

CPCC Request for Proposals: Scoping Research Agenda

The Chief, Professional Conduct and Culture (CPCC) is being established within the Department of National Defence (DND) and Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). This organization will be the functional authority and principal advisor to the Deputy Minister and Chief of Defence Staff on all matters related to professional conduct and culture in the Defence Team. As such, the CPCC is focused on creating the conditions for cultural transformation; that is, to progress the culture and governance of DND and the CAF to better embody shared professional values and ethos that embrace the diversity and values of Canada, wherein all members thrive in a dignified, equitable, respectful, and inclusive institution, while continuously delivering and supporting operational excellence.

In support of its objectives, CPCC will pursue research and analyses of relevant cultural processes and structures, policies, challenges, perspectives, lessons learned and best practices to concurrently enhance the inclusion of members of the Defence Team and operational effectiveness by contributing to doctrine, professional military education, training and related personnel readiness enablers. Importantly, CPCC priorities recognize the intersection of sexual misconduct with discrimination and hateful conduct, as well as additional layers of harm for Indigenous and racialized persons, individuals who do not identify as or are not perceived to be cisgender or heteronormative, persons with disabilities, and women.

The key Canadian Government policies that inform this current call for proposals are: the Government of Canada Defence Policy: *Strong, Secure, Engaged* and the CPCC Initiating Directive, accessible at: [CDS/DM Initiating Directive for Professional Conduct and Culture - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/organizational-structure/anti-racism-secretariat/terms-of-reference.html); the “Minister’s Advisory Panel on Systemic Racism, Discrimination and a focus on anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism, LGBTQ+ Prejudice, Gender Bias and White Supremacy,” accessible at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/organizational-structure/anti-racism-secretariat/terms-of-reference.html>; and the Clerk of the Privy Council “Call to action on anti-racism, equity, and inclusion in the Federal Public Service,” accessible at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/corporate/clerk/call-to-action-anti-racism-equity-inclusion-federal-public-service.html>. Also of relevance, the Government of Canada has commissioned Madame Louise Arbour to lead an “Independent External Comprehensive Review into harassment and sexual misconduct in the DND/CAF”; the Terms of Reference can be accessed at: [New initiatives to advance culture change for Canada’s Defence Team - Canada.ca](https://military-justice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Third-Independent-Report-Fish-1.pdf). Related documents further include “The Report of the Third Independent Review Authority to the Minister of National Defence,” accessible at: <https://military-justice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Third-Independent-Report-Fish-1.pdf>; and “The External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces,” accessible at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/sexual-misbehaviour/external-review-2015.html>.

This call for proposals seeks inputs to assist in identifying and prioritizing the topics and issues that the CPCC should investigate as part of a strategic research agenda. Thus, the key question is: what should be examined in order to facilitate effective cultural transformation and adaptability to achieve and sustain an adaptable, inclusive, robust, healthy and productive Defence Team?

The accompanying draft document, “Developing a Research Plan for the Chief, Professional Conduct and Culture,” provides some initial scoping to support the research agenda. It is provided to assist in developing submissions; however, it should be interpreted as preliminary work and understood to be open to challenge, critique and expansion. This draft recognizes the relationships within and external to Defence in Canada, and thus considers that there are issues and opportunities that would be seen as central to the current challenges faced internally by the CAF, the DND, and the Defence Team, as well as considerations related to influences, impacts, and relationships with other government departments and non-government organizations. Thus, in identifying research topics, it is important to indicate whether these are seen as particularly central or peripheral to the military, the participation of civilians serving in the DND, the Defence Team, or relationships with other government departments and civil society, including, for example, advocacy and equity seeking groups.

Under this call, it is intended to commission several papers. In developing proposals in response to this call, the following key information is provided:

Proposal Submission Deadline: 1 December 2021

Statement of work: The work to be performed is to draw on the most relevant literature to conduct an academic assessment of the broad issues identified in the attached draft for developing a research plan in order to:

- a. Present the issues assessed as of the highest priority for the Canadian Armed Forces, the Department of National Defence or the Defence Team, with justification as developed from the literature;
- b. Identify those issues that are not included in the attachment with a coherent argument for inclusion of the issue(s); and
- c. Provide summary recommendations for scoping specific research projects arising from the first and, as relevant, second item above.

