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SURVEY PROPOSAL

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ORAE PROJECT REPORT NO. PR 476

**SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE RESERVES
PHASE THREE:
NATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY PROPOSAL**

**By
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ORAE Project Reports present the considered results of project analyses to sponsors and interested agencies in an expeditious manner. They do not necessarily represent the official views of the Canadian Department of National Defence.

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IMPROVING THE IMAGE OF THE RESERVES**

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Approved by: SBT, Director for
Chief, Operational Research and Analysis Establishment

ABSTRACT

As the third and final phase in the study, Chief of Reserves and Cadets requested that DSEA conduct a national attitude survey of Canadians toward the Reserves. The study was originally planned for the spring of 1989. Following the announcement of the closure of several military bases in the Government Budget of spring 1989, the study was postponed until the fall of 1990. This report provides the background for the study and the research proposal approved by Chief Reserves and Cadets in 1989. Due to the postponement of the study, the report was not published at that time. It has been updated and revised to reflect the project as it commenced in the fall of 1990.

RESUMÉ

A la troisième et dernière phase de l'étude, le Chef-Réserves et cadets a demandé que DASE entreprenne une étude nationale sur l'attitude des canadiens face aux Réserves. L'étude était prévue originellement pour le printemps 1989. Suite à l'annonce de la fermeture de plusieurs bases, dans le budget fédéral, du printemps de la même année, l'étude avait été remise à l'automne 1990. Le rapport couvre donc l'historique et le plan d'action de l'étude approuvés par le Chef-Réserves et cadets en 1989. Suite à la remise de l'étude à une date ultérieure, le rapport n'avait donc pas été publié en 1989. Il fut révisé et mis-à-jour pour reconstruire les attentes du projet tel que commencé à l'automne 1990.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ABSTRACT/RESUME	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND	2
PHASE THREE - RATIONALE	4
A. Broadening The Recruiting Base	6
B. Motivation To Join The Reserves	10
C. Knowledge Of The Reserves	11
D. Recruiting	12
PHASE THREE - NATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY PROPOSAL	13
A. Purpose	13
B. Research Objectives	13
C. Method	14
SUMMARY	15
REFERENCES	16
ANNEX A	A-1

SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE RESERVES
PHASE THREE:
NATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY PROPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

1. The Directorate of Social and Economic Analysis (DSEA) agreed to carry out a series of studies on the Primary Reserves for the Chief of Reserves and Cadets (C Res & Cdts). The first phase of the study consisted of the collection of qualitative data on the reserves through interviews. These data were used to develop a preliminary questionnaire, which was subsequently pretested on a small representative group of reservists. In phase two of the study, the questionnaire was revised and administered to a random sample of reservists. A series of reports were written on the demographic characteristics of reservists, retention, organizational structure, attrition and integration of the reserves with the regular force. A psychological and social profile of reservists was also developed.

2. For the third phase of the study, C Res & Cdts requested that a national attitude study be conducted. The study is to ascertain the level of Canadian awareness and knowledge of the reserves, to determine the willingness of Canadians to join the reserves, and to identify factors influencing their propensity to join. Questions pertaining to the mobilization of the reserves are included in the study. Attitudinal questions are to be supplemented by a detailed demographic profile which will allow recruiting probabilities to be calculated for the target population. Specification of demographic variables in accordance with parameters set by Statistics Canada will permit projections based on Census data. The study is to provide a broad range of data to support policy analysis and development. It will support and further research conducted on the reserves in a number of efforts directed to organization, manpower

issues, and image of the reserves, and provide input for future advertising campaigns.

3. The rationale for this third phase of the sociological study of the reserves is presented in this report. The importance of conducting the survey is discussed in light of findings of the earlier phases of the DSEA reserve study and trends in the Canadian population. The research design is outlined, focusing on the sample, the methodology and the survey instrument.

BACKGROUND

4. In response to a preliminary study on attrition in the reserves conducted by a public opinion survey company, and in anticipation of changes to the structure of the reserves, the C Res and Cdts requested DSEA to carry out a further study of the reserves. Information was required to support policy analysis and development. Further, C Res and Cdts envisioned that the data would provide the background for a marketing campaign aimed at improving the image of the reserves, and future recruiting campaigns directed at a target population.

