

CME Branch CWO Activity Report

02 Oct 2014

I handed over draft one of the the revised edition of the Red Book (Customs & Traditions of the CME) to Ken Holmes for his editing. Draft one is very much checking for format and content, drafts two and three will be for initial and final editing.

09 Oct 2014

Attended the Dir RCE Conference. This was held in Ottawa and was a gathering of most of the Army Engineers (RCE) pers in Army positions. All Reg Force COs of Combat Engineer Regiments, 4 Engineer Support Regiment and COs of the Divisional Engineer Services Units along with Army staff and some of the Reserve CER COs. This was two days of discussion on a variety of topics.

14 Oct 2014

Sat on the board to help determine who would receive a CMEA Education Bursary this year. There were seven files per group (Offrs, WOs, and Sgt & below). In general this year's files were better prepared and more competitive than I have seen in the past two years of sitting on this bursary selection board. The board consisted of 1 MWO, 2 CWOs, 3 Cpts, 1 Major and 1 CMEA Executive. There were 7 applicants in each category and they were very competitive. The deserving winners have been announced and can be found at CHIMO-on-line at http://admie.forces.mil.ca/cosie/branche-cme-gmc/documents/CMEA%202014_Bursary_Winners_e.pdf
<http://www.cmea-agmc.ca/cmea-bursary-winners>



17 Oct 2014

The Chief Military Engineer, MGen Whitecross and I visited 2 CER in the field in Petawawa. 2 CER was in the middle of a 4 week long field deployment in which they were shaking out basic Engineer skills. The Field Sqns were busy doing Recce, layout and emplacement of tactical minefields. 26 CIED Sqn was conducting its own unique training that was tailored to its specialized role. 26 CIED had a "Mad Bomber" brought in from FDU that was emplacing devices around the training area and putting them through their paces. Construction Troop was busy with a project of constructing two buildings for the Canadian Special Operations Regiment on the Mattawa Plain.

WO O'Connell receiving a Ch Mil Engr Coin from MGen Whitecross



MGen Whitecross presented her Chief Mil Engr coins to four members of the regiment, MCpl Bondy, WO O'Connell, MCpl Remillard and MCpl Phillip during her visit.

28 Oct 2014

The CME Branch Advisor, Col Horgan and I attended the appointment of the new HCol and HLCol of 33 CER. The new HCol is LGen RJ Evraire, CMM, CD (Retired) his bio can be found at <http://www.cmrsj-rmcsj.forces.gc.ca/com-com/bio/bre-reb-eng.asp> and the new HLCol is Mr. Jeff Westeinde, more information on Mr Westeinde is at

<http://investottawa.ca/about-us/board-of-directors/jeff-westeinde/>. The ceremony was presided over the Comd of 33 Bde, Col Bindon who is also an Engineer and a former CO of 33 CER. It was a very good night for 33 CER and for the Engineers.

01 Nov 2014

MGen Whitecross, Col Horgan and I attended the funeral of WO Patrice Vincent. This was a very well attended funeral with national TV coverage. After the service at the church we attended the reception at the funeral home where MGen Whitecross presented Patrice's mother, sister and brother with CME memorial broaches that are provided to the family of our fallen comrades by the CMEA. The family was very appreciative of this small gesture by our Engineer family in recognition of Patrice.

03 Nov 2014

The Col Cmdt and I visited Kingston. Our first stop was with the Engineers at the Base Construction Engineering Section. There we received a unit briefing and had a town hall with the soldiers of the unit. Some of the concerns at the unit level are budgeting and the time it takes to hire civilians and the lack of an apprentice program in the shops. It currently takes them 12-15 months to hire term and casual employees and they have 30 vacancies that could be filled. They also have 5 NCOs that have been posted out with no replacements. The move towards centralized funding is seen as a challenge that will potentially reduce their flexibility.

In the town hall one of the comments that were made was that there is the perception that benefits associated with moving/postings have been slowly eroded over time. The comment was made that a person never made money on a move; however they now feel that it actually cost them money to move. We are already seeing a reluctance of our

members to relocate their families, if they believe that a posting is going to cost them money out of pocket this reluctance will only increase.

On the training side we heard that in general Army Officers felt that they were well prepared and trained to take on jobs at Regiments but did not feel that they were as well prepared to take on infrastructure jobs. Some of the deficiencies in training that was discussed were that the Junior Realty Asset Management (JRAM) course failed to go into enough detail on the construction process and construction considerations. They also felt that they needed more training on the contracting process (terminology, methods, best practices..) Environmental regulations and legislation which affects RP projects was very briefly touched on but lacked detail as did regulations concerning NDSP/NDSI – National Defence Security Policy/National Defence Security Instructions. They need at the very least an introduction to Secure Facilities as all bases have them. Finally more is needed on the DCC relationship and processes. All officers will eventually interact with DCC and starting out on the right foot would be beneficial for all.

