



# Experiences of, and Attitudes Toward, Persons with Disabilities in the CF

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**Defence R&D Canada**  
**Centre for Operational Research and Analysis**

**Director General Military Personnel Strategy**  
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Technical Memorandum

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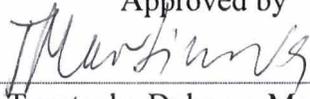
Author



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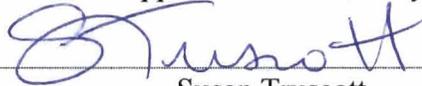


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## Abstract

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The Your-Say Survey is administered regularly by the Director of Personnel Applied Research in order to obtain information about Canadian Forces (CF) members' attitudes concerning a wide spectrum of human resource issues. The focus section of the Spring 2005 administration of the Your-Say Survey concentrated on issues relating to diversity and employment equity in the CF, with a key component of this section focused on persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the CF. Analyses were conducted (1) to assess PWDs' experiences in the CF, including accommodation, discrimination, and perceptions of fair treatment; (2) to assess CF members' attitudes and perceptions about PWDs in the CF and CF policies towards PWDs; and (3) quantitatively cross-validate some of the qualitative observations reported in the CF Employment Systems Review. Overall, although the results of this study indicate many positive aspects regarding the policies concerning PWDs in the CF and the perceptions and treatment of PWDs in the CF, a number of concerns were also noted.

## Résumé

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Le sondage À vous la parole est effectué régulièrement par le directeur – Recherche appliquée (personnel) en vue d'obtenir des renseignements au sujet des attitudes des membres des Forces canadiennes (FC) en ce qui concerne une variété de questions liées aux ressources humaines. La section thème du sondage À vous la parole mené au printemps 2005 était axée sur les questions liées à la diversité et à l'équité en matière d'emploi au sein des FC, et une des composantes clés de cette section portait sur les personnes handicapées au sein des FC. Des analyses ont été menées pour (1) évaluer les expériences des personnes handicapées au sein des FC, y compris en ce qui a trait aux mesures d'adaptation, à la discrimination et aux perceptions relatives au traitement équitable, pour (2) évaluer les attitudes et les perceptions des membres des FC en ce qui a trait aux personnes handicapées au sein des FC et aux politiques des FC concernant les personnes handicapées et pour (3) faire une validation croisée quantitative pour certaines des observations qualitatives rapportées dans l'étude des systèmes d'emploi des FC. Dans l'ensemble, même si les résultats de la présente étude indiquent de nombreux éléments positifs concernant les politiques relatives aux personnes handicapées au sein des FC et les perceptions et le traitement des personnes handicapées au sein des FC, différentes préoccupations ont également été notées.

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## Executive summary

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The Your-Say Survey is administered regularly by the Director of Personnel Applied Research in order to obtain information about Canadian Forces (CF) Regular Force members' attitudes about a wide spectrum of human resource issues. Each Your-Say Survey is comprised of three parts: a classification section, a core section, and a focus section. The classification section consists of demographic type variables such as age, sex, education, income and rank. The core section is used to regularly measure the same organizational variables over time to allow for comparisons and trend analyses. A specific focus section or sections are included in each administration to provide a means of conducting in-depth research or to measure topical issues of interest to leaders. The focus section of the Spring 2005 administration of the Your-Say concentrated on issues relating to diversity and employment equity. A key component of this focus section centered on persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the CF.

The participants came from two different samples: 1592 respondents that were randomly sampled, and 302 PWDs that were purposively over-sampled (in order to obtain sufficient numbers of this low incidence group). The Employment Equity (EE) focus section included a number of items used to learn about PWDs' experiences in the CF, including accommodation, discrimination, and perceptions of fair treatment. Several items were borrowed from the Public Service Employee Survey, which allowed for the comparison of responses between CF and public service personnel. Furthermore, several items from the 'core' section of the Your-Say questionnaire were analyzed from the EE perspective by comparing the responses of PWDs and non-PWDs.

Overall, although the results of this study indicate many positive aspects regarding the policies concerning PWDs in the CF, and the perceptions and treatment of PWDs in the CF, a number of concerns were also noted.

A number of areas of concern were reported by PWDs themselves. Although the majority of PWDs felt that, as a PWD, they had been treated fairly by supervisors, career managers, training providers, co-workers, and CF programs and policies, a significant minority of PWDs reported concerns in each of these areas, particularly with respect to treatment received by supervisors, career managers, and CF policies. In addition, PWDs reported being slightly less satisfied than non-PWDs with the treatment that they received from their supervisors. It is also of note that although many CF members with a disability believed that they received suitable accommodation, others did not receive appropriate accommodation, and many indicated that their career was negatively affected. Furthermore, although many PWDs reported that their requests for accommodation were received with sensitivity and understanding, a fair number did not feel that their request was received appropriately, and some felt stigmatized or resented. Moreover, a significant proportion of PWDs did not request accommodation for their disability because they did not feel comfortable asking or because they believed that it would have negative effects on their careers. Another area of concern was that PWDs were more likely

than non-PWDs to have experienced discrimination on the job, and much of this discrimination was based on mental or physical disability.

Nevertheless, it is heartening that most PWDs reported fair treatment by co-workers, which may speak most directly to these individuals' general and immediate working environments. Furthermore, PWDs in the CF did not experience higher rates of discrimination than PWDs in DND, which is encouraging considering that all CF members have to meet fitness standards and requirements of universality of service that do not apply to civilian employees of DND. It is particularly encouraging that most Regular Force CF respondents had positive attitudes towards their fellow members with disabilities, and were in favour of policies that offer assistance and support to PWDs. However, many CF members felt that members with disabilities should receive more assistance and better treatment than they are currently receiving.

Recommendations stemming from these research findings are consistent with recommendations in the CF EE Plan (Canadian Forces Employment Equity Plan, 2006), will further the CF's accordance with the Employment Equity Act (1995), and most importantly, help to ensure the appropriate treatment of members in uniform who become injured or disabled.

## Sommaire

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Le sondage À vous la parole est mené régulièrement par le directeur – Recherche appliquée (personnel) pour obtenir des renseignements au sujet des attitudes des militaires de la Force régulière des Forces canadiennes (FC) concernant une variété de questions relatives aux ressources humaines. Chaque sondage À vous la parole comprend trois parties : une section de classification, une section principale et une section thème. La section de classification comprend des variables démographiques types comme l'âge, le sexe, l'éducation, le revenu et le grade. La section principale est utilisée pour mesurer régulièrement les mêmes variables organisationnelles avec le temps afin d'effectuer des comparaisons et des analyses des tendances. Une ou des sections thèmes sont incluses dans chaque sondage afin de permettre une recherche en profondeur ou de mesurer des questions d'actualité d'intérêt pour les dirigeants. La section thème du sondage À vous la parole du printemps 2005 portait sur des questions liées à la diversité et à l'équité en matière d'emploi. Un élément clé de cette section thème portait sur les personnes handicapées au sein des FC.

Les participants provenaient de deux échantillons distincts : 1 592 répondants choisis au hasard et un suréchantillon voulu de 302 personnes handicapées (afin d'obtenir suffisamment de données pour ce groupe comprenant peu de représentants). La section thème sur l'équité en matière d'emploi (EE) comprenait différents éléments employés pour en apprendre davantage sur les expériences des personnes handicapées au sein des FC y compris en ce qui a trait aux mesures d'adaptation, à la discrimination et aux perceptions relatives au traitement équitable. Plusieurs éléments ont été empruntés au Sondage auprès des fonctionnaires fédéraux, ce qui a permis de faire des comparaisons entre les réponses des FC et celles des fonctionnaires fédéraux. De plus, plusieurs éléments de section « principale » du questionnaire À vous la parole ont été analysés du point de vue de l'EE par une comparaison des réponses des personnes handicapées et des autres répondants.

Dans l'ensemble, même si les résultats de cette étude indiquent de nombreux éléments positifs en ce qui a trait aux politiques liées aux personnes handicapées au sein des FC et aux perceptions et au traitement des personnes handicapées au sein des FC, différentes préoccupations ont également été soulignées.

Différentes préoccupations ont été rapportées par les personnes handicapées elles-mêmes. Même si la majorité des personnes handicapées étaient d'avis que, en tant que personnes handicapées, elles avaient été traitées équitablement par les superviseurs, les gestionnaires de carrière, les fournisseurs d'instruction, les collègues de travail et les programmes et politiques des FC, une minorité importante de personnes handicapées ont fait part de préoccupations pour tous ces secteurs, surtout en ce qui a trait au traitement par les superviseurs, les gestionnaires de carrière et aux politiques des FC. De plus, les personnes handicapées ont rapporté une satisfaction légèrement inférieure à celle des autres répondants en ce qui concerne le traitement reçu des superviseurs. Remarquez également que, même si bon nombre des membres des FC parmi les personnes handicapées étaient d'avis qu'ils ont obtenu des mesures

d'adaptation adéquates, d'autres n'ont pas reçu de mesures adéquates et de nombreuses personnes handicapées ont mentionné un effet négatif sur leur carrière. De plus, même si de nombreuses personnes handicapées ont mentionné que leurs demandes relatives à des mesures d'adaptation ont été reçues avec sensibilité et compréhension, un nombre assez élevé de ces personnes considéraient que leurs demandes n'avaient pas été reçues adéquatement et quelques-unes ont senti une stigmatisation ou un rejet. En outre, une proportion importante des personnes handicapées n'ont pas fait de demande relative à des mesures d'adaptation parce qu'elles n'étaient pas à l'aise de le faire ou parce qu'elles croyaient que cela aurait un effet négatif sur leur carrière. Un autre secteur de préoccupation était que les personnes handicapées risquaient davantage de subir de la discrimination au travail que les autres répondants et que cette discrimination était en grande partie fondée sur un handicap mental ou physique.

Malgré tout, il est encourageant de voir que la plupart des personnes handicapées ont rapporté un traitement équitable par leurs collègues de travail, ce qui représente un indicateur plus direct de l'environnement de travail général et immédiat de ces personnes. De plus, les personnes handicapées au sein des FC n'ont pas rapporté un taux de discrimination supérieur que les personnes handicapées au sein du MDN, ce qui est encourageant si l'on considère que tous les membres des FC doivent respecter des normes de condition physique et des exigences liées au principe de l'universalité du service qui ne s'appliquent pas aux employés civils du MDN. Il est particulièrement encourageant de voir que les répondants membres de la Force régulière des FC avaient des attitudes positives envers les personnes handicapées membres des FC et qu'ils appuyaient les politiques visant à offrir de l'aide et un soutien aux personnes handicapées. Cependant, de nombreux membres des FC étaient d'avis que les personnes handicapées devraient recevoir davantage d'aide ou un meilleur traitement qu'à l'heure actuelle.

Les recommandations liées aux résultats de la recherche sont conformes aux recommandations du Plan d'EE des FC (Plan d'équité en matière d'emploi des Forces canadiennes, 2006), elles permettront d'accroître le respect de la *Loi sur l'équité en matière d'emploi* (1995) par les FC et, plus important encore, elles aideront à veiller au traitement adéquat des militaires qui se blessent ou qui deviennent handicapés.

