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One of the main problems, he explains, is that we "have yet to have a government to introduce legislation to allow time off (work) for military training, instead of taking up holidays." Such legislation exists in the United States.

The militia is also working towards "higher pay, active civilian involvement on the industry side, and more advanced equipment," Captain Romaniec continues.

However, the general populace has little knowledge of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)," Captain Romaniec states. While he maintains that the army rarely sees real combat, "everyone, at one point in their career, ends up at the 'pointy end.'"

1445: We leave Captain Romaniec at the Militia Centre, and drive to the section of Base Supply which deals with the issuing of new uniforms.

Sargeant Murphy briefly explains the process involved: Someone needing a new article of clothing will have their measurements taken by the co-ordinator, who will then find the required garment in the proper size from the storage shelves in the warehouse.

According to Murphy, this section of Base Supply is a completely new operation, because new uniforms are being issued to each section of the Armed Forces: the airforce (two shades of blue—one for summer and one for winter), the army (tan for summer, green for winter), and the navy (white for summer, blue for winter). Consequently, Murphy explains, there are three different tailoring areas, each contracted separately to a different civilian clothing manufacturer.

In 1968, Murphy continues, complete integration of the army, navy, and airforce came into effort, in order to make the CAF more homogeneous. A single green uniform design was worn by all army members. Now, however, Murphy says, the Administration is attempting to boost morale and unity within each section, by re-introducing differentiated uniforms.

1456: We are headed for an old hangar which now houses Base Supply and the Aircrew Selection Centre.

Second Lieutenant Phil Brooks, who is an air navigator in training, greets us in the foyer, the walls of which are hung with photos of various army aircraft.

The pilot programme here is very intensive, according to



Captain Bob Young

Brooks. "Of every 100 people who come in here and take the test to see if they are suitable to become pilots," he says, "five people are actually chosen to go on."

Requirements for the programme are tough. Applicants must first take an aptitude test; then an electroencephalograph (EEG), an electrocardiograph (ECG), and a thorough eye test. Pilots must have perfect vision, Brooks explains. However, "aspiring navigators whose visual qualifications are just slightly substandard are still allowed in."

The first round of testing lasts a week, and each course has 20-30 students, Brooks explains. 50-55% of those who reach this stage pass on to the next, says Brooks.

Those who are medically fit, have met the minimum qualifications on the flight simulator, and have at least an average amount of academic aptitude, will advance to the nationwide competition.

At this stage, the number of candidates chosen depends on the quota required by the airforce, according to Brooks. It is a supply-and-demand situation, and there may be people who pass but are not chosen. The minimum commitment beyond training is five years.

The next phase of training, totalling 27 hours, takes place in Moose Jaw, with an average cost of \$500,000-\$750,000, per pilot, Brooks calculates.

After this, comes the C4-114 (fighter pilot) stage of training, which lasts a year. 20-25 pilots per month, and 120 pilots per year take this course, Brooks continues. It has, in a good year, a pass rate as high as 60-70 percent; in a bad year, as low as 30 percent. In this phase, training costs approximately \$3 million. On completion of this last round of training, the pilot is ready to go to work, Brooks says.

He leads us into the examination room, where the original testing of candidates takes place. They will write tests throughout Monday and Tuesday, covering such a range of areas as psychological competence, general math ability, language ability, instrumental reading, and technical information. However, Brooks stresses, no specific knowledge of flying is required, as "even experienced flyers can fail, while totally inexperienced people can be brilliant."

The pilot training process is "so intense that burnout later is rare," Brooks maintains. "Only those really eager to fly get the seats; the others get less demanding jobs (in administration, for example)."

"Air training here is the best in the world," he says. "We have the air space to do it." Brooks cites Cold Lake, Alberta, as a prime location for training activities.

Brooks leads us from the examination room to the flight simulator. This is a round room with aerial scenery painted on the walls, and a mock airplane mounted in the centre. There are three so-called "visual general aviator testers" here, Brooks tells us.

The student sits in the airplane while the examiner controls the three axes of rotation (yaw—the rotational motion, pitch—side-to-side motion, and roll—front-to-back motion) from a panel on the outside of the plane; releasing first one axis at a time, then all of them at once. The student must attempt to manipulate the steering to keep the plane steady.

Pilot Jamie now enters the cockpit for a crash course in aviation. The rest of us watch from a safe distance while Brooks begins the "testing." At first, Jamie seems to be holding his own; however, when Brooks releases all three axes at once, the plane begins to pivot in all directions with James laughing hysterically inside. We're all very thankful that Jamie has no military aspirations.

Still reeling from Jamie's test flight, we follow Brooks to yet another circular room for a look at their newest in flight simulators: this plane has an entirely automated cockpit, complete with a computer monitor. The process is still in the experimental stage though, Brooks explains. Nevertheless, in this simulator, the student "will go from complete ignorance (about flying) to knowing how to go up, do a circuit, and land," says Brooks.

1545: Our next stop is the Fire Hall (or "Crash House," as it is affectionately called here), where we are greeted by Master Corporal Pete Andrew.

Fire inspections and crash protection are the main functions of this station, Andrew explains. 12 people work here, alternating on a four-day shift: four in the office, or "inspection station," six on crew, and two in management. The station closes every day at 3:00 pm, but there is a duty firefighter on call at all times after that point. The Base is not serviced by civilian fire stations, Andrew adds.

According to Andrew, the main duties of the "Crash House" include: enforcing military fire regulations; effecting fire evacuation; and monitoring water main distributions.

There are two crash crews in operation, employing three people per shift, as well as two trucks, each weighing 22 tonnes when fully loaded. Each truck possesses two tanks, each holding 2000 litres of water and 250 litres of foam. Despite the size of these vehicles, one person can operate a truck single-handedly, says Andrew.

These trucks are also designed for "Rapid Intervention," Andrew adds, which means that they can accelerate from 0-60 mph in 18 seconds.

1611: Last stop. We accompany Captain Blenkinsop to his own section: the Base electric and mechanical repair depot, which is located inside two old airplane hangars. A diverse abundance of large green army equipment, all in various states of restoration, surround us.

Here, explains Blenkinsop, repairs are made on some 600 vehicles—400, used by the militia, and 200, by the regular army. 90 people are employed here.

These vehicles include not only army equipment, but also "company cars," automobiles driven by army personnel.

We stroll past a large army tow truck. "It's an old design, but it works," he says.

1630: Our journey has come to an end. We stand outside in the cold, dying light, saying our "thankyou's" and "good-byes." Blenkinsop leads us to the main entrance, then disappears into a whirl of rush-hour traffic. We make our pensive way back to York, eager to tell the whole community about our exciting mission into the depths of Canadian Forces Base Downsview.

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