

## COLONEL COMMANDANT'S MARCH 2016 MESSAGE

Dear Friends

As many who have retired, I became a “snowbird”, with January to March activities normally limited to pleasures in the sun. Hence, the absence of a message since Christmas. I have nonetheless been monitoring the web and other means to remain in the game and alert to Corps activities.

Returning for a brief visit, accompanied by my fellow Combat Arms Colonel Commandants, I met with the Army commander on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February. Our meeting was informative, detailed and positive. My take away is that our Commander is a strong believer and good friend of the Armoured Corps. It is clear that we have carved a solid reputation in the Army and are well positioned within the Commander's vision and intent. He reiterated that his vital ground remains the ability to prosecute live “combat team” operations. My read is that multi- purpose training with a view to achieving “Adaptive Dispersed operations” will continue to be the corner stone of the Army's operating tenets and both components of our Corps will find primary and supporting roles within this strategy. Although the future looks good, I will hold my judgement until I see clear improvements to capability building initiatives, not the least a new platform for our Reserve units.

While in Ottawa, I attended the Annual General Meeting of the Conference of Defence Association (CDA) and the annual conference of the CDA Institute. Both activities were well attended and achieved their intended goals. The latter activity had as theme “National Security Strategy and the Future of Conflict. Among the many prestigious speakers, the Defence and Veterans Affairs Ministers as well as the Chief of Defence Staff's messages were those which caught the most attention:

*Minister Sajiin spoke of the importance of forward looking regarding the expanded role of Canada in the fight against ISIL. His immediate priority beyond the active operations is to focus on achieving balanced capabilities, hence the announcement that a interdepartmental assisted, defence “policy review” open to public discourse will be completed by the end of 2016. An ambitious plan indeed!*

*Minister Hehr, VAC and Associate MND reiterated his commitment to provide the necessary and deserved care, compassion and respect to our veterans and their families. He confirmed that far reaching improvements are underway that will make support more efficient and accessible. He thanked General Walt Natynczyk, his DM for providing solid guidance to the department.*

*General Vance, the CDS spoke to the active operations not the least our contribution to the fight with ISIL. As part of a larger coalition the CF will play a vital “non-combat” training and mentoring role. He stressed that although “non-combat”, our troops may need to use force in self-defense. He spent much of his allocution setting the stage for what is to be a major Policy Review cognizant of the many pressures that will shape the outcome. He concluded his remarks by reiterating his engagement regarding the institutional care of our people. Determined to eradicate harassment of any kind, OP HONOUR will continue to promote confidence in team building while serving. Moreover, members*

*leaving the CF must be happier and healthier, hence he agrees to customized care for individuals transitioning. He has directed that the command and control of the Joint Personnel Support Unit (JPSU) be transferred to the Environmental Commanders for closer coordination of services.*

As all of you, I was profoundly shocked by the tragic accident and the grave injury sustained by Colonel Greg Hug, the Colonel of the Regiment of the LDSH (RC) while vacationing in Barbados. I have sent our collective prayers and thoughts to him, Maria and his extended family. From Maria's latest message she thanked all for the lovely words of encouragement and outpouring of kindness offered. She also stated that Greg was on the mend but it will be a long road ahead to recovery. I will continue to monitor his progress and provide information as made available

In closing I wish you all continued success in all your undertakings and hope that this message has found you well.

Best regards!

Worthy

Georges

Colonel (ret) G. Rousseau  
Colonel Commandant  
Royal Canadian Armoured Corps

My activities since last message:

- a. CDA AGM 17 February, 2016
- b. CDAI Conference 18-19 February, 2016
- c. NCR Black Hat Mess dinner 18 February, 2016

My future activities (not exhaustive):

- a. RCMI Cavalry Luncheon on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. Unable to attend as I am involved in a previous scheduled engagement. The DArmour and President of the Association will be present in lieu.
- b. Investiture in the Order of Saint-George, 1 April 2016
- c. Army Ball in Gatineau 17<sup>th</sup> April 2016
- d. Black Hat Luncheon in Kingston 21 April 2016
- e. Visit to the Sherbrooke Hussars 22-23 April 2016
- f. RCD association gathering in Saint-Jean Quebec 24-25 June
- g. RCD Change of Command 27<sup>th</sup> of June
- h. Henry Sampson Memorial golf tournament in Smith Falls 22 July 2016
- i. Corps BBQ in Perth 23 July 2016
- j. RCAC Golf Tournament at Highland Golf Club in Ottawa, 20 August 2016

- k. Visit the Ontario Regiment, summer 2016 (TBC)
- l. Visit the RCAC School summer/fall 2016 (dates TBD)
- m. Visit to the Windsor Regiment 21-22 October 2016
- n. Corps AGM in Kingston in 12-14 October 2016