Deliverable: The required deliverable for endorsed proposals, is a paper of approximately 20 to 30 pages meeting the standards expected of an academic book chapter or graduate student term paper.

Bid Evaluation Criteria: proposals will be evaluated on three criteria to assess the value for the price quoted:

- a. Expertise: the degree to which the individual(s) demonstrate expertise relevant to the topics that are proposed to be addressed;
- b. Relevance: the degree to which the proposal is assessed to address issues that that are of greatest relevance in informing the CPCC strategic research programme; and
- c. Cost.

Submission Requirements: it is requested that responses provide the following information:

- Name(s) of proposed contributor(s) with a brief (200 word) summary of relevant expertise, publications or, for graduate students, courses taken;
- A short (maximum 500 words) summary presenting the key topics to be covered in the paper and a summative statement of the contribution that contributors propose to make in informing the draft CPCC research program; and
- A firm, fixed price cost for the work to be performed.

Selection Notifications: 10 December 2021

Submission Deadline: 11 March 2022, to include final paper and invoice.

Intellectual Property: all work submitted to CPCC under contract will become the property of the Crown.

Point of Contact: those seeking additional information to assist in developing a proposal are invited to contact: Karen D. Davis, Karen.Davis@forces.gc.ca

Developing a research plan for the Chief, Professional Conduct and Culture

This note is intended to enable the development of a multi-year research plan for the Chief, Professional Conduct and Culture (CPCC). The scope of the CPCC is presented followed by initial framing of potential research topics.

Introduction

This document is written to inform considerations of formal research and analyses to support the development of a strategic framework to enable CPCC to continuously align Defence culture(s) with Canadian society and ensure Defence effectiveness. This paper includes a description of elements of an institution to present one way of considering systems, structures and processes (noting that how these are defined and understood varies across academic disciplines).

Importantly, systems are used in two ways. “S” systems refer to the ways in which national society is organized and functions while “s” systems refer to specific elements within Defence such as the CAF Recruiting “s”ystem. Thus, it is recognized that Defence is a component of the Canadian government and embedded in Canadian society hence is influenced by broader factors including larger social “S”ystems. However, conversely, it is also recognized that there are significant internal capacities (especially for the CAF) to influence individuals, small teams and the larger institution including through internal “s”ystems.

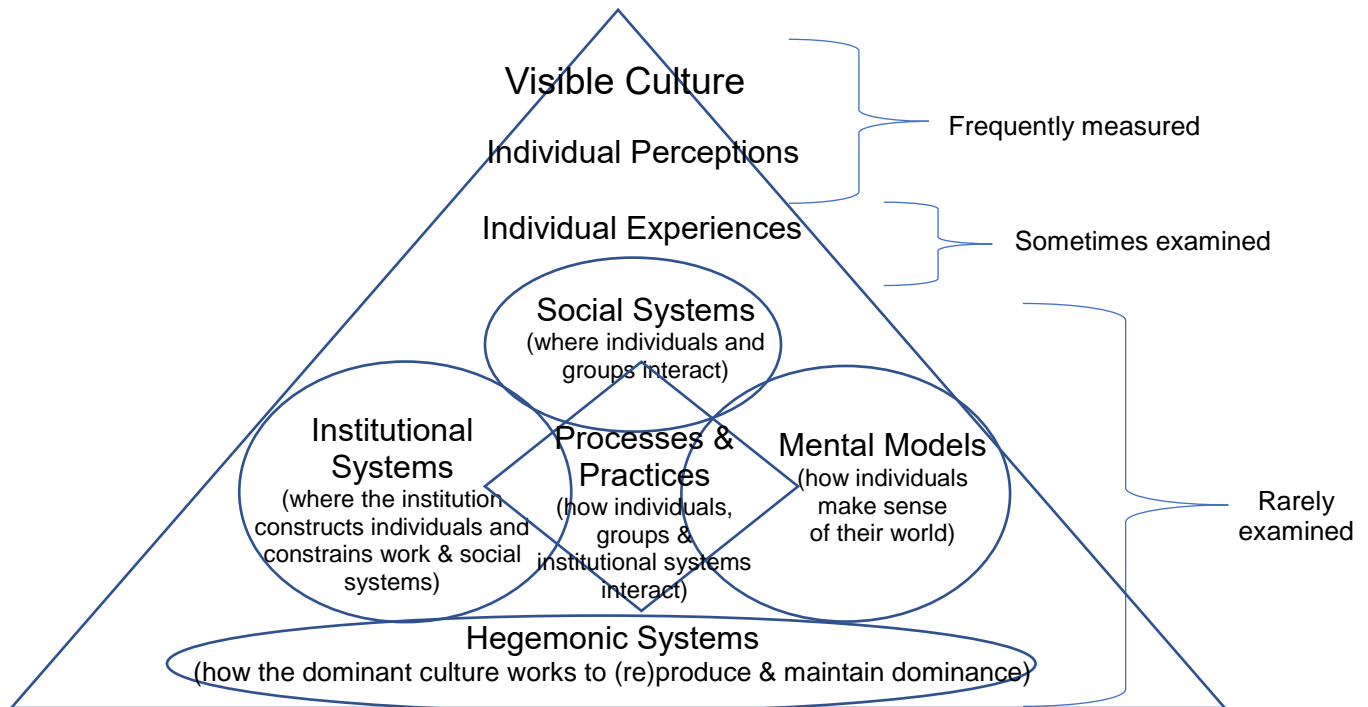
Systems, structures, mental models and processes & practices