It was also brought up that there was an Advanced Construction Engineer Officer course that has not been run in a year or two. Compared to putting a Regiment in the field this course would be relatively cheap and would provide our Officers with much needed information on how to lead and manage large realty asset portfolios.

From Base CE we visited with 1 ESU. The Col Cmdt received a unit briefing from the CO LCol MacEwan. 1 ESU is unique in that it provides a deployable technical capability found nowhere else in the CAF and that it is your one shop stop for infrastructure, environment and force protection engineering.

As a very busy unit, manning is a concern at 1 ESU. They are currently not manning one of their Specialist Engineers Teams (SETs) and with an establishment of 95 RegF, ResF and Civs they are only at 73 pers. Of that 73 they had 36 deployed of Ops, Ex or Mics tasks, almost half of the unit.

Another topic of concern was the standup of the new Drafting and Survey Tech trade and the distribution of these techs throughout the CF. 9 D&S techs will be posted to 1 ESU and 3 to CFSME. The real concern is the 1 D&S tech posted to Regts and CE Sects. There is a concern that posting one tech to a Regt or a CE Sect will not be beneficial to the trade or the individual. In the locations where there is only one tradesman it is felt that even though they may be busy and employed that they will not be employed to their fullest capability to keep their skill sets at the required level. There is also the expensive challenge of obtaining and operating very expensive hardware and software for these Techs in dispersed locations. 1 ESU feels that they are best suited for maintaining a critical mass of D&S Techs and then deploying the capability when and where it is needed.

1 ESU then hosted a BBQ for the Col Cmdt and I that included all Engineers in the Kingston area as well as retired members and the local CMEA Chapter. After lunch we visited with Col Michaud at the Department of Applied Military Science (AMS) and Col Dickson at the Canadian Advanced Land Warfare Centre. It was observed during our

visit to AMS that there are no Combat Engrs on the Army Technical Warrant Officer course this year.

From Kingston we travelled to Trenton where we had an excellent visit with the Base Construction Engineers, Base Fire Hall and 86 ASU.

The Col Cmdt and I were hosted by the Engineer leadership from across the base at the Wing Officers mess for a meet and greet. The next morning we were taken to the New Wing fire hall by WO Baskocitch. The fire hall is just being completed and is now starting to be occupied. Once completed and manned this will be a state of the art fire hall large enough to house all of their equipment, vehicles and fire fighters on base.

From the fire hall we were taken by MCpl Larocque for a tour of the Airfield Arrestor System (AAS) on the airfield. We received a very informative tour of the AAS and all of its complexities. We were shown the newly installed system that will now keep the operators and equipment out of the elements. We then went to the 86 ASU lines and were shown where they rebuild the systems and ship them out. MCpl Borquex-Lazcano



MCpl Larocque briefing BGen DesLauriers on the newly installed Airfield Arrestor System

gave us a briefing on the WFE shop and their on-going project of inspecting pipes and underground systems around the airfield with the help of a remote controlled vehicle with a very impressive HD camera mounted on it.

An EGS briefing from Cpl Nicholls followed with a tour of the EGS shop where they were designing, building and preparing equipment for future deployments.

We then toured an 81 CEF job site where Cpl Swaby showed us where they were completely renovating the washroom facilities in an old gymnasium on the north side of the airfield. New plumbing was being installed with new pipes. The building itself is at least 50 years old and renovating it was like going to an archeology site as the tradesmen had to dig through several other renovations/sub floors in order to do their own renovation.

The visit to Trenton ended with the Col Cmdt addressing most of the 8 Wing Engineers both military and civilian. Civilian employees are still concerned with job security as we move forward with ADM(IE) transformation and the Real Property Ops Gp takes over the portfolio. Rank to Rank rationalization (R2R) was also a topic of concern amongst



BGen DesLauriers promoting Cpl Denis to MCpl

the tradesmen. There seems to be insufficient information about the study, the proposals and the impact. More information needs to be passed down the chain of command.

From Trenton we made the drive to North Bay to visit the 22 Wing Engineers. Our first order of business was for the Col Cndt to promote Cpl Denis to MCpl. 22 Wing Engineers is a fairly small unit with shops housed in the same building that houses their office space. It is not a great work environment when you have the Orderly Room right across the hall from shops that are welding and working on equipment. They are due to take over another building soon so that the shops can be removed from the administration area.