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Background

The Your-Say Survey is administered regularly by the Directorate of Personnel Applied Research in order to obtain information about Canadian Forces (CF) members' attitudes about a wide spectrum of personnel issues. Each Your-Say Survey is comprised of three parts: a classification section, a core section, and a focus section. The classification section consists of demographic type variables such as age, sex, education, income and rank. The core section is used to regularly measure the same organizational variables over time to allow for comparisons and trend analyses. A specific focus section or sections are included in each administration of the Your-Say survey to provide a means of conducting in-depth research or to measure topical issues of interest to leaders (Norton, 2005). The focus section of the spring 2005 administration of the Your-Say concentrated on issues relating to diversity and employment equity (EE) in the CF. A key component of this focus section centered on persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the CF.

## 1.2 Aim

This investigation aimed to:

1. Assess PWDs' experiences in the CF, including accommodation, discrimination, and perceptions of fair treatment;
2. Assess CF members' attitudes and perceptions about PWDs in the CF and CF policies towards PWDs;
3. Quantitatively cross-validate some of the qualitative observations reported in the CF Employment Systems Review (CF ESR) (Ajilon Consulting, 2004).

## 2. Methodology

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### 2.1 Sampling

The survey participants came from two different samples: the general sample and the PWD over-sample. Different sampling methodologies were used to obtain these two respective samples.

#### 2.1.1 General Sample

##### 2.1.1.1 *Population of Interest and Sampling Frame*

The target population was all Regular Force Personnel with the exception of Officer Cadets, personnel with less than one year of service, and members on Subsidized University Training. These three groups were not included in the population of interest because respondents' ability to answer many of the questions on the survey required that they have sufficient and recent exposure to the organization. In addition, 9,035 personnel who were sampled in 2004 by Director of Military Employment Policy were removed from the sampling frame in order to prevent the over-surveying of these individuals<sup>1</sup>. This resulted in a sampling frame of 47,537 Regular Force personnel from which the sample was selected, using the sampling method described below.

##### 2.1.1.2 *Sampling Method*

The general sample was selected using stratified random sampling. With this approach, the population is divided into subsets (called strata) before selecting a sample within each of these subsets. This method increases precision of the overall population estimates by ensuring that the number of individuals selected from each stratum for the sample is proportional to the number of individuals in each stratum in the population of interest. The characteristics that were used to stratify the sample included Level One (L1) organization [i.e., Chief of the Land Staff (CLS), Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Chief of the Maritime Staff (CMS), Chief of Military Personnel (CMP), Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (DCDS), Assistant Deputy Minister Material (ADM Mat), ADM

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<sup>1</sup> These personnel came from the following military occupational classifications: 116, 117, 118, 121, 135, 207, 334, 161, and 164.

Information Management or (ADM IM), and Other<sup>2</sup>] and rank [i.e., Junior and Senior Officers and Non-Commissioned Members (NCMs)<sup>3</sup>] within each L1 organization.

The response rate was estimated to be 35% based on other recent and comparable studies in the Department. Therefore, it was decided to survey 3,000 personnel in order to achieve an overall margin of error of  $\pm 3\%$  for the actual sample with 95% confidence.

## **2.1.2 Designated Group Member Over-Sampling**

### **2.1.2.1 Populations of Interest**

For many of the analyses it was necessary to examine the responses of PWDs, in particular, in order to assess their experiences within CF employment systems, and to compare their responses to those of non-PWDs. However, PWDs are a ‘low incidence group’ with respect to their representation in the CF (i.e., 845 PWDs<sup>4</sup>). Thus, the number of individuals from this group that would be selected for the sample if the stratified random sampling technique (used for selecting the general sample) were used, would be too low to conduct meaningful analyses. As a result, it was necessary to purposively over-sample PWDs, in order to be able to obtain a large enough sub-sample from which results could be generalized to the population of interest – that is, to all PWDs in the Regular Force.

### **2.1.2.2 Sampling Frames and Sampling Method**

The sampling frame for the over-sampling of PWDs was comprised of all personnel that self-identified as a PWD on the Canadian Forces Self-Identification Census (DMGIEE website, 2005) and that indicated that their responses could be used for human resource planning purposes.

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<sup>2</sup> The remaining L1 organizations were collapsed into an “other” category based on size: Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff (VCDS), ADM (Finance and Corporate Services), Judge Advocate General (JAG), ADM (Infrastructure and Environment), ADM (Public Affairs), ADM (Science and Technology), ADM (Policy), Chief Review Services (CRS), Chief Military Judge (CMJ), ADM (Human Resources-Civilian), National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ).

<sup>3</sup> Junior NCMs included Pte/OS/AB, Cpl/LS, and MCpl/MS; Senior NCMs included Sgt/PO2, WO/PO1, MWO/CPO2, and CWO/CPO1; Junior Officers included 2Lt/A-SLt, Lt/SLt, and Capt/Lt(N); Senior Officers included Maj/Lcdr, LCol/Cdr, Col/Capt(N), General/Flag.

<sup>4</sup> As of 6 April 2005 when the sample frames were drawn.

Furthermore, this over-sample sampling frame was cross-checked with the general sampling frame so as not to include individuals in both samples and to avoid mailing potential respondents more than one survey. Individuals who were in both sampling frames were retained in the sampling frame of the general sample, but were removed from the over-sample sampling frame. In this way the proportion of PWDs in the general sample would be similar to the proportion of this group in the overall Regular Force CF population, so that results from the general sample would be representative of the CF Regular Force population.

This resulted in a sampling frame of 576 PWDs. Because the resultant number of individuals in this sampling frame was relatively small, and only 35% of these individuals were expected to respond to the survey<sup>5</sup>, a simple purposive sampling approach was used. Specifically, all personnel from this sampling frame were sampled (i.e., mailed the Your-Say Survey).

### **2.1.3 Response Rates**

#### **2.1.3.1 General Sample**

The overall response rate for the general sample was 50.9%, which was quite a bit higher than the projected response rate of 35.0%, and higher than the 44.7% response rate obtained in the previous administration of the Your-Say Survey, which was administered in June of 2004 (Norton, 2005). The overall margin of error for this survey was  $\pm 2.4\%$  with 95% confidence, in the obtained results, meaning that the results reported here are correct 19 times out of 20.

#### **2.1.3.2 Designated Group Member Over-Sample**

The PWD over-sample sampling frame was comprised of 576 personnel and a total of 302 personnel self-identified as being a PWD on the Your-Say Survey. However, it is not possible to calculate a true response rate because not all individuals who were selected for the over-sample by way of their responses on the CF Self-Identification Census still self-identified as being members of that group on the Your-Say Survey.

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<sup>5</sup> There was no *a priori* reason to expect that the response rates of PWDs would differ from those of non-PWDs.

#### **2.1.4 Sample Used Based on Type of Analysis**

PWDs. When analyses entailed making comparisons between PWDs and non-PWDs all respondents who self-identified as being a PWD on the Your-Say survey, regardless of whether they were drawn from the general sample or through the PWD over-sampling, were considered PWDs and were included. Given that a purposive approach was used to sample PWDs, this does not compromise the randomness of the PWD subsample, since the majority of them were not selected randomly in the first place. In addition, this helped to increase the sample size for this group.

General CF Sample. When analyses entailed making observations about the overall attitudes and perceptions of Regular Force CF members towards PWDs, only individuals from the general sample, selected using the stratified random sampling approach, were included. This helped to maintain the representativeness of the general sample and allowed for the findings to be generalized to the overall CF Regular Force population.

#### **2.1.5 Sample Characteristics**

The characteristics of the general sample and the PWD focus sample are presented in Table 1. Analyses regarding the overall CF population (i.e., based on the general sample) were weighted by L1 organization and rank group to ensure that the proportions of respondents in the sample were representative of the proportions in the CF population with respect to L1 organization and rank group. The proportions of respondents from the general and PWD sample within the L1 organizations and the rank categories are not directly comparable, due to the different sampling methodologies used to select these respective samples<sup>6</sup>. The proportion of the respondents by environment and by sex do not appear to be markedly different between the 2 samples, but those in the PWD focus sample are somewhat more likely to report English as their first official language than those in the general sample.

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<sup>6</sup> The general sample was allocated using the square-root of N-proportional allocation in order to maximize the precision of the estimates within each of the strata on these two variables.

**Table 1. Sample Characteristics<sup>7</sup>**

CHARACTERISTIC	GENERAL SAMPLE (N = 1592)		PWD SAMPLE (N = 302)	
	#	%	#	%
<b>L1 ORGANIZATION</b>				
CLS	366	24.0	106	37.1
CAS	338	22.1	65	22.7
CMS	219	14.3	36	12.6
CMP	135	8.8	15	5.2
DCDS	132	8.6	15	5.2
ADM (Material)	125	8.2	18	6.3
ADM (IM)	84	5.5	5	1.7
Other	129	8.4	26	9.1
<b>RANK</b>				
Junior NCM	432	27.3	145	48.5
Senior NCM	486	30.7	99	33.1
Junior Officer	321	20.3	33	11.0
Senior Officer	345	21.8	22	7.4
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>				
Land	684	43.3	159	52.8
Air	598	37.9	91	30.2
Sea	296	18.8	51	16.9
<b>SEX</b>				
Male	1359	86.6	265	88.3
Female	210	13.4	35	11.7
<b>FIRST OFFICIAL LANGUAGE</b>				
English	1089	68.8	257	85.7
French	494	31.2	43	14.3

<sup>7</sup> Valid percent was used as the percentage per group due to missing data. From the general sample, 64 cases were missing L1 Organization, 8 were missing rank category, 14 were missing environment, 23 were missing sex, and 9 were missing first official language. From the PWD focus sample, 16 cases were missing L1 Organization, 3 was missing rank category, 1 was missing environment, 2 were missing sex, and 2 were missing first official language.

## 2.2 Questionnaire

### 2.2.1 Experiences and Perceptions of PWDs

A number of items were used to learn about PWDs' experiences in the CF, including accommodation, discrimination, and perceptions of fair treatment. Several items were borrowed from the Public Service Employee Survey, which allowed for the comparison of responses between CF and public service personnel. Furthermore, several items from the 'core' section of the Your-Say questionnaire were analyzed from the EE perspective by comparing the responses of PWDs and non-PWDs.

#### 2.2.1.1 *Fair Treatment*

PWDs were asked to rate how fairly they feel they have been treated by:

- supervisors,
- career managers,
- training providers,
- co-workers, and
- CF policies and programs.

#### 2.2.1.2 *Supervisor Treatment*

The core section of the Your-Say Survey contained 25 items asking respondents about their perceptions of their immediate supervisors (i.e., the individuals that write their Performance Evaluation Review). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to each item on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Ten of the 25 items spoke directly to treatment of each respondent by the supervisor (e.g., Treats me fairly when decisions are being made; Really cares about my well-being) while the other 15 items spoke more generally to the supervisor's characteristics and job effectiveness (e.g., Successfully solves problems; Maintains order and discipline). The items that spoke directly to the respondents' treatment by the supervisor were of particular relevance, and were used to compare the perceptions of PWDs and non-PWDs.

The ten items of interest were combined into a composite index called 'Supervisor Treatment' (item total correlations ranged from .64 to .81). The scale showed high internal consistency (Chronbach's  $\alpha = .94$ ). This, along with the item-total correlations, indicates that the items in the composite index are highly related and are measuring the same underlying concept.