The proposed model at Figure 1, largely drawing from sociological frameworks, is based on the iceberg analogy of culture having layers with the need to critically examine the deeper facets that shape/determine culture rather than just assessing the visible culture or individual perceptions. Systems, structures, mental models, and processes and practices are all inter-related and operate in a dynamic environment best understood as a complex adaptive system. Each of the elements are described leading to comments on hegemonic systems. Furthermore, this model suggests a knowledge hierarchy; that is, the types of knowledge which organizations most frequently collect and analyze to inform the development of institutional policies and practices is juxtaposed within the broader complexity of influences on organizational cultures, suggesting critical domains of knowledge which are not readily produced by organizations, including the CAF and the DND.

Institutional Systems: Those facets that frame where and how work, social and career activities take place. Systems can be closed, limited or bounded (the financial management system) or open, dynamic or unrestricted (the system to enable professional judgement); Defence has multiple, inter-connected systems of systems. These systems contain related structures as explained below. As a general observation, systems can be characterized by having: a purpose, some guiding structures, feedback loops, decision makers and observable outcomes. As an example, the CAF recruiting system serves to enroll qualified individuals to meet CAF employment requirements – based on formal policies and directives as well as daily practices – with assessments of the degree to which those actually enrolled met actual requirements used to amend objectives, processes or decision frameworks. Some systems are fuzzy or opaque hence not all of the characteristics are easily identifiable: the output of professional socialization in the Public Service (the degree to which PS employees see themselves as a member of a profession

and how they understand their profession) can be assessed and the guiding structures can be identified but the decision makers and feedback loops can be difficult to discern. Additional comments will be provided below on hegemonic systems.

Figure 1: Sociological Culture Framework



Institutional Structures: Those facets that are defined, objective or visible and are created by the institution to direct, control, inform or influence work and inter-personal activities of groups and individuals. These include: formal rules (policies, doctrine, authorizations; written operating procedures); standards (performance requirements, advancement/promotion criteria, competency thresholds); codified conduct (forms of addressing others, rules for holding meetings, in the CAF: marching, saluting, mess etiquette); declarative knowledge (course learning outcomes, procedural checklists); infrastructure (buildings, equipment, technologies); artifacts/symbols (uniforms, artwork, martial music, signage); and collection and organization of information (coding, storage and retrieval of data, information and knowledge). These elements can be identified and examined by those outside the institution however the meaning attached to or derived from any element may require either local cultural awareness or critical analyses. Further, most people accept elements of institutional structures without reflecting on the implicit ordering embedded in the element. Despite the fact that all represent social construction, few people reflect deeply on the values, priorities or perspectives that inform how structures are created – these structures are typically only called into question when individuals or subgroups raise experiences of inequities due to structures that have inequities embedded within them.