One of the major concerns of 22 Wing is the old “Hole” where NORAD Ops were located before they were moved above ground. This facility is now empty, however 22 Wing Engrs are actively engaged in keeping the space maintained and trying to stay on top of numerous environmental concerns. After a tour of the shops and the Operations Centre for the Canadian Air Defence Sector we had a town hall with the members of 22 Wing Engineers.

14 Nov 2014

First draft of the new Red Book has been completed and it has been handed over to specific individuals for a second draft review.

19 Nov 2014

Col Horgan the CME Branch advisor and I visited CFMSE Gagetown and Ex Nihilo Sapper.

This is an annual Ex that is a combined Ex that is unique in its scope and conduct as it included participants from 4 ESR, CFSME, 1 ESU, and CJOC Engrs. This Ex provides a venue to assess the Basic Engineer Officer Course (BEOC) and Construction Engineer



Col Horgan CME Branch Advisor speaking with Ph IV Students

Officer Course (CEOC) students' ability to plan and employ Command and Control (C2) for an Engr task at the Tp/Flt level. 4 ESR also provided HICON, LOCON, EXCON and the resources to accomplish and remediate full spectrum of combat and construction engineer tasks.

After having spent the day in the field visiting with the phase IV Officers we were given the opportunity to speak with DP1 and DP 2 students from both Field Engineer training Squadron and Construction Engineering Training Squadron.

10 Feb 2015

I attended two days of In Briefs for BGen Irwin our incoming Colonel Commandant. He was briefed on all aspects of the Branch. The Branch Adj and I went over his proposed travel plan for the next year, Col Horgan gave him the Branch Advisors brief, LCol Sauve gave him an RCAF brief, Col Goodman gave him an RCE brief, LCol Henley gave a Real Property Operations Gp Brief, and LCol Nickerson gave a Geomatics brief. All of the briefings were followed by talks with MGen Whitecross.

11 Feb 2015

MGen Whitecross and I visited with the CO of 1 ESU Kingston, LCol MacEwen and RSM Hatfield. They took us through the new 1 ESU building that is being retrofitted for their use. The new bldg is in a commercial zone of Kingston and is a former warehouse. The warehouse is being fitted with new office space, areas for the SETs and storage. The unit will be very comfortable in their new home when they move into it later on this summer.

The visit also coincided with a CMEA dinner held at Fort Frontenac in Kingston. In attendance were about 60 CMEA members, serving and retired along with a large number of Officer Cadets from RMC who were going through to become CME Officers.



17 Feb 2015

The Col Cmdt and I attended Ex Ubique at CFSME Gagetown. The first day of the Ex started out with the swearing in of our new Col Cmdt, BGen Irwin. BGen DesLauriers reluctantly gave up the reigns after serving for 5 years as our Col Cmdt.

Our Col Cmdt BGen Deslauriers receiving a CME Branch Commendation from BGen Sirois at Ex Ubique

BGen DesLauriers gave a heartfelt speech about what it meant for

him to be Col Cmdt of the CME and his association with the Branch over the last 50 years. He was presented with a CME Branch Commendation for his truly outstanding work and was also presented with his Col Cmdt Pennant.

Ex Ubique is a PD Ex run by CFSME for the PH IV officers of the Combat Engineers and the Construction Engineers as well as the Cbt Engr 6B and the Const Engr Superintendent courses. The exercise then formally kicked off with the Cmdt of CFSME LCol Dubois who welcomed all of the guests. The theme of this year's Ex Ubique was Theatre Opening.

Speakers this year included our new Col Cmdt BGen Irwin speaking about the CME Branch, BGen Sirois also spoke about the Branch. LCol Pilon gave a presentation on CONPLAN Jupiter. CONPLAN Jupiter is direction provided by CDS for the CAF to mount, deploy and employ a Joint Task Force as described in the Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS) missions 5 & 6 (Msn 5: Lead and/or conduct a Major International Operation for an Extended Period of time, Msn 6: Deploy forces in response to a crisis elsewhere in the world for a shorter period of time). Capt Sloan talked about fire prevention and Light Urban Search and Rescue capabilities of our Fire Fighters. LCol MacEwan the CO of 1 ESU gave a presentation on 1 ESUs capabilities and Force Bed Down. Col Horgan also gave a presentation on RCAF Engineers.

