

Minister
of National Defence



Ministre
de la Défense nationale

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K2

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Mr. Svend J. Robinson, M.P.
Room 483 - West Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Robinson:

Thank you for your letter of September 27th, 1994, in which you asked a number of questions related to the recruiting and employment of gays and lesbians in the Canadian Forces (CF).

It is not possible to provide the information you requested about the sexual orientation of CF members or of individuals recruited since the CF policy on sexual orientation was changed. The sexual orientation of CF members is treated as personal information with no bearing on performance or employability. ~~There is~~ ^{no} any restriction on homosexuals serving in the CF. As a consequence, information on the sexual orientation of members is neither requested from CF members nor recorded. CF members are free to openly indicate their sexual orientation, should they wish to do so; however, this information is not retained in any form by the CF.

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Major anti-discrimination measures are covered in the CF policy order on harassment. The CF policy on harassment is one of zero tolerance for any form of harassment, be it personal, sexual or abuse of authority. Personal harassment is defined as "improper behaviour by an individual that is directed at or is offensive to another individual; that is based on personal characteristics including, for example, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, physical characteristics, or mannerisms; and that a reasonable person ought to have known would be unwelcome." The policy outlines action which must be taken when a complaint of harassment is received. A revised policy on harassment, to be issued this fall, introduces new measures, such as a provision for the appointment of harassment advisors. The revised policy will be implemented by a combination of communication, education and training programs. This policy provides an avenue for redress for members who feel they have been harassed on the basis

orientation

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of their sexual orientation. Normal grievance procedures apply in the case of an individual who feels that he or she has been discriminated against with respect to career opportunities, performance evaluations or in any other respect.

The redress procedures outlined above are available to all CF members. There is no indication, in terms of complaints received, that the change in policy on sexual orientation has resulted in either harassment or discrimination towards gays and lesbians in the CF. Consequently, there is no perceived need, at present, to introduce programs specifically aimed at preventing the harassment of, or discrimination against, gays and lesbians.

The CF welcomes application from all qualified individuals and has no plans to introduce programs specifically targeting gays and lesbians as potential recruits.

Once again, thank you for your letter and for your interest in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Hon. D.M. Collenette

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