportunities and “obligations of the recruit” need to be more readily available.
- There is a desire for face-to-face experiences with current Aboriginal CF members.
- Interactive opportunities through non-static exhibits and “open houses” generate positive reactions.

- Multi-media vehicles are becoming more popular and accessible to Aboriginal youth in urban and remote areas.
- When it comes to choosing imagery:
 - Humanitarian values evoke the most positive emotions
 - Non-combat action photos can work, but high-risk images (like skydiving) can evoke sentiments of fear instead of adventure
 - Combat photos evoke upsetting feelings and lead to negative perceptions towards the Forces
 - Participants indicated that the photos should include a diverse Forces – one with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal soldiers working hand in hand. It should be noted, however, that all of the photos that were tested, were “field” photos, showing Forces personnel in action. This response should not be interpreted to mean that a photo of one Aboriginal soldier – alone in the proper setting – would not be well received.
- On a final note, most participants either associated the Canadian Forces with the “Government” or the “Army”. Hardly anyone associated the Forces with the “Navy” or the “Air Force”. There may be a need to ensure that the awareness materials demonstrate the broadness of the Forces by underlining that opportunities exist for land, air and sea.

The following report provides an overview of the observations and findings from these Circles. These findings are intended to help the DND/CF develop an Aboriginal recruitment strategy that resonates with this audience.





RÉSUMÉ

En mars 2008, Poirier Communications a organisé cinq (5) séances de consultation auprès de 33 participants autochtones dans quatre provinces / territoires au nom du Ministère de la Défense nationale/Forces canadiennes (MDN/FC).

Les consultations avaient pour but de :

- explorer le degré de connaissances à propos des Forces canadiennes
- explorer les attitudes et les points de vue à propos des Forces canadiennes
- explorer la probabilité de s'engager dans les Forces canadiennes ou de le recommander
- explorer les raisons et les obstacles qui influencent les impressions à propos des FC comme choix de carrière.

Dans l'élaboration d'un processus de consultation auprès des peuples autochtones, il importe de comprendre que l'approche sera dramatiquement différente de celles utilisées dans la population en général, tout comme la vie au quotidien des Autochtones est bien différente de celle des Canadiens non autochtones. Les sentiments des Autochtones à l'endroit de la terre, des traditions historiques, et de fait, du rôle même des êtres humains sur la Terre, sont en vive opposition par rapport aux concepts généralisés. Quand on consulte les Autochtones, il est important de comprendre les protocoles de la collectivité et de respecter ses commentaires quant à la façon de réaliser les objectifs.

Pour atteindre les objectifs de la recherche, Poirier Communications a proposé d'organiser des consultations, connues sous le nom de Cercles de dialogue. Ces Cercles se fondent sur les techniques habituelles des groupes témoins dans un environnement et selon une méthodologie appropriés aux coutumes autochtones.

Pour cette recherche, des Cercles de dialogue ont eu lieu dans les cinq endroits suivants :

- Montréal, Québec
- Iqaluit, Nunavut
- Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
- Première nation de Whitecap Sioux / Dakota, Saskatchewan
- Algonquins de Pikwakanagan, Ontario

Ces forums étaient équitablement représentatifs des participants inuits, métis et des Premières nations.

Ces Cercles révèlent ce qui suit :

- Les constatations étaient généralement uniformes, quels que soient l'ascendance autochtone, le lieu, l'âge ou le sexe.
- Les jeunes Autochtones se fient considérablement aux expériences et au savoir de leur famille, de leurs amis et de la famille élargie quand il s'agit de choisir une carrière.
- Les participants étaient d'avis que les Forces participent de plus en plus à la guerre et aux combats. L'opposition à ce nouveau rôle semble s'accroître. Les participants ont indiqué préférer des Forces qui maintiennent la paix et entreprennent des missions humanitaires. Si le rôle de combattants persistait, un grand nombre de participants ont dit que ce serait un obstacle à donner leur « aval » et à encourager des personnes à envisager de faire carrière dans les Forces canadiennes.
- Les participants croient que les Forces représenteraient un bon choix pour les jeunes autochtones qui sont à la recherche :
 - d'une éducation (gratuite)
 - d'un emploi
 - de possibilités de voir le monde.