In addition to Ex Ubique we attended the CME Museum meeting. The curator Sandra Johnson-Penny continues to do outstanding work at our museum and we are well served by her. The museum is always updating and reworking its displays, it is truly one of the best museums in the county and it is worth a visit. Of course the museum is always looking for donations of artefacts or money to help obtain, refurbish and display new artefacts. To make a United Way Campaign donation to the CME Museum through MEMAC (Military Engineers Museum Association of Canada), provide the name and address below and this Revenue Canada **registration number: 11924 5321 RR001**

Outside of the United Way, cheques or artefacts can be sent directly to the CME Museum to this address:

Canadian Military Engineers Museum
Canadian Forces School of Military Engineering
J-10 Mitchell Building
Canadian Forces Base / Area Support Group Gagetown
PO Box CP 17000, Station Forces
Oromocto, NB E2V 4J5



Outgoing and Incoming Cols Comdt of the CME
BGen DesLauriers and BGen Irwin

In the evening all of the students of the four courses as well as the staff of CFSME held a mess dinner with the Col Cmdt as the guest of honour. The next morning was the graduation ceremony for the Construction Engineer Officer Course. I accompanied BGen Irwin who was the Reviewing Officer for the graduation ceremony.

16 Feb 2015

I went to Petawawa for Maj Webb's DWD. Maj Webb had joined as a Sapper and we had worked together briefly in Resources Tp in 2 CER in the mid 90's. Since that time Maj Webb had taken his commission and had served in JTF2 as well as OC of a Fd Sqn in Kandahar and

DCO of 2 CER. It was my distinct please to be allowed to Present Maj Webb with his CME Branch Certificate upon his retirement.

6 March 2015

The Col Cmdt and I went to Kingston for the Dwd for LCol Mann. LCol Mann was the DCmdt of the Command and Staff College in Kingston. A former DCO of 1 CER and a Cmdt of CFSME he is a larger than life character. I had the honour to assist the Col Cmdt in presenting the CME Branch Certificate to LCol Mann.

10 March 2015

I attended part of the Dir RCE Handover in Ottawa. With the retirement of Col Goodman, Col Basinger has been appointed Dir RCE.

13 March 2015

I met with Ken Holmes for discussions on the Red Book Re-write. Work on the Red Book continues. The first editing has been completed with a great deal of help from CFSME and LCol Fortin providing review and comments. We are now almost ready for formatting and then it will be ready to be sent to the printer.

10 April 2015

The Col Cmdt, BGen Irwin and I represented the CME Family at the funeral of LGen Leach. LGen Leach had been the Army Comd in the late 90's retiring in 2000. He was serving as the Col Cmdt of the Logistics Branch at the time of his death. There was a great gathering of soldiers retired and serving who attended this funeral. There were many other Engineers among the mourners.

24 April 2015

I attended the CMEA National Executive Meeting. Chaired by the President of CMEA John Lesperance, all of the principle reports were given. The most exciting was from the Registrar John Macpherson who told us that membership had just surpassed 1800. Well done to all of the local chapters and CFSME for their continued hard work on recruiting new members.

Planning for a General Meeting in the fall is going ahead and it will be held in Ottawa to coincide with CME Branch Council and the CME all ranks fall mess dinner.

One area of concern for the association is the weekly CMEA News Letter. This weekly electronic newsletter needs sponsorship and without sponsorship we are in danger of losing it. If you are able to help with sponsorship or you are willing to do some research to find sponsors please contact Dave Carney.

28 April 2015

The Colonel Commandant and I visited 1 Canadian Air Division (1CAD) in Winnipeg along with 38 CER, Base CE in Shilo and Wing Engineers in 17 Wing Winnipeg. We started out with a visit to 1 CAD. We were met by LCol Watson and given an outstanding welcome to Winnipeg. The Col Cmdt signed the 1 CAD guestbook and we were given a tour of 1 CAD which included an office call with BGen Frawley the DComd 1 CAD. We had an opportunity to meet the Engineers in 1 CAD and the COS of 1 CAD, Colonel Levasseur who is also an Engineer.

We then had a visit with the Comd of 38 CBG, Col Ermel. He spoke to the Col Cmdt about the 38 CBG training plan and told us of the great work that 38 CER is doing in the Bde and he spoke in terms of 38 CER being the newest unit in the Bde and one of its best.

That evening we went to McGregor Armoury in Winnipeg to visit 38 CER. We were met by the CO, LCol Davies and the RSM, MWO Desjardins. We had a unit brief from LCol Davies and he expressed concern that he was having problems getting Engineer specific equipment. Tools such as exploders, mine detectors, prodders etc were not being sent to the unit and the only way he was able to conduct Trg was to borrow these items from elsewhere. His unit has been issued trucks with hydraulic tool packs but no hydraulic tools had been issued to him.