### **2.2.1.3 Accommodation**

Individuals who self-identified as being PWDs were asked whether they had requested accommodation due to their disability in the CF, how they were treated if they did ask to be accommodated, and why they did not request accommodation if they did not ask to be accommodated. Accommodation was defined as:

*Formal or informal changes to your working conditions or environment required either 1) as a result of a formally documented permanent change in medical category which will/has resulted in career action such as Medical Employment Limitations (MEL); or 2) to help one deal with temporary or permanent disability-related issues which will not result in MEL and/or prevent to prevent medical problems from occurring.*

### **2.2.1.4 Discrimination**

A number of questions were presented to assess respondents' experiences of discrimination. First, respondents were asked whether they have been a victim of discrimination on the job in the past two years. Response options were 'never,' 'once or twice,' and 'more than twice.' The following definition of discrimination, taken from the Public Service Employee Survey (2002), was provided:

*Discrimination means to treat someone differently or unfairly because of a personal characteristic or distinction which whether intentional or not, has an effect which imposes disadvantages not imposed upon other or which withholds or limits access to other members of society. There are eleven prohibited grounds under the Canadian Human Rights Act: race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, mental or physical disability and pardoned conviction.*

Those respondents that reported having experienced discrimination within the past two years were asked:

- from whom they experienced discrimination;
- whether they complained about discrimination within the last 12 months; and
- if they did not complain about the discrimination that they experienced, they were asked why they did not complain.

## **2.2.2 Attitudes and Perceptions of CF Policies Towards PWDs**

A number of questions were included to assess CF members' attitudes and perceptions of CF policies of PWDs, such as "The CF releases too many good people because they have a disability" and "Members with disabilities should be released, rather than spending resources attempting to rehabilitate and retain them."

## **2.2.3 Disclosing Disability or Injury**

All participants were asked several questions assessing how comfortable they would feel to disclose having a disability. For example, "If I had a disability I would not disclose it for fear that it would negatively affect my career" and "If I had posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) I would not want the CF to know about it."

## **2.2.4 Employment Systems Review (ESR) Cross-Validation**

A number of the questions in this survey were created to quantitatively cross-validate some of the observations reported in the CF ESR (Ajilon Consulting, 2004). The ESR is a review of all employment systems, policies, and practices in order to identify employment barriers to designated group members (DGMs) in the CF. However, the ESR is a distinctly qualitative piece of research, and was based largely on consultations with available individuals within the CF. Further, it was based on a small sample of PWDs (N = 23). Thus, although the ESR presented a comprehensive overview with respect to identifying and highlighting many of the diverse issues and barriers related to PWDs, it was not possible to appreciate the severity and prevalence with which these issues were occurring. As a result, a quantitative follow-up was warranted, and was carried out by translating some of the rich qualitative observations reported in the ESR into survey items that were then presented to a large representative sample of CF members.

## **2.3 Procedure**

Once the questionnaire was developed and formatted, a pre-testing phase was conducted to improve the questionnaire and the quality and clarity of the questions. This process was useful for assessing problems related to poor question wording, discovering problems related to sequencing, and errors in layout or instructions. This process was also informative for estimating the time needed to complete the questionnaire.

A pre-notice letter was sent out in advance of the survey to inform potential respondents that a survey would be mailed to them, explain the nature of the research, and encourage their participation. An example of the pre-notice letter can be found in Annex A. Several weeks after the mailing of the pre-notice letter, all individuals in the sampling frame described above were mailed the Your-Say to complete and return.

### 3. Results

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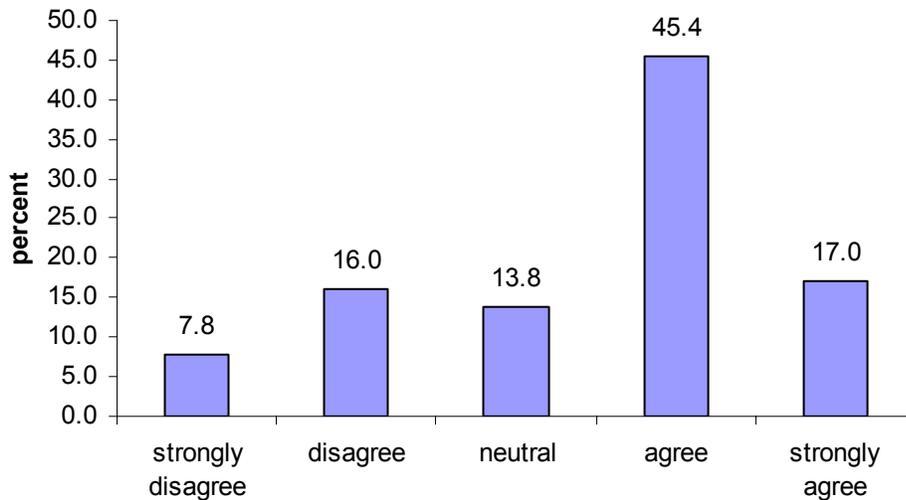
#### 3.1 Experiences and Perceptions of PWDs

##### 3.1.1 Fair Treatment

In order to assess whether PWDs feel they have been treated fairly in the CF, respondents who identified as PWDs were presented with the item “As a CF member with a disability, I feel that I have been treated fairly by...” and asked to indicate their degree of agreement on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) with respect to the treatment they received from:

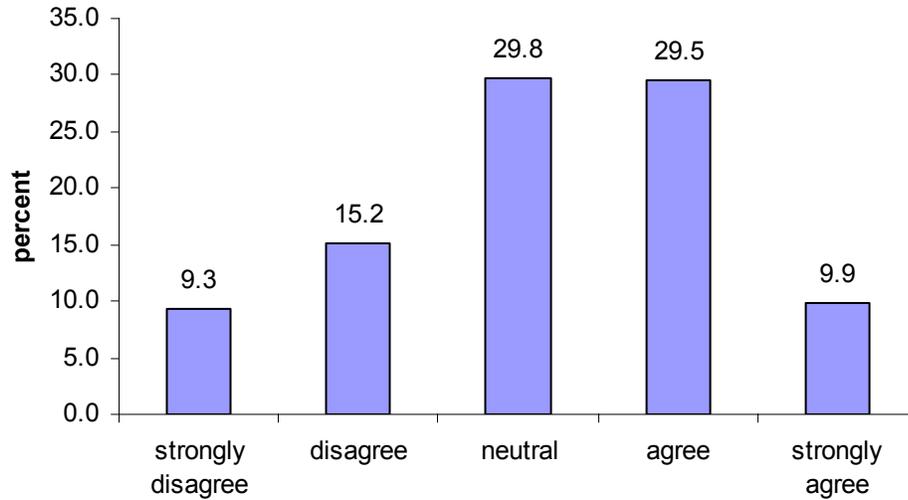
- supervisors;
- career managers;
- training providers;
- co-workers;
- and CF policies and programs.

As shown in Figure 1, the majority of PWDs felt that they had been treated fairly by supervisors, although approximately one quarter did not feel that supervisors treated them fairly.



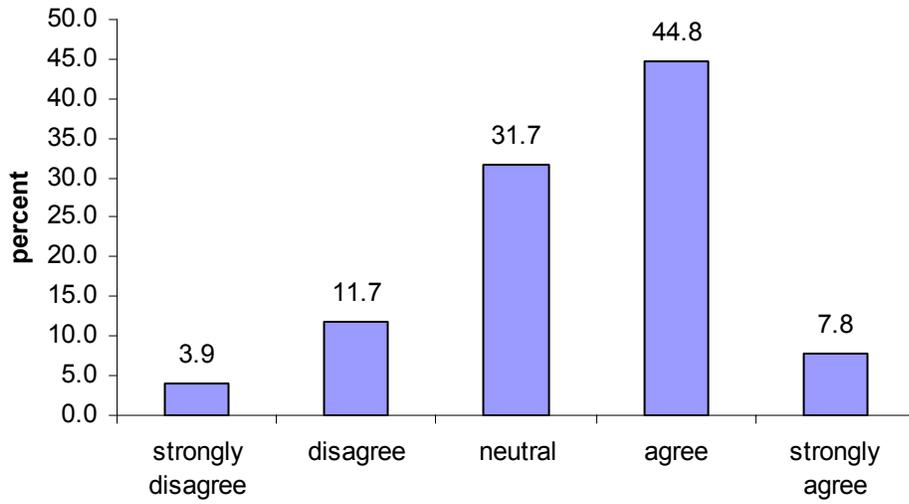
**Figure 1. Reports of Fair Treatment by Supervisors**

As shown in Figure 2, approximately 40% of PWDs felt that, as PWDs, they had been treated fairly by career managers, a third felt neutral with respect to whether career managers treated them fairly, and approximately a quarter did not feel that they received fair treatment from career managers.



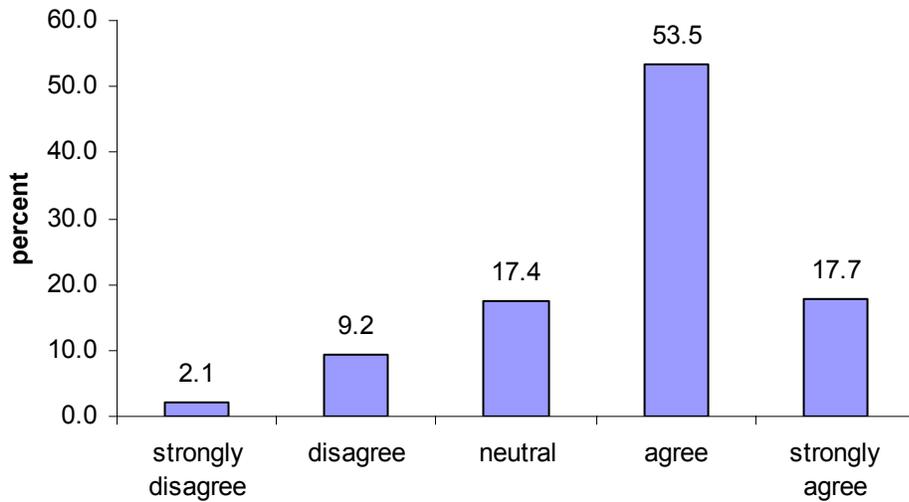
**Figure 2. Reports of Fair Treatment by Career Managers**

Over half of the PWDs felt that they had been treated fairly by training providers, another third felt neutral in this regard, and approximately 15% indicated that, as PWDs, they did not receive fair treatment from training providers, as illustrated in Figure 3.