- Au nombre des autres obstacles auxquels des jeunes autochtones pourraient être confrontés figurent les suivants :
 - la peur d'un choc culturel (s'adapter à la vie militaire et à un mode de vie non autochtone)
 - devenir une minorité (pour la première fois) dans une grande collectivité / un environnement non autochtone.
- Les moyens traditionnels de recrutement comme les annonces imprimées et à la radio dans les médias autochtones et d'autre matériel de promotion comme les affiches et les brochures peuvent être efficaces.
- Les renseignements sur les possibilités de carrières et les « obligations des recrues » doivent être plus aisément accessibles.
- On souhaiterait des expériences de rencontres en personne avec des autochtones qui sont membres des Forces canadiennes.
- Les possibilités interactives au moyen d'expositions non statiques et de « portes ouvertes » suscitent des réactions positives.
- Les moyens multimédias gagnent en popularité auprès des jeunes Autochtones et leur sont de plus en plus accessibles en milieux urbains et éloignés.
- Lorsqu'il s'agit de choisir l'imagerie :
 - Les valeurs humanitaires évoquent des émotions plus positives.
 - Les photos d'action ailleurs qu'au combat peuvent être efficaces, mais celles à risque élevé (comme le parachutisme) peuvent susciter des sentiments de peur plutôt que l'attrait pour l'aventure.
 - Les photos de combat évoquent des sentiments troublants et suscitent des perceptions négatives à l'endroit des Forces.
 - Les participants ont indiqué que les photos devraient montrer des effectifs militaires diversifiés – une avec des soldats autochtones et non autochtones travaillant ensemble. Par ailleurs, il convient de signaler que toutes les photos qui ont fait l'objet du sondage étaient des photos

« sur le terrain » montrant du personnel des Forces en action. Il ne faudrait pas interpréter cette réponse comme signifiant qu'une photo d'un soldat autochtone – seul dans un contexte approprié – ne serait pas bien reçue.

- Pour terminer, la majorité des participants associaient les Forces canadiennes avec « le gouvernement » ou « l'armée ». Presque personne n'associait les Forces avec « la marine » ou « les forces aériennes ». Il faudrait peut-être assurer que le matériel promotionnel montre l'ampleur des Forces en insistant sur l'existence de possibilités sur terre, sur mer et dans les airs.

Le rapport suivant présente un aperçu des observations et des constatations dégagées dans ces Cercles. Les résultats ont pour objet d'aider MDN/FC à élaborer une stratégie de recrutement d'Autochtones dans les Forces canadiennes adaptée à ce public.





RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

In March 2008, Poirier Communications conducted five (5) consultations with 33 Aboriginal participants.

The objectives of the consultations were to:

- Explore knowledge levels of the Canadian Forces
- Explore attitudes and views towards the Canadian Forces
- Explore likelihood to join / recommend the Canadian Forces
- Explore drivers and barriers impacting impressions of the CF as a career choice

In developing a consultation process with Aboriginal Peoples, it is important to understand the approach will differ dramatically from the mainstream, just as the day-to-day lives of Aboriginal people differ from those of non-Aboriginal Canadians. The Aboriginal feeling for the land, historical traditions, indeed the very role of humans in the scheme of things, stands in sharp contrast to mainstream concepts. When consulting with Aboriginal people, it is important to understand the community protocols and respect community input on how to achieve the objectives.

While there is considerable diversity amongst Aboriginal communities, two important factors apply equally to First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. Spirituality is inseparable from other aspects of life and the community is inseparable from the individual.

In order to meet the research objectives, Poirier Communications proposed organizing consultations, known as Dialogue Circles. These Circles employ standard focus testing techniques within an environment and methodology that is appropriate to Aboriginal customs.

The agency has conducted more than 500 Dialogue Circles to test a broad range of communication vehicles. This testing has taken place in all regions of the country, in French, English and Inuktitut.

