

GUARD DIRECTIVE 004
REGIMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF
COMMANDING OFFICERS AND THEIR LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Updated 01 November 2023

GENERAL

1. PPCLI officers who are appointed as Commanding Officers (PPCLI COs) have been selected based on the recommendation of the Regiment, scrutinized through a selection board process, and approved by the senior-most leadership of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) chain of command. These officers are appointed based on their character and competence and with the belief that they will execute their duties in keeping with the highest expectations of the Regiment, the Canadian Army (CA) and the CAF. Patricia COs are accountable to the Chief of Defence Staff, and have significant vested or delegated authorities and several lines of responsibility, both through the CAF chain of command and, within the Regiment, through the Regimental Executive Committee (REC) and to the Guard.

PURPOSE

2. This directive defines the Regimental responsibilities of PPCLI officers appointed as COs.

CONCEPTS

3. Applicability. While this directive is purposefully delivered in the form of a written brief from the Guard “to:” all PPCLI COs by virtue of the Authorities, Responsibilities, and Accountabilities that are vested in them through the National Defence Act, it applies fully to those PPCLI Warrant Officers appointed as Regimental Sergeants-Major / Unit Chief Warrant Officers. It also applies to Company Commanders and Company Sergeants-Major, as these appointments together provide the senior leadership to the soldiers of the Regiment and the members of the CAF. It would be foolhardy and contrary to our Regiment’s leadership tenants¹, if we did not collaboratively review and execute these Regimental responsibilities as unified leadership teams.

4. There is no dichotomy between what the Regiment expects and what the CAF expect of COs². This said, there are elements of the *Regimental Strategy*³ that are of no specific interest to the CAF, although all its elements contribute to the Regimental Mission to: *contribute to CA and CAF combat readiness and the national interests, through operational excellence, while caring for the Regimental Family and upholding the PPCLI identity.* The two strands of expectation are therefore entirely intertwined and mutually supportive. What is done for the Regiment always, ultimately, also serves the CA, the CAF and Canada.

RESPONSIBILITIES

5. COs are charged to lead major units. They are therefore expected to put their mark on the units that they lead. The legitimate areas for them to do this in, together with their other subordinate leaders, is

¹ See Guard Directive 003: *Leadership in the PPCLI – The Patricia Way*. Available on the internet under “references” at PPCLI.com

² See *The Chief of Defence Staff Guidance to Commanding Officers and Their Leadership Teams*. Available on the Defence Wide Area Network or through the Canadian Defence Academy

³ See the *PPCLI Regimental Strategy, Version 4*. Available on the internet under “references” at PPCLI.com

in the continuous socialization of the *CAF Ethos*⁴ and through the achievement of tactical excellence at the unit level. This is basic, and the fundamental Regimental expectation is that COs will concentrate on providing the very best tactical unit to the CAF that they can. Here, they can mark the unit in character, deed and outlook. In this, COs understand and apply *The Patricia Way*⁵ approach to leadership.

6. Regardless as to whether they are appointed to command a PPCLI battalion, a training establishment, or a CAF institutional support unit, PPCLI COs must have a clear understanding of combined arms tactics and the application of the Principles of War developed from a variety of solid command experiences. The Regiment has continued to excel in operations and must maintain our excellence in warfighting skills throughout the spectrum of conflict. This characteristic of the Regiment cannot be allowed to erode. Training units for operations and the development of CAF officers and soldiers must continue to be the focus of the Regimental leadership. COs must place considerable effort on the professional development of their officers and senior NCOs to cultivate future leaders within the Regiment, the CA and the CAF.

7. COs protect and use the military justice system. This means that COs must be, and must be seen to be, steeped in its purpose and nuances and highly just and fair in its application. This includes remembering that families are not to be sanctioned for the sins of their loved ones where this is avoidable, and that the Regiment expects COs to take care of families that are disadvantaged by a spouse who ends up under sanction or punishment. Our obligation to our soldiers and their families is not suspended when a mistake or even a criminal act involves one of our own. Only when a soldier is found guilty of a serious act will the Regiment ever consider abandoning that soldier.

8. COs support and protect effective messes and institutions for all ranks. They safeguard the interests of their soldiers by doing everything that they can to ensure appropriate and competent, motivated supervision in these institutions. COs are also to ensure that messes serve the interest of the rank groups and of the rich role that messes have in socialization, stress relief and integration.