5. The study was initiated with the collection of extensive qualitative data through interviews with reserve personnel, and the administration of a preliminary questionnaire to a sample of reservists. In the course of discussions with senior reserve personnel, it emerged that recruiting, per se, was not perceived to be a major problem for most units. That is to say that most units did not have difficulty recruiting the quantity of reservists required. However, filling the ranks with quality recruits - for example, those with specialized training, advanced education or long term aspirations within the reserves - was considered to be a problem. Attrition at the senior other

ranks level was identified as a particular problem, and this was amplified in units where specialized skills were required. Throughout the discussions it became apparent that retention, as opposed to recruiting, was seen as a fundamental problem for many units. By and large, attrition was attributed to the internal structure and administration of the reserves. External social factors were seen as compounding the problem of retention.

6. Based on these initial findings, DSEA recommended that the study be expanded to focus on retention and the internal structure of the reserves, as well as recruiting. With the approval of C Res and Cdts, the second phase of the study was designed to identify the characteristics, attitudes and values of reservists. The major findings of this phase of the study are found in a series of reports on the profile of reservists, retention, organizational structure, attrition, integration of reserve units with regular force units, and trends and implications (see ORAE Project Reports 407, 413, 414, 415, 416 and 440). In brief, the study indicated that the reserves are still the preserve of young, single males. Word of mouth is the most common first source of information on the reserves, and of those who have seen formal reserve recruiting publicity, the majority consider it to be of poor quality. Principally, reservists are motivated to join the reserves for three types of reasons: pragmatic or monetary reasons; patriotic reasons; or as a result of a keen interest in the military. Age and gender differences are apparent in the motivation of individuals to join the reserves. Men and older members are more likely to list patriotic or military interest reasons for their motivation to join the reserves, while women and youths are more likely to state pragmatic reasons for their rationale. This suggests that various components of the reserve force seek different objectives from their affiliation with the reserves.

7. Analysis of attitudinal data suggest a lack of satisfactory equipment for training, a shortage of training time and high leadership instability. A critical assessment of the role and training program of the reserves was apparent, especially by those in leadership positions. However, greater integration of reserve units with the regular force appeared to have positive benefits in these areas, as well as in terms of high moral and low attrition.

8. Despite the fact that there are a number of organizational problems identified by reservists, most reservists do not cite them as their primary reason for leaving the reserves. Attrition is found to relate more to external factors, such as job conflicts, education conflicts, family conflicts, a job or educational move, and joining the regular force. The conflicts between the role of the reservist and his or her full-time occupational, educational or family role far outweigh other reasons cited for leaving the reserves. The data indicate that, to a considerable extent, the factors that draw reservists out of the reserves are factors related to their age and stage of life. This suggests that a primary factor in the relatively high attrition rates in the reserves is the continued reliance on youths - one of the most unstable subgroups in the population.

PHASE THREE - RATIONALE

9. In June of 1987 the Canadian government tabled a new White Paper on Defence entitled Challenge and Commitment: A Defence Policy for Canada. In it, the government committed itself to a Total Force Concept whereby the distinction between the regular force and the reserves would be reduced and the responsibility for national defence would be shared. Sinaiko (1985) offers several reasons for the move to the Total Force

Concept in the U.S.. First, a continuing decline in the youth cohort through out the decade will reduce to some degree the number of youths available for full-time service. Second, significant cost reductions can be achieved by utilizing reserve manpower. Third, there are substantial benefits of having pretrained/experienced persons to augment the regular force when necessary (p.1).

10. Similar arguments have been made in the Canadian context, however, the first two deserve some qualification. It is unlikely the Canadian youth cohort will decline to the extent that the CF will have serious difficulty filling its ranks. In the 1980's, regular and reserve force members of all ages represented, together, less than 1% of the Canadian labour force (the reserves less that 0.2 %). Additionally, while the youth component of the labour force will shrink in size over the coming decades, the labour force itself will continue to grow, albeit at a slower rate, beyond the year 2006 (Health and Welfare Canada, 1989: 39).