By using Aboriginal moderators and community liaison workers, Poirier Communications is able to create a test environment that allows for open and reliable qualitative feedback.

For this research, the agency identified the following five (5) venues for the Dialogue Circles:

- Montreal, QC
- Iqaluit, NU
- Saskatoon, SK
- Whitecap Sioux / Dakota First Nation, SK
- Algonquins of Pikwakanagan, ON

These venues offer a balanced representation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit participants while respecting budgetary limitations. Two of these sites are also in close proximity to Canadian Forces Bases (i.e. CFB Petawawa neighbours the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan and CFAD Dundurn is close to the Whitecap Sioux / Dakota First Nation).

Once the venues were approved, Poirier Communications sent a protocol letter to the potential host (see Annex A).

Once the communities agreed to participate, Poirier Communications hired a local On-Site Coordinator for each Circle. The On-Site Coordinator was responsible for participant selection, booking space and purchasing refreshments for their Circle (see Annex B).

Each On-Site Coordinator was responsible for recruiting up to eight (8) participants. Each Circle was to include:

- An Elder
- Parents of a child between the ages of 18 - 24
- Young Adults between the ages of 25 - 35
- Youth between the ages of 18 - 24

Participants varied in age, gender and background. The following table provides an overview of the 33 participants.





DIALOGUE CIRCLES

LOCATION	Participants	Youth (18-24)	Adults (25-35)	Parents	Elders
Montreal, QC	First Nations Inuit Métis	3	2	2	1
Iqaluit, NU	Inuit	3	2	2	1
Whitecap Sioux / Dakota First Nation, SK	First Nations	1	2	2	1
Saskatoon, SK	Métis	1	1	1	1
Algonquins of Pikwakanagan	First Nations	2	2	2	1
Sub-Totals		10	9	9	5

Each Dialogue Circle was conducted in an environment that respected the cultures and traditions of Aboriginal Peoples. In general each session lasted 2 hours. Each individual received a \$50 honorarium for participating. Refreshments such as tea and bannock were also served.

Two Aboriginal moderators conducted the Dialogue Circles. In order to ensure that the same information was gathered for each session effectively, Poirier Communications produced a moderator's guide (see Annex C) in collaboration with the DND/CF.

During the Dialogue Circles, participants were allowed to communicate in English, French or in his/her Aboriginal language.

Participants were asked a series of questions relating to:

- Views and perceptions of the Canadian Forces
- Knowledge of the Canadian Forces

- Attributes and barriers of joining the Canadian Forces
- 9 field photos of Forces personnel in action
- Potential campaign vehicles for future awareness campaigns

Each session was audio-taped for analysis purposes. In order to assure a certain level of anonymity, participant names were removed from the transcripts. Participants were advised of this at the beginning of the session.

The following sections provide an overview of the observations and findings from these Circles.

It should be kept in mind when reading this report that these findings are drawn exclusively from qualitative research. While every effort is made to balance various demographic characteristics when recruiting participants, these groups (and therefore the findings drawn from them) may not be said to be representative of the larger population as a whole. While groups generally indicate appropriate directionality, they do not serve as a proxy for a fully representative quantitative methodology. For the reader's ease, these findings are depicted to some extent as definitive and “projectible”. This is, however, true only for the universe represented by these participants.

These findings are intended to help the DND/CF develop an Aboriginal recruitment strategy that resonates with this audience.



THE FINDINGS

General Observations

The findings from all five Dialogue Circles were uniform and quite consistent. The Circles did not reveal any major variances between First Nations, Inuit or Métis values/perceptions.

Participants from most urban centres shared the same values as those from smaller, isolate, communities. In general, participants demonstrated a real sense of belonging towards their community and the values of their community. Even those in urban centres made references to their community's beliefs. Montreal was the only exception -- participants responded independently without mention of their "community" values.

There were also no significant differences based on the age or the gender of the participant.