After some discussion with the CO we met the HLCol of 38 CER HLCol Ken Webb. HLCol Webb is a graduate of RMC and was posted to 1 CEU Winnipeg where he worked for 3 years before taking his release and working in the private sector. We then witnessed HLCol Webb act as the Reviewing Officer for the change of appointment of SSM 31 Engineer Squadron from MWO Fisher to WO Nuessler.

We then adjourned to the mess where we had the opportunity to present MWO Desjardins with his CME Certificate of Service for his more than 39 years of service to the Engineers in the Reg Force and the Res Force. We then had the chance to talk to the soldiers of the Sqn in an informal setting. Some of the feedback we received was frustration with getting loaded on summer courses. Reservists tend to be students who depend on summer employment. If we can't get them on the courses that they need they will go elsewhere and we will lose them from the Regiments. Others are employees who have made arrangements with their employers/managers to miss work so that they can attend courses. In our short time there it could not be confirmed where the problems are for course loading of individuals (ie Bde, Div, Army Individual Trg system etc) but the problem must be addressed so we don't lose these dedicated soldiers. The Col Cmdt and I had a great visit with 38 CER and we were both impressed by the high quality of soldiers that make up our Res F units.

The next day we made the drive to Shilo and met the Base Construction Engineers for Shilo. Maj Wall and MWO Brassington toured us around the base and the CE Section. We met with the BComd of Shilo and toured the shops in CE.

During our discussions with them they expressed concern of the slow response to staffing of positions and the length of time that it takes to hire people. They also spoke of money that gets pushed down to Base CE. Although the money is welcomed by the Base CE staff there are times when this top down directed approach does not synchronize with the immediate priorities of the base and it leaves very little flexibility on how and where the money is to be spent.

We then toured the steam plant and the water treatment/sewage plant and the shops. There is concern throughout the shops and plants about the low number of apprentices in the shops and the ability to succession plan individuals to take over at the supervisory level.

The next day we visited with the 17 Wing Construction Engineers. We started the visit with an office call to Col Roy the Comd of 17 Wing. We then had a unit brief from the WCEO Maj Ivanko and the Unit MWO, MWO Morningstar. Concern was voiced by the leadership that there were vacant positions, civilian and military that are not being filled.



BGen Irwin at the Shilo Water Treatment Plant

The unit was also moving into the RCAF's High Rediness cycle with too many vacancies in their organization. As we toured the shops and spoke with the tradesmen we were told that they are experiencing a shortage of vehicles in the CE Sections that hampers them in the day to day execution of their tasks.

We then had a Town Hall with the members of 17 Wing CE. There was concern about Op Tempo and the way that we are deploying Construction Engineers. In too many cases we are only deploying one tradesmen of any specific trade. This makes for long hours and no back up if a tradesman gets injured on the job or has leave. It is also a problem when there are multiple sites that need work. The Colonel Commandant also heard an anecdotal story where a WFE was sent on deployment and a plumber's position went vacant as it was thought that the WFE would know enough about pumps and pipes to do a plumbers job!

That evening the Colonel Commandant was the guest of honour at an All Ranks Engineer Birthday Dinner. The CMEA subsidized the cost of the meal for Jr Ranks and Jr



BGen Irwin cuts the birthday cake under the close supervision of MWO Jurczak and the Chief Cook.

Officers. In attendance were Engineers from 1 CAD, 38 CER, 17 Wing and 2 CAD. BGen Irwin had the opportunity to address the dinner before we sat down and he also gave the Toast to the CME. The dinner was very well attended and well run by the PMC, MWO Jurczak. After dinner BGen Irwin cut the birthday cake and the members of the head table served cake to everyone at the dinner.

28 May 2015



BGen Irwin presenting CWO Nick Manoukarakis with his CME certificate and an Engineer Flag

The Colonel Commandant and I traveled to Petawawa for the Retirement of CWO Nick Manoukarakis. This was a great event hosted by 2 CER. CWO Manoukarakis is a former RSM of 2 CER. Both he and his wife Michelle had very long and distinguished careers in the CF. Of special note Nick and Michelle were both awarded and made Members of the Order of Military Merit. Many members and former members of 2 CER were in attendance to say farewell.

29 May 2015

The Colonel Commandant and I were on the road to another DwD. We went to Kingston for Col Dickson's retirement. Col Dickson is a former Director of Engineers and the former Branch Advisor. Again the Colonel Commandant presented Col Dickson with his CME certificate. This was another big gathering of Engineers to say farewell to a long serving member of the branch.