11. The cost benefit comparison of the reserves to the regular force has been the subject of previous DSEA work, and further work is currently underway. Earlier studies showed the comparative training costs of the militia to be slightly more cost effective than for their regular force counterpart (see Goodfellow, 1974). Under the total force mandate, the readiness requirements of the reserve units and their role are altered, and this may reduce the advantage in cost effectiveness. Current DSEA studies are addressing this subject matter.

12. The recruitment of quality reservists over the next decade may present a challenge to the reserves, and especially the militia, in light of current socio-demographic and economic trends. Recruiting the required number of reservists, for a

role within the total force mandate, may necessitate new initiatives - for example, the widening of the traditional target recruiting population, and the engagement of new recruiting and advertising strategies. In addition, data on motivation to join the reserves, which are not readily available, will be necessary for planning recruiting campaigns. Each of these initiatives is discussed in more detail below.

A. BROADENING THE RECRUITING BASE

13. The DSEA Sociological Study of the Reserves indicated that the reserves are still the preserve of young, single males. In light of the declining youth cohort (which is not a projection, but a reality since those who will be of recruiting age in 2002 are already born), the reserves may have to consider expanding its traditional target recruiting population. Canada has responded positively to the desire of women to fulfil a military career, and female participation is higher in the reserves than in the regular force. The majority of females, however, are in support positions within the reserves. The increase in the number of females who have attained or are enrolled in post-secondary education programs, and the number who are currently trained in or employed in scientific and technical areas, indicate that they form a group which should be considered for more than the traditional support roles. The expansion of military trades open to women over the last few years also lends support to the suggestion that females could be more extensively used to meet reserve manpower requirements.

14. Traditionally, a large proportion of reservists have been secondary school students. Not only is this subgroup of the population declining in size, several drawbacks have been experienced with the reliance on this group. Isbrandt (1988) lists 6 drawbacks - first, they do not offer maturity or

characteristics of maturity; second, they do not offer managerial, leadership or white collar skills; third, they do not offer the technical or blue collar skills needed in technical environments; fourth, they tend to leave the reserves, return to school and don't necessarily return; fifth, they do not reflect the broad spectrum of society and therefore give a certain image to the reserves; and sixth, they may be restricted from mobilization while enrolled in school.

15. Enrolment in post-secondary schools has increased over recent decades, as has the number of Canadians with post-secondary education. This trend implies that fewer youths will be available for full-time service in the regular force. This is a group, however, which may be attracted to the reserves in greater numbers through the use of alternative recruiting strategies and/or a change in image. The recruitment of more individuals with higher education does blur the traditional distinction between officers and other ranks, and new programs and policies may have to be designed to accommodate this group.

16. As a result of technical innovations and advances in defence systems, the requirements for individuals with specialized and technical training in the reserves has increased. Renewed effort to attract the civilian employed would increase the recruiting base; provide more individuals with technical training and skills; reduce training costs; and provide the maturity reportedly lacking in a force consisting primarily of students. In addition, managerial, leadership and white collar skills are required in the reserves. Incentives such as civilian pay equivalency, military rank tied to technical training, job protection and guaranteed military leave for training may have to be considered in order to attract the civilian employed.

17. As a result of a decline in the birth rate and an aging population, Statistics Canada projects that the growth rate in the country will be maintained by immigration. Accordingly, first generation Canadians will continue to account for a sizable proportion of the total Canadian population. The extent to which they may constitute a growing segment of the population is of course dependent on the birth rate in the country and the level of immigration set out in Government policy, assuming the mortality rate and level of emigration remain relatively constant.

18. There are two important points to be considered regarding first generation Canadians, from a recruiting perspective. First, immigrants to Canada have always formed a substantial group of potential recruits, and a group that will at least remain constant in size, or may in fact grow. And second, Statistics Canada data indicate that the profile of immigrants to Canada has changed dramatically in terms of the country of origin. Common wisdom holds that non-British, and non-French first generation Canadians do not readily join military organizations. This is especially true when they come from countries which conscript membership into the armed forces and/or from countries to which Canada grants immigrants refugee status. It is likely safe to assume that a parental suspiciousness of military organizations may also generate a negative attitude toward military service among the children of immigrants from these countries.