Brand Awareness, Attitudes and Views

All of the participants were familiar with the Canadian Forces. Nearly everyone was able to identify someone (friend, extended family member or relative) currently enlisted in the Forces. Only a few associated the Forces with WWII veterans.

Several of the participants also talked about knowing people involved as cadets, rangers or Bold Eagle; however, they recognized that there is a distinction between these individuals and members of the Canadian Forces.

Most participants felt that the Forces can be a good career choice for Aboriginal People. They believe that the Forces can provide education, employment and an opportunity to see the world.

However, the vast majority showed opposition to the Forces' increasing role in combat. There was a strong belief that the military should provide humanitarian aid and not engage in war.

To most participants, there was no distinction between Canadian Forces and Government – throughout the Circles, people constantly referred to the Canadian Forces as “the Government”. Several also referred to the Forces as “the Army”.

Previous values attributed to Aboriginal veterans like honour and tradition were not mentioned during these Circles. Participants associated values like respect and discipline with military service.

“They were the first non-Aboriginal people to set up base in this community...I viewed them as good, hard working people” (Iqaluit Circle)

“They have a lot to offer. Not just the education, but a career. They offer things that other companies can’t!” (Algonquins of Pikwakanagan Circle)

“Yes I know a couple of kids from the high school. Some were army cadets first. Male and female.” (Saskatoon Circle)

Levels of Knowledge

The general perception is that the Forces offers career opportunities and employment in exchange for enlisting, yet most felt that they did not have sufficient knowledge to determine if they, or someone they knew, should pursue this opportunity.

Most of the participants acknowledge that the Forces offers a wide variety of career choices. Several talked about military friends who became lawyers, communications specialists and pursued careers that are not intuitively associated with the Canadian Forces.

In light of this, participants believed that the Forces should provide more information on career opportunities. Several indicated that the information should be available for people to review privately (i.e. they wanted to review the opportunities without the presence or pressures of a recruitment officer).





Participants noted that there are a lot of promotional materials and advertisements in circulation. Their belief is that these products portray exciting adventures but offer little or no content.

To increase knowledge, participants also indicated a desire for opportunities to “see what’s it’s really like to be in Forces”. Participants spoke positively of “interactive displays”. They also suggested more open houses at military bases or opportunities to “shadow” a recruit for the day. They felt that providing an opportunity to shadow an Aboriginal recruit would be very empowering and effective.

“You see the posters and commercials, but they don’t provide enough pertinent information – just images that don’t tell you anything about the broad career opportunities available...We have a lot of interaction here with people on the base [CFB Petawawa]. We have a good rapport, but still I don’t find them eager to offer information about the Armed Forces.” (Algonquins of Pikwakanagan Circle)

Attributes of the Forces as a Career Choice

Nearly all of the positive attributes surrounding a career in the Forces, that were mentioned during these consultations, relate to:

- (Free) Education
- Employment
- World travel / Getting out of the community

It would be impossible to rank these attributes based on the feedback gathered. In many instances, it was the combination of all three things that positioned the Forces as a unique career choice.

A few people talked about the Forces as an “extended family”, noting that it would be easier to become a part of this family than it would be to just leave the community and start a new life in the city by yourself.

“They need to show the difference between choosing to flip burgers for minimum wage with little opportunity for advancement vs. joining the Forces and all the benefits that go with it!” (Whitecap Sioux / Dakota First Nation Circle)

“The one positive thing that I’ve heard is that people who join the Forces find that they really feel like they have a family. They have a feeling of belonging! (Saskatoon Circle)

Barriers

At this time, the greatest barrier to considering a CF career appears to be the Forces’ increasing involvement in war. All of the groups indicated their interest in supporting humanitarian missions, but show great opposition to war. If the role of combat continues, a large number of participants indicated that they would not endorse/recommend the Forces as a viable career choice.

Further to this, several believe that the Forces do not offer enough support to those that return from battle. In more than half of the Circles, participants talked about soldiers returning home, “messed up” and in states of desperation. The communities as a whole feel that the Government is not doing enough to help individuals with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Another barrier relates to community pressure. Several people talked about pressure to stay close to home and not leave the community.