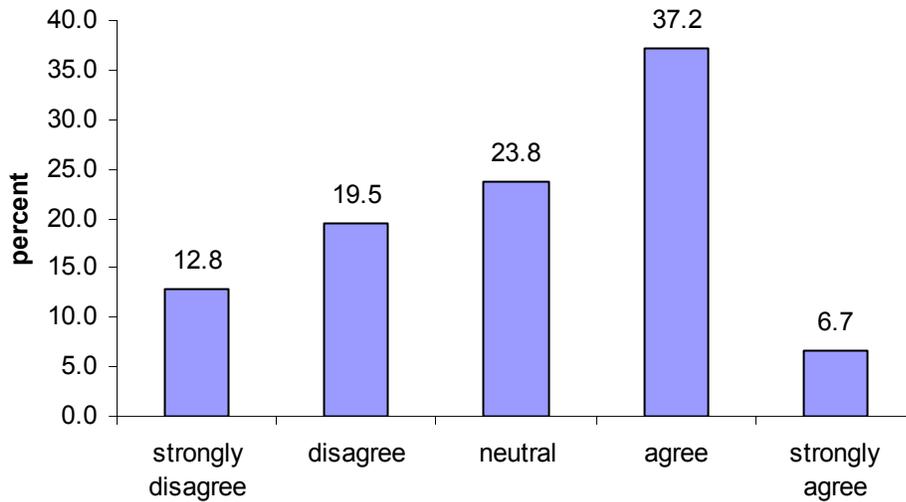
**Figure 3. Reports of Fair Treatment by Training Providers**

The vast majority of PWDs felt that they had been treated fairly by co-workers, although approximately 10% disagreed, as illustrated in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Reports of Fair Treatment by Co-Workers**

As shown in Figure 5, although over 40% of PWDs reported feeling fairly treated by CF policies and programs, approximately one third disagreed.



**Figure 5. Reports of Fair Treatment by CF Policies and Programs**

### 3.1.2 Supervisor Treatment

Ten items spoke directly to treatment by one’s immediate supervisor. Respondents had been asked to indicate their level of agreement to each of these items on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Respondents’ perceptions of the treatment they receive from their immediate supervisors was then assessed by combining scores on these 10 items into a composite index termed ‘supervisor treatment.’

On average, PWDs ( $M = 3.45$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ) were slightly less satisfied with the treatment they received from their supervisors than non-PWDs ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ),  $t(380) = -4.61$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $w^2 = .01$ . However, the majority of respondents from both groups were at least somewhat satisfied with the treatment they received.

### 3.1.3 Accommodation

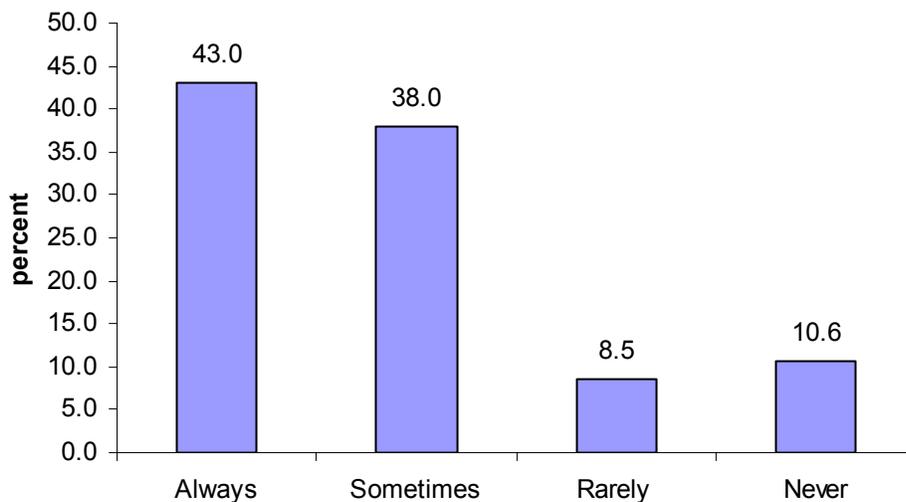
When asked “Have you ever asked to be accommodated due to disability in the CF?” approximately half (51.5%) of the PWDs indicated that they have asked for accommodation and half (48.5%) indicated that they have not asked for accommodation.

### 3.1.3.1 Outcome of Requesting Accommodation

To assess the outcome of requesting accommodation, the PWDs that had requested accommodation due to disability were then asked to rate the following items on a scale of 1 (always) to 4 (never):

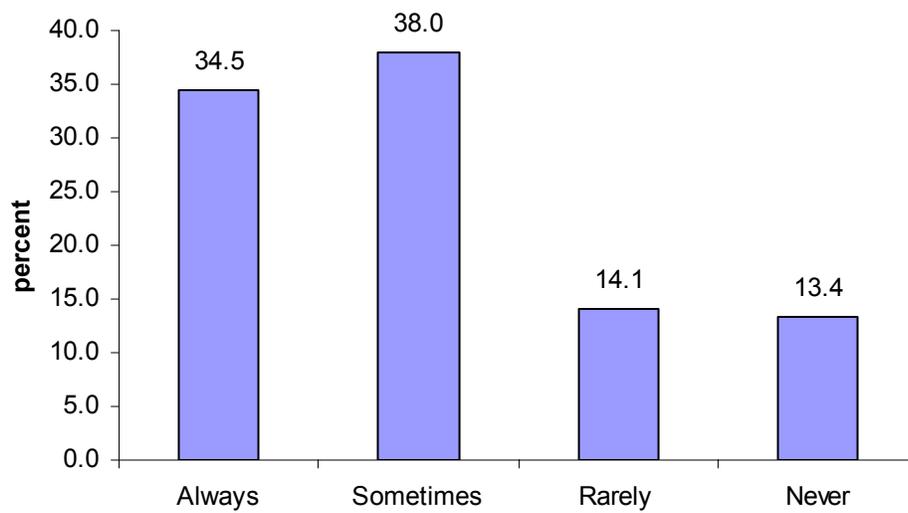
- I received accommodation to suit my needs
- My request was received with sensitivity and understanding
- I felt stigmatized or resented
- My career was negatively affected

As shown in Figure 6, a large proportion of PWDs indicated that they received accommodation to suit their needs at least sometimes. However, almost 20% indicated that they rarely or never received appropriate accommodation.



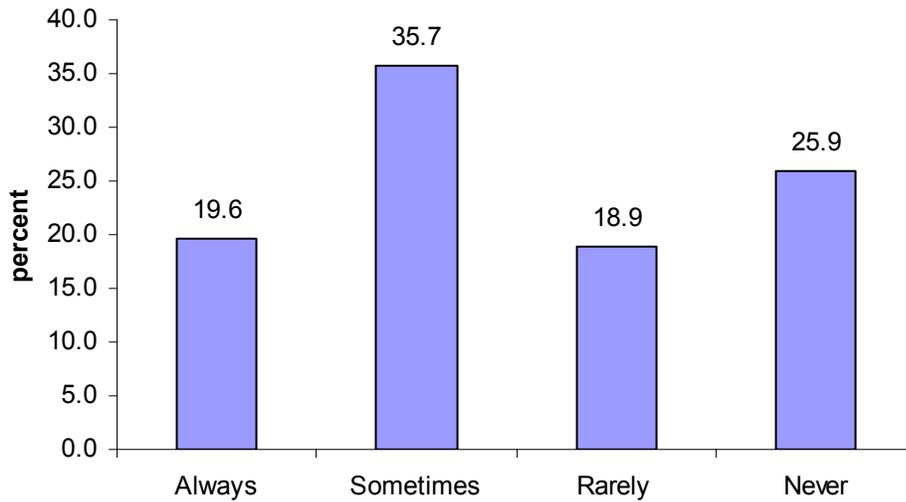
**Figure 6. Responses to “I received accommodation to suit my needs”**

Although a large proportion of PWDs indicated that their request was always received with sensitivity and understanding, and another large proportion indicated their request was sometimes properly received, almost a third of the respondents felt that they were rarely or never treated with sensitivity and understanding upon requesting accommodation, as shown in Figure 7.



**Figure 7. Responses to “My request was received with sensitivity and understanding”**

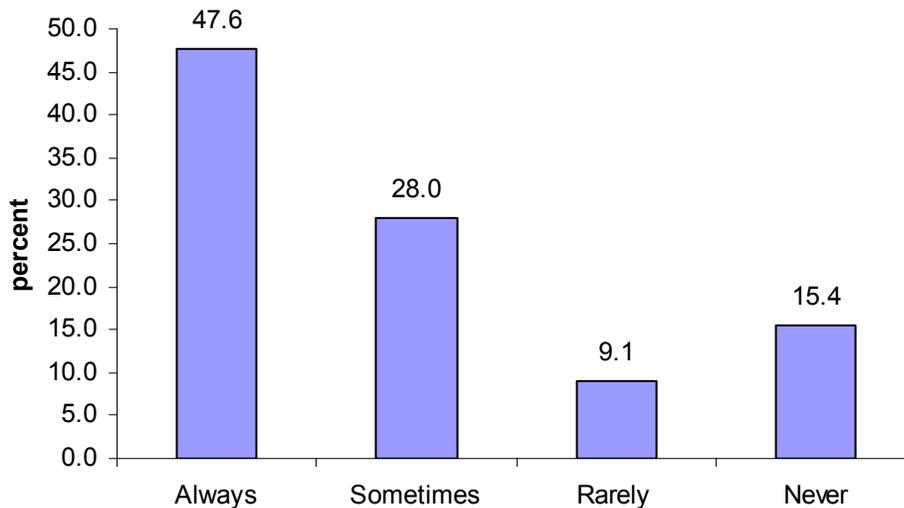
Although approximately 45% of PWDs reported that they rarely or never felt stigmatized or resented, approximately a third indicated that they did sometimes feel this way, and another fifth indicated that they always felt stigmatized or resented upon asking for accommodation, as shown in Figure 8.



**Figure 8. Responses to “I felt stigmatized or resented”**

As shown in Figure 9, almost half of PWDs who requested accommodation reported that their career was always negatively affected, and almost a third indicated that their career was sometimes negatively affected. This is not particularly surprising given that “all CF members must meet the universality of service standards, which require them to perform any lawful duty and to be operationally employable, deployable, and physically fit” (p. 10, National Defence, 2005) and disabled members who are being accommodated via programs are not eligible for promotion (Ajilon, 2004).

These results accord with the findings reported in the ESR, where it was noted that, “Placement of a member in an accommodation status has significant and profound career implications. According to the medical accommodation policy, such a member is not normally considered for promotion, career courses.” (Ajilon, 2005, p. 77). Similarly, the new Defence Administrative Orders and Directives (DAODs) on Universality of Service indicate that the requirements to meet the minimum operational standards are “now a prerequisite for promotion. Any exception to this requirement must be personally approved by the CDS” (CANFORGEN 087/06 CMP 040 081835Z, 2006).