Mental Models: Functioning at the individual level, this pertains to the ways in which people understand their world. Of importance, these mental models are what individuals use to navigate in and around the work, social and career systems in which they are embedded. Mental models extend beyond what people know through how they acquire and use knowledge to the implicit associations and (virtually automatic) cognitive functioning that influence perceptions and behaviours. Thus, these comprise: factual/declarative knowledge; socially constructed understandings (values & belief systems; group and societal norms, social conventions); deeply internalized cognitive frameworks (e.g., stereotypes, schemas); emotional responses to stimuli; and unconscious/instinctive reactions (e.g., the fight or flight response to a ‘startle’ stimulus). The sum is expressed as one’s worldview. Of importance, professions seek to instill a particular worldview often through very intentional mechanisms of socialization with the expectation that practitioners will draw on the endorsed worldview when making judgements (especially in complex contexts). It is, however, recognized that the worldview endorsed or imparted by the profession represents only a portion of any person’s worldview as this is also based on all of their intersectional identities and life experiences.

Processes and practices: These are all of the ways in which structures, systems and individuals interact. Some processes are planned, specific or intentional (scheduling and conducting a meeting) while many daily practices are informal, personal or operate at generally unconscious levels (when participating in a meeting these are facets like deciding where to sit, what to say, how to understand the discussion, how to interpret the body language, etc.). While structures, systems and mental models all contribute to create or shape the environment in which one is embedded; processes and practices are the ‘field of action’ where people draw on structures; engage with each other; and, continuously update their mental models. As part of practices, the burden to formally identify how institutional structures create experiences of discrimination, oppression, and inequity rests with those adversely affected. Further, a common response is to amend accommodations thus leaving individuals within existing structures rather than making meaningful change of the structures themselves.

Hegemonic Systems: Systemic and Structural Issues. As described above, structures are seen as formal mechanisms created by the institution to control or influence the other three elements of systems, processes and mental models. Structural issues are products of any domain (and often all four) which are deeply embedded in the institution. For example, the categorizations of people based on ascribed race (and informed by settler colonialism and cultural superiority) are embedded in current policies, systems, social practices and, for many, mental models including the use of racialized stereotypes. As this is not usually evident to many and the implicit ordering and valuing of groups of people is hidden not declared, it leads to structural racism. Similarly, systems are seen as interconnected components that serve an organizational purpose (again, the financial management system). Issues (such as racism) can be seen to become systemic when the effects created are distributed across the organization and/or when they are not amenable to simplistic correction. When taken together, those issues that are seen as structural and systemic are evidence of hegemonic “S”ystems. These are seen as broad societal “S”ystems which have become deeply embedded within DND and CAF; operate to produce and reproduce specific effects which privilege members of one group (hence disadvantage those in other groups); and,

function in a way that makes them difficult to change. Patriarchy with privileges awarded to male-identifying and masculinist performing individuals and Racism with privileges awarded to visibly White individuals are recognized as two hegemonic systems of advantage (for the dominant group) or oppression (for minority groups). As is well described, a specific form of patriarchy in the armed forces is referred to as militarized masculinities. Together, the hegemonic practices of patriarchy/militarized masculinities and racism serve to create clear social hierarchies within the CAF. The dominance of masculinist practices is visible in many facets of CAF culture including the (re)production of an alcohol culture and of the action-oriented (rather than values-based) warrior identity. Despite repeated attempts to change both of these, long standing manifestations of each either remained (hidden) in some sectors of the CAF or reappear relatively quickly due to deeply embedded hegemonic practices.

Research Requirements: Symptoms, Issues and Root Causes

Notwithstanding the research that has been advanced in Defence in relation to leadership, culture, sexual misconduct, harassment, discrimination, equity, diversity, inclusion, workplace wellbeing, and ethics, as well as human resources processes such as recruitment, promotion, training and education, and career transitions, there is a requirement to reassess understandings of challenges and root causes to contribute to the development of an integrated strategic framework to manage continuous culture change.

While many symptoms and indicators are measured, including experience of, and influences on, sexual misconduct, harassment, discrimination, social exclusion and identity factors, and ethical climate, knowledge is less well developed in regard to understanding the key domains and determinants of culture, the lived experience of diverse individuals, socialization, and professional processes. Further, while many root causes have been inferred or dismissed in Canadian Defence context, including negative impacts of toxic masculinity and structural racism, there are limited insights into the extent to which such processes contribute to stratified, gendered, and racialized hierarchies.

These examples, along with the discussion above, provide some insight into the breadth and depth of knowledge that is implicated when we make reference to culture and its influences on lived experiences in institutions such as the DND and the CAF.

A.C. Okros

5 Jul 2021