Others talked about concerns with leaving their community for the first time to become a minority in a non-Aboriginal environment. Fears of culture shock, non-acceptance and racism can be overwhelming.

“One of the concerns I have is the culture shock for some of our youth. We see it when they leave the community to go to university or whatever. I don’t think the Army understands the community well enough to help those who choose to leave and join the Forces.” (Algonquins of Pikwakanagan Circle)





“If you’re used to having the full support of your friends and family – it’s hard to leave a tight-knit community” (Iqaluit Circle)

“It’s scary to go someplace thinking you are going to be the only one of your kind. Being the only one of anything is scary, especially when you come from a community where there aren’t a lot of non-Aboriginal people...” (Saskatoon Circle)

Visual Concepts

During the Dialogue Circles, the facilitator presented nine (9) photographs/images to the participants. These images fell under three (3) themes:

- Action
- Combat
- Humanitarian

Each photo was presented individually. Participants were asked to give their first impressions, then identify what they liked and disliked about the images.

Overall, participants most liked the humanitarian images. These photos evoke a more positive impression of the Forces. Participants were left feeling that the Forces aren't just there to fight – it also offers aid in times of crisis.

Participants were also asked if the images should portray photos that only show Aboriginal soldiers in action or if they would prefer seeing diversity. Nearly everyone felt that the images should show Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal soldiers working together. Field photos – only portraying Aboriginal faces – would look staged and probably would not be very realistic.

The following sections provide more feedback on each theme and image.

Action Photos

Participants were shown three (3) action photos one-at-a-time (see Annex D).
The major observations and feedback from this series were:

Photo I (Snowmobiling)

- Most did not associate the image with the Forces
- Made people think of home, skidoo rallies and ice fishing
- Several thought it was a “safe” photo, bordering on boring
- Several found it adventurous and exciting
- First impressions:
 - Adventurous and exciting
 - Boring – we skidoo all the time
 - Looks very cold (and isolated)
 - They seem to be having fun

Photo II (Skydiving)

- Participants all expressed emotions of action and adventure
- A large number found that it also evoked fear and excessive risk
- Most would not be interested in undertaking this activity
- Many felt that the men were being pushed from the plane (as opposed to jumping)
- First impressions:
 - A dangerous activity, not just in combat
 - Fear of the “unknown”
 - It makes me nervous, scared...even terrified



Photo III (Soldiers in Action)

- Most felt it portrayed combat, on the front lines, in a war zone
- A few perceived this as a base camp training exercise
- Many said it evoked negative emotions in them
- Several felt the image wasn't self-explanatory – it was too difficult for many to see what the soldiers were doing
- First impressions:
 - This is a combat image – not an action shot
 - Surroundings are extremely dangerous
 - Left with a “grim” feeling – everything is so dark and gloomy

Overall Impressions of Action Photos

Of the three action photos, Photo I generated the most positive impressions; however, participants did not associate the image with the Forces. Participants associated it more with an exciting winter outing/event that they already take part in.

Photos II and III generated mostly negative feedback. Both were perceived as combat photos, evoking feelings of war, danger and fear. Most felt these were not situations they would like to find themselves in. In addition, many didn't like the photos themselves. The pictures were considered to be dark, grim and lacking clarity. A few felt that these action photos reflected possible images of “basic training” exercises.

“A good representation of what it is to join the Army – scary – but at the same time it can be exhilarating!” (Montreal Circle)

“You don't see the opportunities they could have...the focus is all on going to war.” (Iqaluit Circle)

Combat Photos

Participants were shown three (3) combat photos one-at-a-time (see Annex E). The major observations and feedback from this series were:

Photo I (Armoured Vehicle)

- Image generated mostly negative impressions
- Most felt this depicted combat or war
- Evoked feelings of fear and concern
- Very few perceived this in a positive way – offering safety or peacekeeping
- Evoked feelings of fear and concern
- First Impressions:
 - Solitude
 - Going in for the attack
 - This is horrible...very negative
 - They're coming to protect/save me

