

Captain Michael Bellemare, CD



Captain Bellemare joined the Royal Winnipeg Rifles in Winnipeg, Manitoba as an Infantryman in June 1986. He spent eleven years with the Reserves and completed many courses such as: Basic Infantryman, Basic Machine Gunner, Driver Wheeled, Junior Leadership Course and Infantry Section Commander Course. He achieved the rank of Sergeant while in the Reserves and deployed on OP HARMONY with the 1 Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Battle Group to the Serb Krajina in 1994. Captain Bellemare transferred to the Regular Force as an Infantryman and was posted to 3 PPCLI at CFB Edmonton, Alberta in 1997.

Upon arriving at 3 PPCLI, Captain Bellemare was reduced in rank to Private (Trained). He completed four years with 3 PPCLI and completed some more courses such as: Basic Machine Gunner (again), Basic Pioneer Course, Basic Parachutist Course, Basic Mountain Warfare Course and of course just for fun the Junior NCO Course all over again. He achieved the rank of Master Corporal while at 3 PPCLI and filled many roles as Company Signaller, Section 2 I/C and Weapons Detachment Commander. While at 3 PPCLI there was a whirl wind of deployments and training exercises which included two deployments on OP PALLADIUM with the Lord Strathcona Horse (Royal Canadians) Battle Group in 1997 and the 3 PPCLI Battle Group in 2000 to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Truly one of the highlights of Captain Bellemare's military career was attaining his Jump Course while with 3 PPCLI and participating in NATO's Partnership for Peace Exercise in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina with the United States Marine Corps in 1999. Never one to sit still and always looking for the next challenge, Captain Bellemare remustered to Geomatics Technician and was posted to the Mapping and Charting Establishment at Ottawa, Ontario in 2001.

While at MCE, Captain Bellemare was reduced in rank (again) to Corporal (Untrained). He completed three years with MCE and attained his Geomatics Technician Apprentice and Journeyman qualifications. As fate would have it, he achieved the rank of Master Corporal (again) while at MCE and filled various roles such as Surveyor and Geomatics Support Team member. Various tasks were done such as support for EX FINAL DRIVE for the Army

Operations Course in Kingston, Ontario, survey missions for the Royal Canadian Navy's potential radar sites in Newfoundland and Labrador, Royal Canadian Airforce airfield survey in CFB Trenton, Ontario and UXO survey in Detachment Meaford, Ontario. While at MCE, Captain Bellemare decided to take the road less travelled and become an officer. Since he already attained a Bachelor's of Science degree from the University of Winnipeg in 1992, he decided to apply for the Special Commissioning Plan. He won't lie and say that his first choice was Airfield Engineer but he was selected for Combat Engineering Officer – Oorah!

Once again enduring his final rank change, third time is a charm, to 2nd Lieutenant and obtaining his commission, Captain Bellemare was sent to the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School in Saint-Jean, Quebec in 2004. There he completed his Basic Officer Training Plan and was then sent to the Canadian Forces School of Military Engineers in CFB Gagetown, New Brunswick in 2005. There he completed his Basic Engineer Officer Course Phase III & IV, Basic EOD Operator Course, Unit Environmental Officer Course and the LAV III Crew Commander Course. Between Phase Training, Captain Bellemare was attached posted to the Canadian Trials and Evaluation Unit in CFB Gagetown, New Brunswick. It was definitely another highlight of his military career to observe the workings of this Unit. Now that he was a fully qualified Combat Engineering Officer, he was promoted to full Lieutenant and posted to his first operational field unit as an officer, 4 Engineer Support Regiment, in 2006 at CFB Gagetown, New Brunswick.

Once settled into 4 ESR, Captain Bellemare was made the Heavy Equipment and Resource Troop Commander. He spent four years at 4 ESR and accomplished a great many things such as being promoted to his current rank in 2007, the Engineer Operations Course, the Army Tactical Operations Course and the Junior Realty Asset Management Course. Before leaving 4 ESR, Captain Bellemare was made the Regimental Training Officer but by then he had been bitten by the Infrastructure 'Bug' and decided to go the way of the Construction Engineers. He was posted to Base CE at CFB Edmonton, Alberta in 2010.

Captain Bellemare was made the 2 I/C / Requirements Officer for Base CE. He spent four years there where of course his Army centric training shifted to financial training such as Procurement Contracting, Expenditure Management Course, NPP Financial Delegated Authority and other fun courses such as that. Another military highlight of his career was being made the Acting Base Constructing Engineer Officer for a few months while a suitable replacement was waiting to come onboard. Keeping within the Infrastructure Stream, Captain Bellemare was moved from Base CE to the 3rd Canadian Division Support Group Engineer Services in 2014.

Upon arriving at 3 CDSG Engr Svcs, Captain Bellemare was made the Infrastructure Operations Officer. Over the last five years until present day, he has witnessed transformation to ADM(IE), renaming of 3 CDSG Engr Svcs to Real Property Operations Unit (West) and the continual challenge of maintaining DND Infrastructure over three provinces, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba at the strategic level. He also managed to squeeze in his Army Operations Course at

the Canadian Army Command and Staff College at CFB Kingston, Ontario in 2015. His current role before retirement has shifted from Operations to Planning as the Project Development Officer.

Over the course of his career Captain Bellemare has served on several domestic operations like the Red River Flood in Manitoba in 1997, the St. John River Flood in New Brunswick in 2008 and the Fort McMurray Fire in 2016. He also completed three operational tours including the Serb Krijina in 1994, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1997 and 2000. Captain Bellemare received the following decorations and qualifications such as the Canada 125th Anniversary of Confederation Medal, United Nations Protection Force – Yugoslavia Medal, NATO Stabilisation Force – Former Yugoslavia Medal x 2, Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal, the Canadian Forces Decoration – 1st Clasp Medal and the United States Army Jump Wings.

Captain Bellemare is retiring from the Canadian Armed Forces on the 14 April 2019 after 33 plus years (combined) of loyal and dedicated service. Presently he has no future endeavours after leaving the Army other than taking advantage of Vocational Rehabilitation through SISIP and Veterans Affairs. He will remain in the St. Albert area with his daughter Jennie, his son Benjamin and his daughter Arizona for the foreseeable future. On a final note, Captain Bellemare would like to pay homage to the Comrades in Arms he personally knew that fell in battle overseas or here at home. Not a day goes by that he doesn't think of them, may they RIP and God's Speed. AIRBORNE! CHIMO!