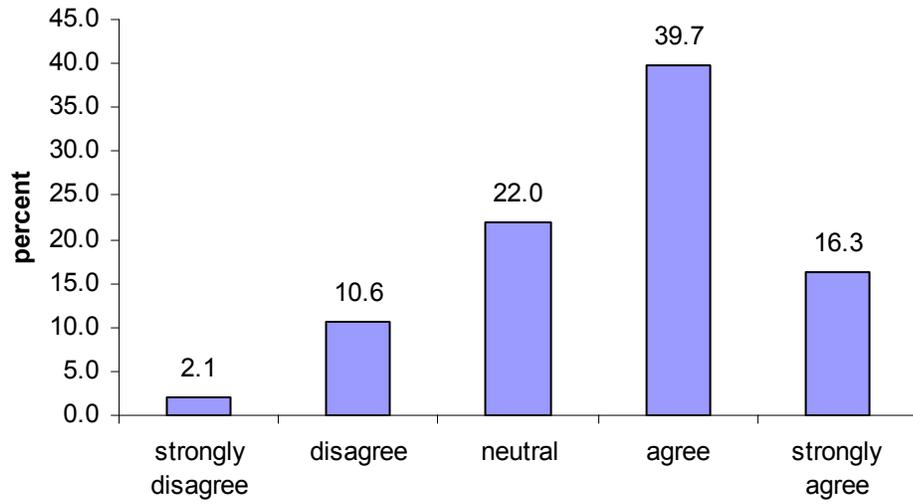
**Figure 9. Responses to “My career was negatively affected”**

### **3.1.3.2 Reasons for not Requesting Accommodation**

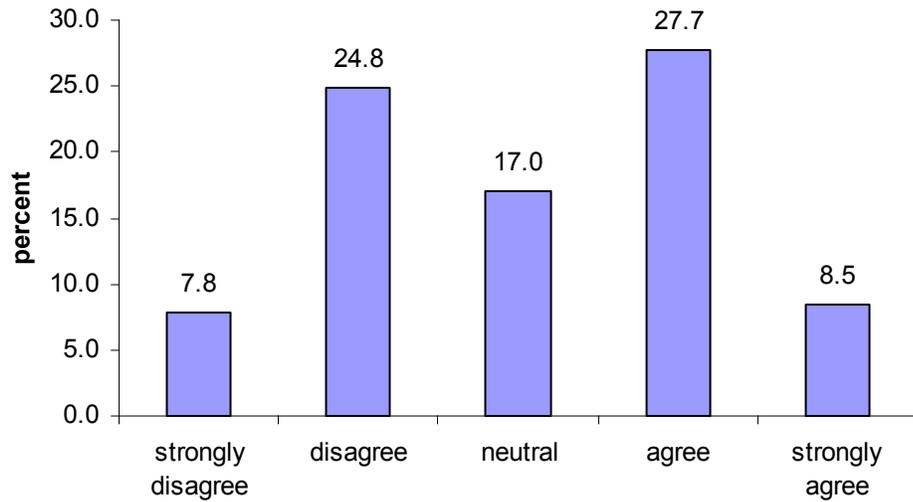
PWDs who did not request to be accommodated were asked to rate the degree to which the following reasons for not requesting accommodation applied to them, on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree):

- I didn’t require accommodation
- I didn’t feel comfortable asking
- I was worried it would affect my career

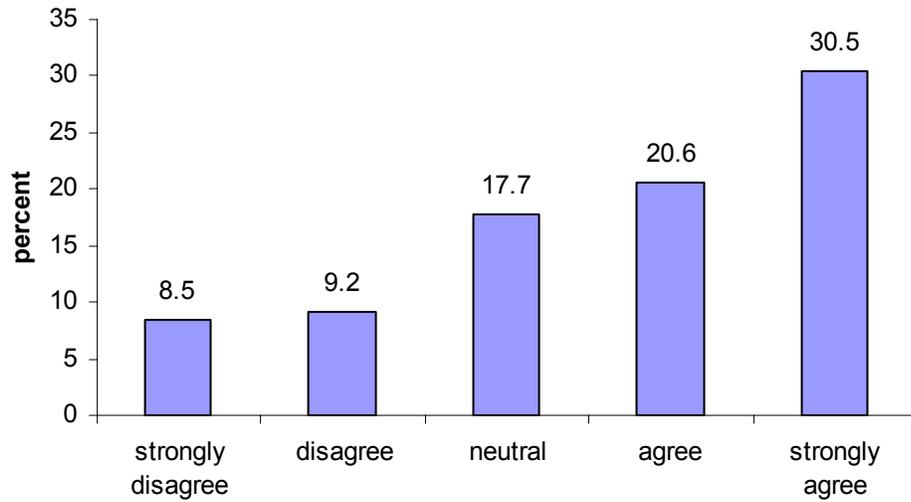
As shown in Figure 10, of those PWDs that did not request to be accommodated, at least half did not ask to be accommodated for their disability because they did not feel that they required accommodation. However, at least one third did not ask to be accommodated for their disability because they did not feel comfortable asking, as illustrated in Figure 11, and approximately half did not ask to be accommodated because they believed it would have negative effects on their career, as illustrated in Figure 12.



**Figure 10. Proportions of PWDs that Did Not Ask to be Accommodated Because They Did Not Require Accommodation**



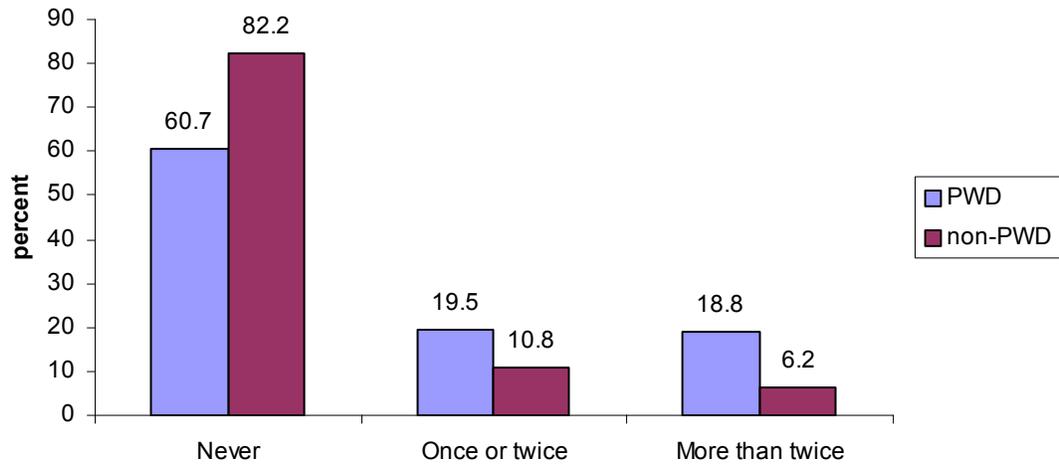
**Figure 11. Proportions of PWDs that Did Not Ask to be Accommodated Because They Did Not Feel Comfortable Asking**



**Figure 12. Proportions of PWDs that Did Not Ask to be Accommodated Because They Were Worried it Would Affect Their Career**

### 3.1.4 Discrimination

Experiences of discrimination were assessed by asking the question “In the past two years, have you been the victim of discrimination on the job?” to which respondents could indicate ‘never,’ ‘once or twice,’ or ‘more than twice.’ As shown in Figure 13, a greater proportion of PWDs than non-PWDs reported having experienced discrimination on the job. Not surprisingly, 76.3% of PWDs who believed that they experienced discrimination reported having been discriminated against based on ‘mental or physical disability,’ as compared to only 4.5% of non-PWDs who had experienced discrimination.

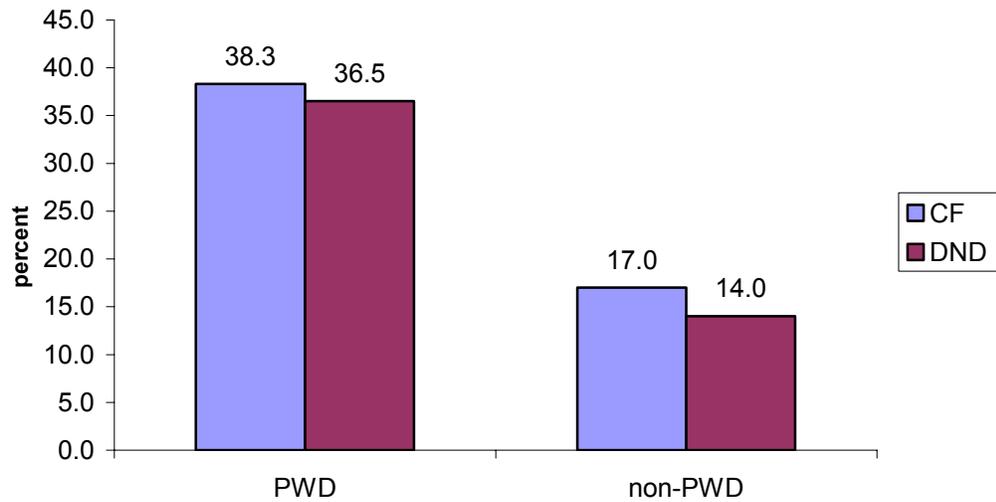


**Figure 13. Experiences of Discrimination on the Job in the Past Two Years**

The question of whether respondents had experienced discrimination in the past two years was also asked of Department of National Defence (DND) civilian employees via the Public Service Employee Survey (2002). Thus, it was possible to compare the responses of CF personnel to those of DND employees<sup>8</sup>. As shown in Figure 14, PWDs experienced similar rates of discrimination in the CF as in DND.

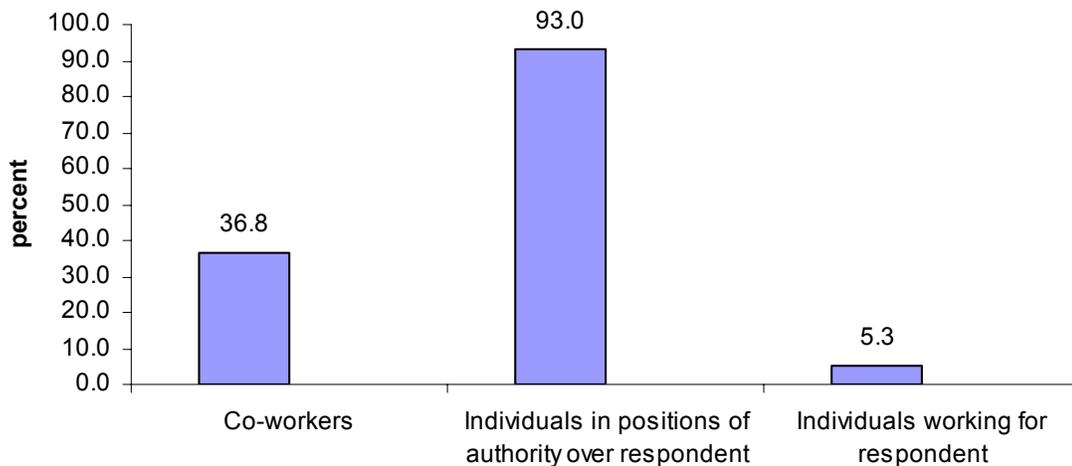
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<sup>8</sup> Surveys to Public Service Employees and CF members were administered several years apart. It is assumed that experiences of discrimination would not have changed considerably in this time period.



**Figure 14. Discrimination in the CF and in DND**

PWDs who indicated having experienced discrimination in the past two years were asked to specify from whom this discrimination was experienced. Response options included ‘co-workers,’ ‘individuals with authority over me,’ and ‘individuals working for me.’ Respondents were asked to mark all that apply. As illustrated in Figure 15, the vast majority of PWDs who had experienced discrimination had been discriminated against by those with authority over them, with a fair proportion also having experienced discrimination from co-workers.