Photo II (Woman in Combat)

- Most disliked the image
- Image depicted combat
- The woman looked like she was afraid. Most thought that she was either in fear of losing her own life or that she was about to take the life of someone else and was fearful about having to follow through.
- Very few perceived this as a positive image showing an independent woman that can be an inspiration to others
- First impressions:
 - This looks like a combat situation
 - She looks small
 - It looks like she has to kill
 - She's ready to fight
 - She looks sad and scared



- She looks uncomfortable
- You see too much of the whites of her eyes – it looks uncomfortable
- You feel sorry for her because she looks like she's not sure whether she will live or die

Photo III (Soldiers in Alley)

- This photo evoked primarily fear
- Most felt it depicted combat or war
- First impressions:
 - Fear of battle and fear of the unknown (who's around that corner?)
 - These soldiers look ready to kill but we're left wondering "who?" and "why?"
 - They're preparing to kill someone
 - Must be on foreign ground, based on the architecture

Overall Impressions of Combat Photos

This series of photos depicted combat or war theme. They also evoked feelings of fear on many levels. Three forms of fear were evoked:

- Fear of being in a situation of war
- Fear of the unknown
- Fear for one's life

Participants felt that images II and III illustrated soldiers preparing to kill. Overall, this series evoked very negative feelings and left participants with a negative impression towards the Forces.

"I think these would have to be balanced with some positive images." (Whitecap Sioux / Dakota First Nation Circle)

"They are very dark, very negative, but they are the reality that I see as war. If it were in my power, I wouldn't let a child of mine do this!" (Saskatoon Circle)

Humanitarian Photos

Participants were shown three (3) humanitarian photos one-at-a-time (see Annex F). The major observations and feedback from this series were:

Photo I (Medics in Action – B&W)

- Most perceived this as an offer of aid and rescue from a dangerous situation
- Many found it to be too dark, adding a sense of danger and death
- First impressions:
 - Life or death situation
 - Running from death
 - Offering aid
 - Rescuing a victim of war
 - Dark and dangerous perceptions

Photo II (Medics with Child)

- Initial impression of rescue and aid
- Evoked a general impression of sadness
- Most felt drawn to the small child
- Many felt good about helping a child, but also felt that the child's problems were a direct result of military presence
- First impressions:
 - Offer of help/aid is apparent
 - Conflicting – this child's situation may be caused by "our" presence
 - Contrast between the small child and the big men to be touching
 - Sadness for the child's injuries or loss of family



Photo III (Rescue Team)

- Most felt it depicted rescue and aid
- Most felt this depicted a serious situation but not Forces related
- Shows people pulling together to help another human being
- Sense of teamwork
- First impressions:
 - Serious situation
 - Illustrates aid & teamwork
 - Photo looks dated

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Overall Impressions of Humanitarian Photos

Overall, participants found the humanitarian photos generated the most positive impressions. These images offered a more positive side to the work of the Forces. They show caring individuals helping others. Participants were left feeling that the Forces not only fight, but offer aid in times of crisis.

Photo III was the least effective as participants did not associate the image with the Forces.

The only negative impressions evoked from the humanitarian imagery resulted from thoughts that military presence may have caused the crisis in the first place.

"I like to see pictures of them helping people. You can't show pictures that are too real (referring to the combat series), because you will scare too many people"
(Algonquins of Pikwakanagan Circle)

"I would be more inclined to have a positive mindset if this was displayed. However, the child's predicament is a direct result of why the Army is there." (Saskatoon Circle)

Reaching Potential Recruits

When it comes to career choices, participants indicated that Aboriginal youth tend to consult mostly with family members, friends and extended family. They rely heavily on the input and experiences of those close to them.

Secondary influencers can include trusted Aboriginal career/employment professionals (i.e. high school guidance counselor or Aboriginal Employment Opportunity Workers).

Participants were also asked to suggest potential recruitment vehicles. Many suggested mass media like Aboriginal print and radio. For television, many of the younger participants suggested mainstream programming.