9. Strong and stable families are a key ingredient of operational readiness, and as such, COs have an obligation to support our soldiers and their families. Predictability, achieved through transparent and consistent messaging, coupled with accessibility to support resources, contribute to this aim. COs act within their military community of the garrison to ensure that there is a constancy in support for families, an even approach to the inclusion of families within the Regimental Family, and an active and positive social life for the unit. It is important that families understand what their spouses do, why they do it, how they do it, and whom they do it with. This obligates unit COs to ensure that families do get a chance to visit unit lines, to see their spouses in the company of their peers, to observe all major ceremonials, to share in most Regimental celebrations, to be kept informed, and to be considered in all planning. COs will not cede responsibility for families to garrison organizations. They will use these extra-unit support organizations to help in achieving constancy of unit support. COs will consider applications to the Regimental Benevolent Fund when circumstances dictate.

10. COs have a moral and ethical obligation to ensure their soldiers who become ill or injured are fully supported in their recovery with compassion and continual engagement.

11. COs will advance the Regimental Objectives by planning and undertaking activities that enable the Regimental Lines of Effort. COs and their leadership teams must take especial care to promote and

⁴ A fulsome articulation of the *Canadian Armed Forces Ethos: Trusted to Serve* is available on the internet: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/canadian-armed-forces-ethos-trusted-to-serve.html>

⁵ Guard Directive 003: *Leadership in the PPCLI – The Patricia Way*. Available on the internet under “references” at PPCLI.com

guard our Regimental History, Traditions, and Identity. While each unit is different, COs are to place all their public obligations under the scrutiny of the *CAF Ethos* and our Regimental Values, which are totally aligned.

12. COs have a responsibility to promote the profile of the Colonel-in-Chief and the Colonel of the Regiment within the Regiment, including supporting visits as coordinated by Regimental Headquarters (RHQ). Out of courtesy, COs shall correspond with the Colonel-in-Chief upon taking command of a unit.

13. Every CO is expected to maintain a supportive and regular relationship with local PPCLI Association branches and our affiliated PPCLI Cadet Corps. Additionally, every CO is expected to ensure that RHQ is kept informed on a timely basis of major plans for the unit and key dates. Routine Regimental traffic, such as Patrician articles, should be a matter of administrative ease between units and RHQ, and not a source of friction.

14. While each CO has a responsibility to their individual units, they have concomitant obligations to foster a collaborative relationship with flanking COs. Cooperation and transparency will ensure that the holistic interests of the Regiment are protected and advanced.

15. PPCLI Battalion COs sit as voting members of the REC. This places direct responsibility for Regimental activities in the hands of those in command of our soldiers – those who in the final analysis do the work to which the REC commits them. This responsibility therefore is a serious and necessary one. When possible following the announcement of their appointment, all PPCLI COs (Designate) should participate in REC meetings, as *ex officio* members, in order to build their situational awareness.

16. While COs no longer sit as members of the Regimental promotion boards, they continue to play a critical role in career development and management. The importance of this responsibility cannot be overstated, for the selection of the next generation of Patricia soldier-leaders is the greatest command trust given to all senior leaders.

17. Timely and appropriate recognition of soldiers is a key tenet of good leadership. COs will seek to recognize soldiers when appropriate, including nominations for Regimental Honours and Awards.

18. Exchanges will continue to be the purview of the chain of command in accordance with CAF policy and based largely on the availability of resources. Where possible, COs should exploit opportunities for small unit / reciprocal exchanges, especially with The Rifles and the Royal Australian Regiment.

19. COs and their leadership teams set standards for their units, and, hence, for the Regiment. They must first demand high standards of themselves and one another and should not pass faults. Leadership directly implies responsibility, and PPCLI leaders should be open to and welcoming of criticism as a road to improvement and as one method of honouring their responsibility.

CONCLUSION

20. COs carry great authority and accountability with their appointment and share the execution of their responsibilities with a wide and varied leadership team in the unit. They focus not only on warfighting missions and tasks (which must *de facto* take precedence), but on Regimental Objectives as well. COs and their leadership teams have the full support of their Regiment in doing so and the Regiment is there to assist whenever needed.