**Figure 15. Perpetrators of Discrimination**

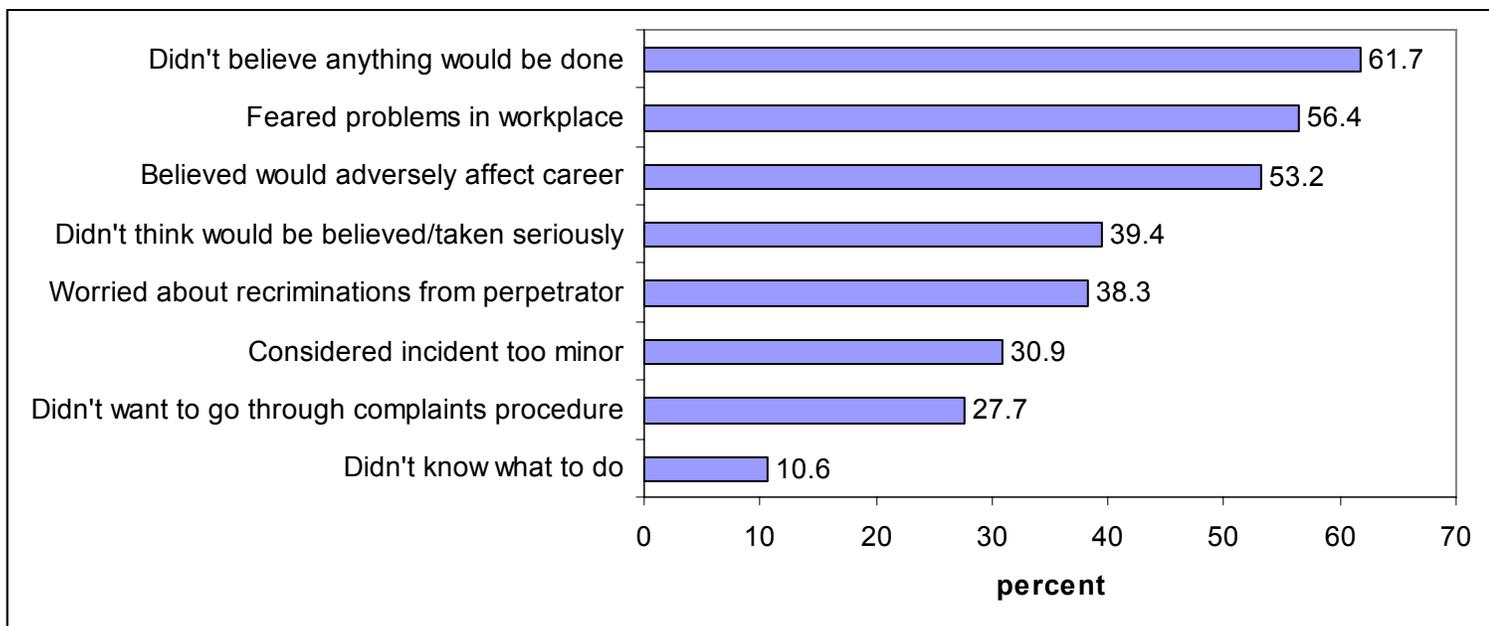
PWDs who indicated having experienced discrimination in the past two years were also asked whether or not they complained about discrimination in the last 12 months. Overall, 21.0% of PWDs who had experienced discrimination had complained about this discrimination<sup>9</sup>.

PWDs who did not complain about discrimination were asked why they did not complain. The following possible reasons were presented, and respondents were asked to mark all that apply:

- didn't know what to do;
- considered the incident(s) to be too minor to report;
- did not think people would believe me/take me seriously;
- did not want to go through the complaints procedure;
- believed such a step might adversely affect my career;
- was worried that there would be recriminations from the perpetrator(s);
- thought it would cause problems in my workplace; and
- did not believe anything would be done if I did complain.

The frequency with which each reason for not complaining was identified is presented in Figure 16. The most common reasons for not complaining were not believing that anything would be done about the complaint, followed by fearing problems in the workplace and believing that complaining would adversely affect the respondent's career.

<sup>9</sup> Although likely this is partly due to the fact that some of the complaints occurred longer than 12 months ago.

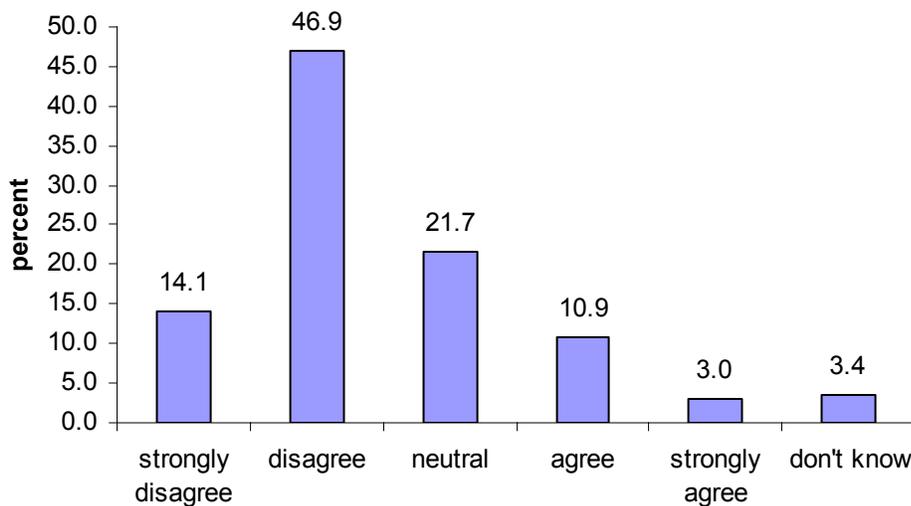


**Figure 16. Reasons for Not Complaining of Discrimination**

### 3.2 Attitudes and Perceptions Regarding CF Policies Towards PWDs

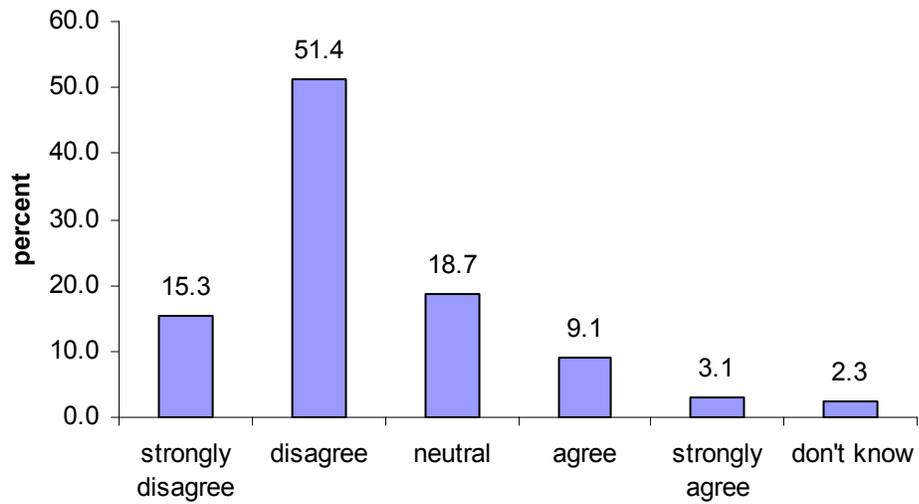
Several questions were included to assess CF members' attitudes and perceptions regarding CF policies with respect to PWDs.

First, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement "Members with disabilities are unfit to serve in the CF" on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). As can be seen in Figure 17, most respondents disagreed with this statement, and only 13.9% either agreed or strongly agreed (although another 21.7% indicated a neutral level of agreement).



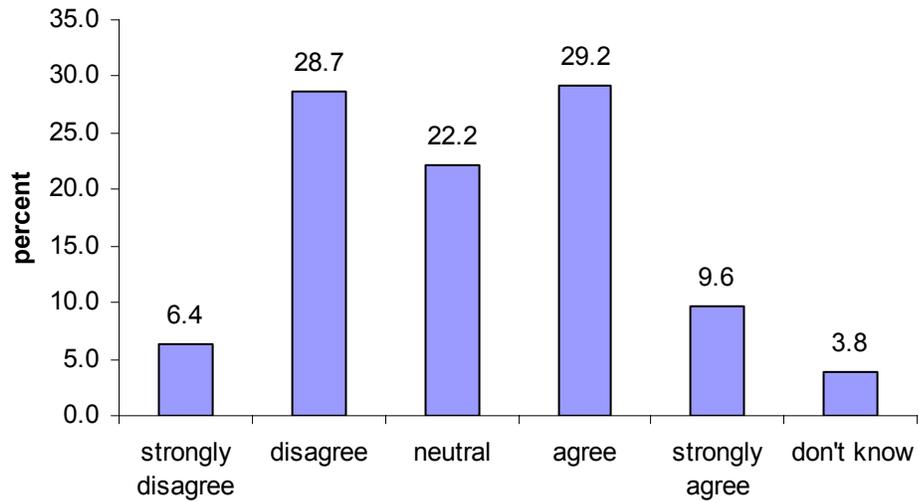
**Figure 17. Level of Agreement with the Statement "Members with disabilities are unfit to serve in the CF"**

Next, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the statement "Members with disabilities should be released, rather than spending resources attempting to rehabilitate and retain them" on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). As shown in Figure 18, the vast majority of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that members with disabilities should be released instead of allocating resources to facilitate their rehabilitation and retention.



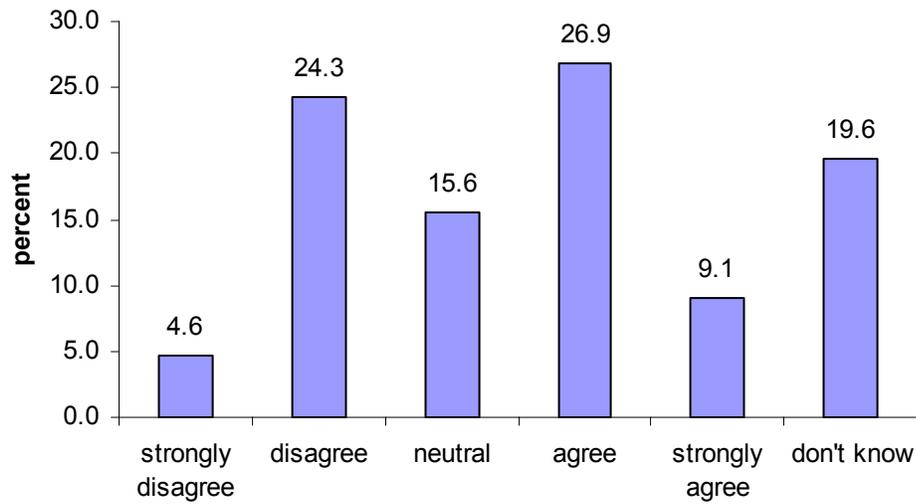
**Figure 18. Level of Agreement with the Statement “Members with disabilities should be released, rather than spending resources attempting to rehabilitate and retain them”**

Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “Keeping disabled members in the CF places extra burdens on others” on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). As illustrated in Figure 19, approximately 40% of respondents disagreed with the statement, although one third agreed.