Posters and pamphlets were suggested; however, participants were asking for information relating to career paths. In particular, they felt it was important to profile the less traditional, high-end professional opportunities. Participants also wanted to know more about the commitment that recruits must make towards the Forces.

A lot of the participants also were suggesting public events. Many indicated having seen large Forces exhibits at fairs, festivals and special events. They liked having the opportunity to see military apparatus and to talk with “real” soldiers.

Further to this, individuals felt that Aboriginal soldiers would have a positive influence on potential recruits. As role models, these soldiers can share their experiences and explain how they overcame some of their initial barriers. It was noted that “base open houses” and opportunities to for potential recruits to “shadow” an Aboriginal soldier for a day would be extremely beneficial.

As recruitment attracts younger audiences, both urban and remote Circles revealed that there is an increased interest in new media communications through things like the Internet, DVDs, YouTube and Facebook.



"The Kids love free downloads... Let's face it, wherever you are now, you have some access to the Internet!" (Saskatoon Circle)

"To see people! To talk to them! For Aboriginal people, that's the most effective!" (Montreal Circle)

"You have to bring things in that are intriguing. Make it fun! That's what the Youth are looking for!" (Algonquins of Pikwakanagan Circle)

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Upon review of the findings from the Dialogue Circles, it would appear that:

- The findings were generally consistent, regardless of Aboriginal ancestry, location, age or gender.
- Aboriginal youth rely heavily on the experiences and knowledge of their family, friends and extended family when it comes to making career choices.
- Participants feel that the Forces is increasingly engaging in war and combat. Opposition to this new role appears to be growing. Participants showed preference for a Forces that maintains peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. If the role of combat continues, a large number of participants indicated that they would not encourage individuals to consider the Canadian Forces as a career opportunity.
- In the event that Forces were to return to peacekeeping/humanitarian roles, participants believe that the Forces would make a good choice for Aboriginal youth that are looking for:
 - (Free) Education
 - Employment
 - An opportunity to see the world.
- Additional barriers that face potential Aboriginal youth include:
 - Fears of culture shock (adapting to non-Aboriginal and military ways)
 - Becoming a minority (for the first time) in a large, non-Aboriginal, community/environment
- Traditional recruitment vehicles like Aboriginal radio and print as well as outreach materials like posters and pamphlets can be effective.
- Information on career opportunities and “obligations of the recruit” need to be more readily available.
- There is a desire for face-to-face experiences with current Aboriginal CF members.
- Interactive opportunities through non-static exhibits and “open



houses” generate positive reactions.

- Multi-media vehicles are becoming more popular and accessible to Aboriginal youth in urban and remote areas.
- When it comes to choosing imagery:
 - Humanitarian values evoke the most positive emotions
 - Non-combat action photos can work, but high-risk images (like skydiving) can evoke sentiments of fear instead of adventure
 - Combat photos evoke upsetting feelings and lead to negative perceptions towards the Forces
 - Participants indicated that the photos should include a diverse Forces – one with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal soldiers working hand in hand. It should be noted, however, that all of the photos that were tested, were “field” photos, showing Forces personnel in action. This response should not be interpreted to mean that a photo of one Aboriginal soldier – alone in the proper setting – would not be well received.
- On a final note, most participants either associated the Canadian Forces with the “Government” or the “Army”. Hardly anyone associated the Forces with the “Navy” or the “Air Force”. There may be a need to ensure that the awareness materials demonstrate the broadness of the Forces by underlining that opportunities exist for land, air and sea.

A N N E X A
Protocol Letter



A N N E X B
Moderator's Guide



ANNEX C
On-Site Coordinator Guide



A N N E X D
Action Photos



Photo I (Snowmobiling)



Photo II (Skydiving)



Photo III (Soldiers in Action)



A N N E X E
Combat Photos



Photo I (Armoured Vehicle)



Photo II (Woman in Combat)



Photo III (Soldiers in Alley)



A N N E X F
Humanitarian Photos



Photo I (Medics in Action – B&W)



Photo II (Medics with Child)



Photo III (Rescue Team)

