

GUARD DIRECTIVE 004
REGIMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMANDING OFFICERS

Approved 29 Jan 17

GENERAL

1. Commanding Officers (COs) within the Regimental system are appointed on the recommendation of the Regiment and after consideration and selection by Commander Canadian Army (CCA) through a board process. These officers are appointed on the basis of their individual merits and the belief that these officers will execute their responsibilities in keeping with the highest expectations of the Regiment and the Army. The CO has several lines of responsibility and several lines of authority, both to the Army through the CO's immediate chain of command, and to the Regiment, with the Regimental Executive Committee (REC) and to the Guard.

PURPOSE

2. This directive identifies the Regimental responsibilities of COs in the PPCLI.

CONCEPT

3. Applicability. This directive is the written brief from the Guard to all COs in the Regiment. While this directive is purposely directed to COs, it applies fully to Regimental Sergeants-Major (RSMs) and to Company Commanders and Company Sergeant Majors, as these appointments together provide the senior leadership to the soldiers of the Regiment. PPCLI COs serving in Army units beyond Battalions will also benefit from this directive, understanding that their units are not homogeneous organizations comprised of PPCLI soldiers.

4. There is no dichotomy between what the Regiment expects and what the Army expects of COs. This said, there are elements in the Regimental Vision, Mission and Objectives that are of no interest to the Army in any specific way, although all of these elements contribute to the success of the Regimental Mission as a force generator and force maintainer, and contribute to excellence within the Army. The two strands of expectation are therefore entirely intertwined and mutually supportive. What is done for the Regiment always, ultimately, also serves the Army.

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 area for them to do this in, together with their other subordinate leaders, is in 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 Army that they can. Here, they can mark the unit in character, deed and outlook. In this, COs understand and apply the Patricia approach to leadership. COs must therefore 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 our 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 in order to cultivate future leaders within the Regiment and the Army.

6. COs protect and use the military system of justice. This means that COs must be, and must be seen to be, highly steeped in its purpose and nuances and highly just and fair in its application. This includes remembering that families are not to be punished 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 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. We remember that in the ranks of the Regiment, belonging is the greatest pride, being ostracized is the greatest punishment.

7. 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.

8. 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 PPCLI 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 at all times (not only when the unit is away on operations) and to be considered in all planning. COs *will not cede responsibility* for families to garrison or base 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.

9. 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.

10. COs will plan activities to achieve the Regimental Objectives set out in the Regimental Manual, especially Objectives 3, 4 and 5, relating to the Regimental Family, History and Traditions and Image and Identity. They will coordinate these activities as necessary. While each unit is different, COs are to place all of their public obligations under the scrutiny of these Objectives. For example, if a unit has been awarded the Freedom of a City, COs of that unit have an obligation to exercise that Freedom on a regular basis. As another example, every unit, even those on multi-unit bases, needs an active public affairs plan that will see some of the highlights of the unit's activities brought to the attention of the local or regional media. COs of each Battalion should maintain unit drumlines, with support from Regimental Headquarters, subject to the demands of operations and training.

11. COs have a responsibility to promote the profile of the Colonel-in-Chief and the Colonel of the Regiment within the Regiment, including supporting unit visits as coordinated by

Regimental Headquarters. Out of courtesy, COs shall correspond with the Colonel-in-Chief upon taking command of a unit.

12. Every CO is also expected to maintain a supportive and regular relationship with local PPCLI Association branches and their affiliated PPCLI Cadet Corps. Additionally, every CO is expected to ensure that Regimental Headquarters 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.

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

14. 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 that the REC commits them to and who make their contributions to be a member. This responsibility therefore is a serious and necessary one. When possible, incoming Commanding Officers should participate in Regimental Executive Committee meetings once they have been announced as ex-Officio members in order to build their situational awareness.

15. 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.

16. 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.

17. Exchanges will continue to be the purview of the chain of command in accordance with Canadian Army 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.

18. COs, in the most powerful sense, set standards for their units, and, hence, for the Regiment. They must first demand high standards of themselves and their other senior unit leaders, and should not pass faults. Command directly implies responsibility, and commanders should be open to criticism as a road to improvement and as one method of honouring responsibility.

CONCLUSION

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