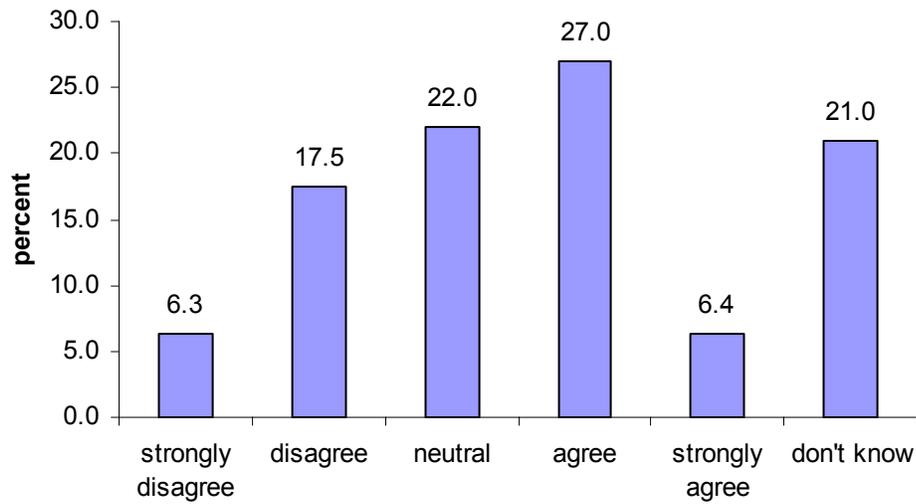
**Figure 19. Level of Agreement with the Statement “Keeping disabled members in the CF places extra burdens on others”**

Next, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “The CF releases too many good people because they have a disability” on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Approximately a third of respondents agreed with this statement and a third disagreed, with slightly more disagreeing, as shown in Figure 20. However, approximately 20% indicated that they simply did not know, which makes sense in that the general CF population is not likely to know rates at which PWDs are released and the reasons for these releases, and this question was only asked to gauge the prevalent perception.



**Figure 20. Level of Agreement with the Statement “The CF releases too many good people because they have a disability”**

Finally, respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “Members with disabilities are released with dignity and recognition for their contribution” on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). As shown in Figure 21, approximately one third of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, whereas one quarter disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. However, 43% of respondents either indicated neutral agreement or stated that they did not know. Again, this makes sense in that those from the general CF population may not necessarily have good familiarity with the process of how members with disabilities are released.

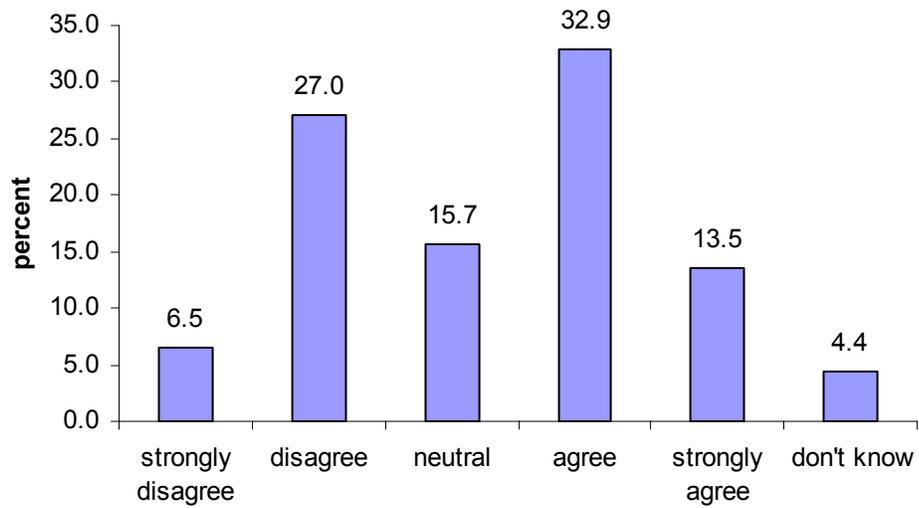


**Figure 21. Level of Agreement with the Statement “Members with disabilities are released with dignity and recognition for their contribution”**

### 3.3 Disclosing Disability or Injury

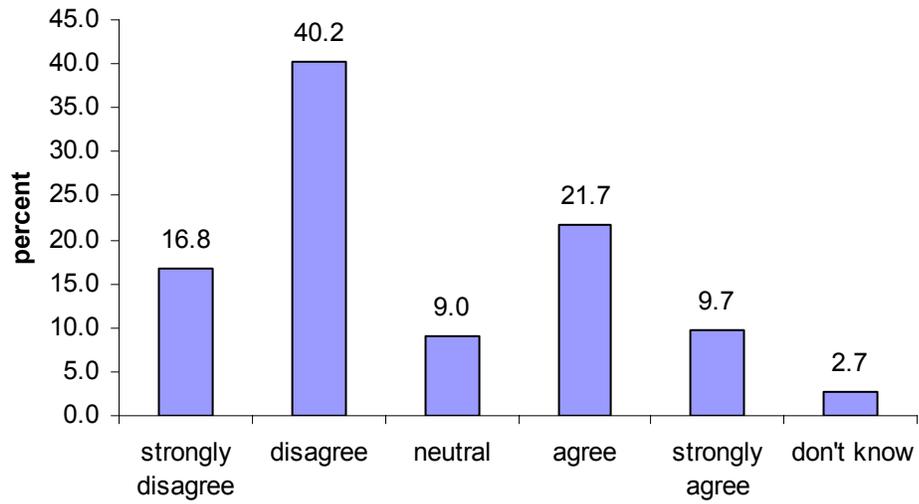
Several questions were included to assess CF members’ way of thinking regarding disclosing disability and/or injury.

First, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “If I had a disability I would not disclose it for fear that it would negatively affect my career” on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). As shown in Figure 22, almost half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would not disclose a disability due to concerns that it would negatively affect their career, although approximately a third disagreed or strongly disagreed.



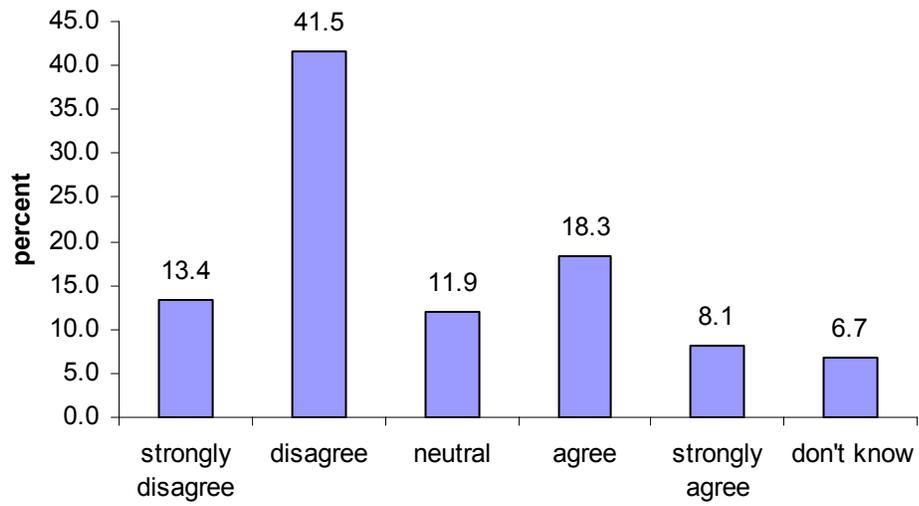
**Figure 22. Level of Agreement with the Statement “If I had a disability I would not disclose it for fear that it would negatively affect my career”**

Next, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “I would be hesitant to disclose that I was injured in the line of duty due to the possibility of negative career repercussions” on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). As illustrated in Figure 23, over half of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, although almost a third agreed or strongly agreed.



**Figure 23. Level of Agreement with the Statement “I would be hesitant to disclose that I was injured in the line of duty due to the possibility of negative career repercussions”**

Finally, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “If I had posttraumatic stress disorder I would not want the CF to know about it” on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). As shown in Figure 24, over half of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, whereas approximately a quarter agreed or strongly agreed.



**Figure 24. Level of Agreement with the Statement “If I had posttraumatic stress disorder I would not want the CF to know about it”**

## **4. Summary of Findings and Recommendations**

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### **4.1 Experiences and Perceptions of PWDs**

#### **4.1.1 Fair Treatment**

The majority of PWDs reported that, as a PWD, they felt they had been treated fairly by supervisors, career managers, training providers, co-workers, and CF programs and policies. However, some PWDs did not feel that they had been treated fairly, and continued focus is needed to ensure that all CF members are treated with fairness and respect.

It is encouraging that the greatest proportion of PWDs reported fair treatment by co-workers, which may speak most directly to these individuals' general and immediate working environment. However, the smallest proportion reported fair treatment by career managers. The ESR consultations also identified that "few, if any, career managers appear to have experience with working and living with a disability or with disruptions from work due to physical or occupational stress injuries. At a minimum, there needs to be more sensitivity and understanding to these types of issues in the career management group" (Ajilon, 2004, p. 82). Given the influence of career managers on members' careers, these findings also suggest the need for greater sensitivity and understanding of PWD-related issues in the career management group.

#### **4.1.2 Supervisor Treatment**

PWDs were slightly less satisfied with the treatment they received from their supervisors than non-PWDs. These differences in satisfaction may stem, in part, from the differential treatment PWDs receive from supervisors due to disability. However, some PWDs may also have different perceptions of the treatment they receive, particularly if they are finding it difficult to deal with having a disability and/or having to request accommodation and the associated effects that this may have on their careers.

#### **4.1.3 Accommodation**

Although many CF members with a disability believed that they received suitable accommodation, others did not believe that they received appropriate accommodation to suit their needs, and many PWDs indicated that their career was negatively affected. This is not particularly surprising given that "all CF members must meet the universality of service standards, which require them to perform any lawful duty and to be operationally employable, deployable, and physically fit" (p. 10, National Defence, 2005), and disabled

members who are being accommodated via programs are not eligible for promotion (Ajilon, 2004).

Although all CF members must meet the universality of service standards, having a disability does not automatically mean a CF member is unable to meet some or all of the requirements. Accommodation, such as that provided through the CF Return to Work Program (RTW), which was “introduced to facilitate the restoration of the physical and mental health of injured or ill members by helping them reintegrate to the workplace as soon as medically possible” (p. 10, National Defence, 2005) or the Service Personnel Holding List (SPHL), which is an administrative tool to facilitate support to a Regular Force member who is injured or becomes ill for a significant period, in order to provide the injured member with the best opportunity to recover in order to permit a return to normal duties, or the best opportunity to adequately prepare for a compulsory reassignment or release (National Defence 2007), are paramount, and should be provided in cases where this is feasible. For some disabled individuals this may be less practicable, and may ultimately result in the individual having to be medically released. In such cases, the Transition Assistance Program, which helps CF members with disabilities transition into the civilian workplace and encourages prospective employers to draw upon the base of highly skilled and job-ready CF members who have been medically released, is essential.

It was noted during the ESR that the use of SPHL and RTW options does not appear to be consistently applied across environments/occupations. The SPHL is a nationally controlled program and there were reported inconsistencies that may be the result of situations being dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The RTW is a recently established program that is still undergoing development, with a standard approach/policy still being formulated through the Directorate Casualty Support Administration. The functioning of these programs ought to be monitored and assessed on a periodic basis to ensure the appropriate treatment and accommodation of PWDs, and strategic program evaluation of each of these respective programs may be warranted. In addition, as suggested by the ESR, to the extent that is practical, disabled members ought to be provided with appropriate training and development opportunities during periods in which they are being accommodated in order to allow members to serve longer in a productive capacity and to encourage them to remain in the CF after they no longer require accommodation.

