



Notes from CDA Member Meeting #18-1, 29 May

Reference: A. AGM, 21 Feb 18
 B. CDA Mass Mailings, 27 Feb & 26 Apr 18
 C. CDA Mass Mailing, 8 May 18
 D. CDA Mass Mailing, 24 May 18
 E. Meeting, 29 May 18

Introduction

The meeting was scheduled as the result of a requirement discussed at ref A for a CDA members meeting over and above the AGM to discuss matters which were of interest or concern to member associations but which could not usually be discussed at an AGM because of the limited time available. The meeting was announced at refs B & C, and members were asked to provide suggested agenda items by 22 May. A detailed agenda and joining instructions were provided at ref D. The meeting was held at KPMG offices, Ottawa and by dial-in at 1300 on Tue, 29 May, 2018. Attendees at the meeting were as follow:

CDA Exec	VAdm Denis Rouleau
CDA Mgmt	Sean McGrath
CF Communications and Electronics Association	Sean Sullivan
	Jeff Holt
CF Logistics Association	John Page
Canadian Infantry Association	Bill Kedziora;
Canadian Military Intelligence Association	Andrea Siew
Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Association	Tom Temple
Royal Canadian Air Force Association	Dean Black
Royal Canadian Armoured Corps Association	LCol (Ret'd) Robert Brown
Royal Canadian Artillery Association	Col (Ret'd) Peter J. Williams
Royal Canadian Dental Corps Association	Frank Hedley
Royal Canadian Legion	Carolyn Gasser
Royal Canadian Medical Services Association	Maurice Beauchamp
The Merchant Navy Commemorative Theme Project	Stephane Ouellette
Royal Canadian Military Institute	Dan Eustace
Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia	Tim Dunne
Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island	Roger Love
	Craig Cotter
United Services Institute, Lethbridge	Glen Miller
United Services Institute, Nanaimo & North Island	Bill McCullough
Can Assn of Former Def Attaches	Tony Battista

Objective

The meeting had several objectives, as listed below:

- Confirm the CDA's ability to have, and interest in having meetings of this kind;
- Confirm whether they are a good idea and worth having;
- Try a test meeting and determine whether there is a desire to continue with similar follow-on meetings;

- Establish protocol for this and similar follow-on meetings, including a shared understanding that these were to be member meetings, co-ordinated by the CDA Nat'l Office, but with a schedule, agenda and prioritization of topics as determined by the attending assns; and
- Collectively discuss agenda topics.

Discussion

There was considerable, free-ranging discussion at the meeting itself and in correspondence both before and after the meeting. The items raised are summarized by topic below:

CDA Org

- Need to make CDA known, relevant, and respected;
- Start by clearly articulating the mission & vision of CDA;
- Conduct a joint strategic review encompassing both Nat'l office, RMAs, & AMA: Shared values, shared objectives, SWOT;
- Consider regional structure, with individual assns designated as lead assn for individual regions (eg: RCMI in Toronto);
- Op RENEW: Integrate Member Meet ideas into Op RENEW, co-ord Member Meet & Op RENEW meetings and discussions as & when possible to avoid duplication;

Advocacy

- A vital funct of CDA is to co-ordinate activity around the country for advocacy purposes;
- Our biggest and most important job remains to advocate;
- Advocacy should include:
 - More, better, more effective advocacy;
 - Advocating for veterans & for reserves;
 - Speaking on behalf of serving members who are not allowed to speak for themselves (& convincing them that we can, and should act on their behalf);
 - Educating/sensitizing the Cdn public about Def & Sec issues;
- The CDA's ability to advocate will be critically dependent on its profile and its perceived legitimacy;
 - Creation of an adequate profile will require that we strive to make ourselves a respected and authoritative voice for defence and security, including providing available and authoritative comment across multiple mediums and on short notice when necessary;
 - We need to publicize and develop the CDA brand;
 - We need to create, distribute, promote, and maintain a SME list by topic and region for media engagements;
 - The CDA's perceived legitimacy will be critically dependent on its perceived knowledge, commitment, and relevance;
- We need a strategic advocacy program;
 - Should be a part of an overall strategic comms plan, formed as a product of the strategic review;
 - Should include a formalized process for planning advocacy; a specific process with templates for soliciting and screening advocacy issues;
 - Should distinguish btw enduring & short-term/transient objectives, should include specific ident of a target audience & how to access them;
 - Should ensure advocacy addresses specific subjects related to CDA mission & objectives;
 - Avoid becoming too Ottawa-centric,

Best Practice

- Need to encourage idea exchange (The real value of the CDA is the opportunity it presents for multiple organizations to meet and discuss the similar challenges & innovative solutions some have found):
 - Maximize utility & return from annual reports by providing guidelines and/or standardized template, sharing reports;
 - Collect and share written responses to a basic questionnaire on org, programming, & best pract;
 - Compile a list of possible services an assn could offer that would be of use/interest to stakeholders, and that could leverage the experience of other assn that have already implemented some of these services (eg: See the list of services contemplated by CFLA);

- Encourage & facilitate inter-assn communications;
- Schedule periodic cross-assn meetings to collectively share ideas, best practices,
- Collect & share after-action reports from assns after events; share ideas of good speakers, good topics;
- Maintain a SME list by topic and region for media engagements;
- Encourage and participate in collaborative and shared programming;
- Run shared presentations via teleconf;
- Provide archived presentations on website;
- Co-ordinate shared facilities (eg: Conf room, website, prep and distribute questionnaires & surveys etc)
- Ask speakers “What can CDA do for you”

Governance, Org General

- What affinity programs are available, what are other ways that assns can raise revenue;
- How to open new chapters; attract new members;
- What is the value proposition for the CDA? For individual assns?:
 - How to answer “What’s in it for me?”;
 - What can an assn offer to retain/attract members;
- What are some samples or examples of assn constitutions and by laws;
- Organizational status: Profit/NFP/Charitable:
 - What org have transitioned to NFP? How did they do it? Any advice/suggestions?;
 - Review and summarize policy on NFP vs Charitable status

Action Items/Conclusion

- Integrate Member Meeting findings and suggestions with ideas and suggestions for Op RENEW;
- Plan follow-on Member Meetings quarterly starting approximately end-Aug;
- Review current status of CDA Strategic Plan, Comms Plan & Advocacy Plan; update or expand as necessary;
- Develop formalized advocacy process for planning advocacy, including specific procedures, templates, etc.;
- Review existing guidelines for development and use of profit vs NFP vs charitable status for assns, update or expand as necessary & distribute to assns;