It was also noted in the ESR that the accommodation of a CF member who has become disabled is based on the number of accommodation positions (by MOC), which is determined by the Managerial Authorities (MAs). Each MA independently estimates and decides on the number of accommodation positions for a given year, based upon the number of positions necessary to maintain operational effectiveness, whether a MOC is understaffed or overstaffed, and other factors such as rank and location (Ajilon, 2004; ADM (HIR-Mil) Instruction 04/03, 2003). This quota is then reviewed annually. In

the course of the ESR it was reported that, “this approach is very limiting, does not allow sufficient flexibility in accommodating PWD, and engenders inconsistencies in how the number of accommodation positions available under each MA is decided each year” (Ajilon, 2004, p. 81). This may account for some of the CF members who report that they did not receive suitable accommodation to meet their needs. However, some of the reported dissatisfaction may be a natural result of having developed a disability, the associated psychological stress, and the reality that not all members who become disabled can be accommodated in a manner that meets their wishes and preferences due to the bona fide occupational requirements and the CF’s conditions of service.

Although many CF members felt their request for accommodation was received with sensitivity and understanding, and they did not feel stigmatized or resented, a fair number did not feel that their request was received appropriately and/or did feel stigmatized or resented. Similarly, it was observed during the course of the ESR that in some cases, “members who have been accommodated are often labelled with an unwarranted stigma and degree of resentment. Not only are such labels inappropriate in the first place, these members are sometimes ashamed and embarrassed, isolated, and left on their own after many years of dedicated service to the CF” (Ajilon, 2004, p. 85). As noted earlier, the ESR consultations also identified that career managers are often not sensitive to disability issues (Ajilon, 2004). Thus, CF members in general, and those engaged in key positions that involve dealing with PWDs (such as career managers), need to be provided with increased awareness, sensitivity, and appropriate approaches when dealing with members who may have a disability.

Of those PWDs that did not request to be accommodated, at least half did not ask to be accommodated for their disability because they did not feel that they required accommodation. However, at least one third did not ask to be accommodated for their disability because they did not feel comfortable asking, and half reported that they did not ask to be accommodated because they believed it would have negative effects on their career. Again, this is not particularly surprising given that all CF members must meet the universality of service standards, and that disabled members who are officially accommodated through one of the available accommodation programs are not eligible for promotion. Further, individuals in any organization may feel uncomfortable asking for accommodation, and this may be particularly pronounced in an organization like the CF that does adopt the principle of universality of service and the need for members to be ‘battle ready’ at all times.

#### **4.1.4 Discrimination**

These results indicate that PWDs were more likely than non-PWDs to report having experienced discrimination on the job, and much of this discrimination was based on mental or physical disability. However, PWDs

in the CF did not experience higher rates of discrimination than PWDs in DND. This is encouraging considering that all CF members have to meet fitness standards and the requirements of universality of service that do not apply to civilian employees of DND.

The vast majority of PWDs who had experienced discrimination had been discriminated against by individuals in positions of authority, but a fair proportion also experienced discrimination from co-workers. This points to the need for increased communication/training on sensitivity towards PWDs.

Only about one fifth of PWDs who experienced discrimination made a complaint about their experience. A variety of reasons for not making a complaint were offered. In some cases these reasons may not be warranted or may be based on misconceptions, but in other cases, respondents may be quite correct in believing that complaining about discrimination could lead to negative repercussions. This information ought be shared with the Canadian Forces Grievance Board (2003), the Director General of Alternate Dispute Resolution, and DHRD 2 (Human Rights and Social Policy), for their consideration and action.

## **4.2 Attitudes and Perceptions of Regular Force Members Regarding CF Policies Towards PWDs**

Overall, respondents were in favour of policies that would be supportive of PWDs and their assistance. The majority of respondents did not believe that PWDs are unfit to serve in the CF, that keeping disabled members in the CF places extra burdens on others, or that PWDs should be released rather than spending resources to facilitate their rehabilitation and retention. Thus, it is heartening that the majority of respondents in the general CF population are supportive of their fellow members with disabilities. Further, the ESR observation that “Generally, there is a low level of tolerance for disabled members within the CF partly due to the fact that the words ‘disabled’ or ‘disability’ imply weakness or that help or assistance is always necessary – concepts that appear on the surface to be antithetical to the principle of universality of service and being ‘battle ready’ at all times” (Ajilon, 2004, p. 83), does not seem to be entirely warranted, although certainly is true of some individuals.

It also appears that a significant proportion of respondents feel that PWDs deserve more assistance and better treatment than they are currently receiving, in that a third believed that the CF releases too many good people due to disability and a quarter did not believe that PWDs are released with the proper dignity and recognition for their contribution. Part of these beliefs and perceptions may be attributed to lack of understanding with respect to how members with disabilities are released, and under what circumstances, in that significant proportions of respondents indicated that they simply ‘don’t know’. Although certainly there is still progress to be made, the Directorate of Human Rights and Diversity is devoted to ensuring that policies towards PWDs in the CF are as fair and accommodating of PWDs as possible.

### **4.3 Disclosing Disability or Injury – Responses of Regular Force Members**

Several questions were included to assess CF members' thoughts regarding disclosing disability and/or injury. Significant proportions of participants indicated that in fact they would not disclose disability due to fear of career repercussions. Given the principle of universality of service and the real consequences of having a disability on career progression and retention, these findings are not entirely surprising, and indeed our estimated rates of PWDs, as assessed via the CF Self-Identification Census (CF Self-Identification Census Site, 2006), likely underestimate the true rates of PWDs in the CF.

Interestingly, respondents indicated that they would be less likely to disclose a general disability than they would be to disclose an injury that was incurred in the line of duty or to disclose PTSD. Perhaps they perceive less stigma, or a more positive response to disability and/or injury incurred in the course of service than other types of disability and/or injury.

## 5. Conclusion

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Overall, although the results of this study indicate many positive aspects regarding the policies concerning PWDs in the CF, and the perceptions and treatment of PWDs in the CF, a number of concerns were also noted.

A number of areas of concern were reported by PWDs themselves. Although the majority of PWDs felt that, as a PWD, they had been treated fairly by supervisors, career managers, training providers, co-workers, and CF programs and policies, a significant minority of PWDs reported concerns in each of these areas, particularly with respect to treatment received by supervisors, career managers, and CF policies. In addition, PWDs reported being slightly less satisfied with the treatment received from their supervisors than non-PWDs. It is also of note that although many CF members with a disability believed that they received suitable accommodation, others did not receive appropriate accommodation, and many indicated that their career was negatively affected. Furthermore, although many PWDs reported that their requests for accommodation were received with sensitivity and understanding, a fair number did not feel that their request was received appropriately, and some felt stigmatized or resented. Moreover, a significant proportion of PWDs did not request accommodation for their disability because they did not feel comfortable asking or because they believed that it would have negative effects on their careers. Another area of concern was that PWDs were more likely than non-PWDs to have experienced discrimination on the job, and much of this discrimination was based on mental or physical disability.

Nevertheless, it is heartening that most PWDs reported fair treatment by co-workers, which may speak most directly to these individuals' general and immediate working environments. Furthermore, PWDs in the CF did not experience higher rates of discrimination than PWDs in DND, which is encouraging considering that all CF members have to meet fitness standards and requirements of universality of service that do not apply to civilian employees of DND. It is particularly encouraging that most Regular Force CF respondents had positive attitudes towards their fellow members with disabilities, and were in favour of policies that offer assistance and support to PWDs. However, many CF members felt that members with disabilities should receive more assistance and better treatment than they are currently receiving.

Recommendations stemming from these research findings are consistent with recommendations in the CF EE Plan (Canadian Forces Employment Equity Plan, 2006), will further the CF's accordance with the Employment Equity Act (1995), and most importantly, help to ensure the appropriate treatment of members in uniform who become injured or disabled.

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The Your-Say Survey is administered regularly by the Director of Personnel Applied Research in order to obtain information about Canadian Forces (CF) members' attitudes concerning a wide spectrum of human resource issues. The focus section of the Spring 2005 administration of the Your-Say Survey concentrated on issues relating to diversity and employment equity in the CF, with a key component of this section focused on persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the CF. Analyses were conducted (1) to assess PWDs' experiences in the CF, including accommodation, discrimination, and perceptions of fair treatment; (2) to assess CF members' attitudes and perceptions about PWDs in the CF and CF policies towards PWDs; and (3) quantitatively cross-validate some of the qualitative observations reported in the CF Employment Systems Review. Overall, although the results of this study indicate many positive aspects regarding the policies concerning PWDs in the CF and the perceptions and treatment of PWDs in the CF, a number of concerns were also noted.

14. KEYWORDS, DESCRIPTORS or IDENTIFIERS (technically meaningful terms or short phrases that characterize a document and could be helpful in cataloguing the document. They should be selected so that no security classification is required. Identifiers, such as equipment model designation, trade name, military project code name, geographic location may also be included. If possible keywords should be selected from a published thesaurus, e.g. Thesaurus of Engineering and Scientific Terms (TEST) and that thesaurus-identified. If it is not possible to select indexing terms which are Unclassified, the classification of each should be indicated as with the title.)

- Persons with Disabilities
- Employment Equity
- Diversity
- Your Say Survey
- Discrimination

## Annex A – Pre-Notice Letter

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18 April, 2005

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

1. A few days from now you will receive in the mail a brief questionnaire for an important, ongoing CF research project being conducted by the Director Human Resources Research and Evaluation (DHRRE).

2. The survey concerns the effectiveness of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces, as a whole, as well as your attitudes, experiences and feelings about life in the Canadian Forces. The survey will address areas such as leadership, work-life balance, level of satisfaction with various aspects of your military career, career intentions, diversity and employment equity, and other important issues.

3. I am writing in advance because we have found that many people like to know ahead of time that they will be contacted. The study is an important one that will help the Canadian Forces to better understand the attitudes and experiences of individual CF members, such as yourself.

4. Thank you for your time and consideration. Your frank answers to this questionnaire will help senior leaders to identify issues of importance to the CF and focus efforts to improve these areas.

Chef d'état major, SMA(RH-Mil)  
Major-général



Major General Jan Arp  
Chief of Staff, ADM (Human Resources – Military)

Le 18 avril 2005

Cher maj Alain,

1. Dans quelques jours, vous recevrez par la poste un bref questionnaire pour un projet de recherche important et progressif, mené par le Directeur – Recherche et évaluation en ressources humaines (DRERH).

2. Ce questionnaire concerne l'efficacité de l'ensemble du ministère de la Défense nationale et des Forces canadiennes, ainsi que vos opinions, expériences et vos impressions au sujet de la vie dans les Forces. Le sondage doit traiter des domaines comme le leadership, l'équilibre travail-vie, la satisfaction envers votre carrière militaire, vos intentions professionnelles, la diversité et l'équité en matière d'emploi, et d'autres aspects importants.

3. Je vous écris à l'avance en raison du fait que bon nombre de gens souhaitent être prévenu que nous voulons communiquer avec eux. Ce sondage est important, puisqu'il aidera les Forces canadiennes à mieux comprendre les expériences et les impressions de chacun de ses membres, comme vous-même.

4. Nous vous remercions de votre temps et de votre collaboration. Vos réponses franches aideront les cadres supérieurs à identifier les enjeux importants des FC et de concentrer les efforts envers ces domaines.