19. The participation of ethnic minorities in the reserves is important for two reasons. First, British and French immigrants have traditionally formed a substantial recruiting base for the military. British and French immigrants have been replaced by immigrants from other countries, and this group still represents a subgroup of the population of considerable size.

As such, they are an important target group in an effort to broaden the recruiting base for the reserves. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the reserves often maintain the link between the civilian community and the military. As such, the reserves should provide a facility where all Canadians, if willing, may contribute to the defence needs of their country. While immigrants and their families may not have the desire or motivation to join military organizations, considerable effort should be made to ensure that equality of representation, opportunity and cultural recognition is not blocked by policy, image or practices.

20. Regional differences are often found in economic and social factors, such as labour force opportunities, average income, availability of post-secondary education, average level of education, unemployment rates, etc. Studies of attitudes toward defence issues, and profiles of recruits have also detected regional and rural/urban differences. It is expected that there are regional and rural/urban differences in the propensity of individuals to join the reserves, and thus the ability of a community to support a reserve unit. Harquail (1981) states that the closing of reserve units in rural areas after the last world war has led to a situation where "outside Ottawa and a handful of communities bordering CF bases, few civilians ever get a chance to see a uniform - much less meet or associate with soldiers" (p. 67). He suggests that the community link (which is of central importance for the existence of the reserves) has been severed and this has led to a public indifference toward the reserves. While the current projection is that any initial expansion of the reserves will involve the augmentation of existing reserve units, consideration should be given to regional and rural/urban patterns of interest in the reserves and attitudes toward defence; the ability of other communities to support reserve

activities; and the increased visibility of reserve units in the communities in which they are located.

21. In summary, the DSEA Sociological Study of the Reserves indicated that the reserves are still predominantly filled by young, single males attending secondary school. The projected expansion of reserve manpower comes at a time when the traditional recruiting base has, and continues to decline. To meet its new mandate outlined in the 1987 Defence White Paper both in terms of manpower and role, the Reserves will likely have to broaden its traditional recruiting base. Subgroups of the population to which the Reserves may wish to target their recruiting include women, post-secondary students, the employed, ethnic minorities and residents of communities where reserve units are not currently located. Consideration should be given to regional and rural/urban differences in support for reserve activities to determine where recruiting should best be targeted.

B. MOTIVATION TO JOIN

22. The identification of subgroups of the population which are under-represented in the reserves in comparison to their composition in the general population is not a difficult task once data similar to those collected in the DSEA reserve study are provided. Faced with a decline in the traditional recruiting base, as well as the identification of problems and inadequacies in the reserves resulting from the over-representation of young students, it makes sense to try to broaden the recruiting base by targeting the under-represented groups in future recruiting campaigns. However, little is known about the attitudes of these subgroups toward the reserves or the motivation of these individuals to join the reserves. There is little use in talking about and planning for a substantial change in the size and structure of the reserves without

knowing whether an adequate number of individuals can be recruited and under what conditions they are willing to join.

23. Recognizing the extent to which motivational and social factors impact on recruiting intentions, a national attitude survey could provide a substantial amount of information on attitudes toward the reserves, the propensity to join, and factors influencing the likelihood of reserve involvement. This type of information is important to understand the context in which motivation to join the reserves was formed and may be encouraged. Socio-demographic differences which affect motivation to join the reserves could be explored and would provide useful information for the selection and design of recruiting or advertising campaigns.

24. New policies and programs may have to be designed to attract more individuals from some of the subgroups of the population which are currently under-represented in the reserves. In addition, current policies and procedures may need to be reviewed to ensure that they do not prevent or deter specific groups from joining. A national attitude survey will provide data on these issues by identifying factors which would encourage reserve involvement and those which currently detract from it. The most effective way to appeal to a potential target population may be determined from data collected in a survey of this type.

C. KNOWLEDGE OF THE RESERVES

25. Motivation to join the reserves hinges on a knowledge of the reserves and its role. Previous studies have indicated that most reservists first learn about the reserves through word-of-mouth, rather than through formal advertising campaigns. The DSEA Reserve Study confirmed these findings. As such, the image that is portrayed through family members, friends and

acquaintances is likely a vital factor in the motivation of an individual to join the reserves. Knowledge of the reserves and attitudes toward it are also shaped by the image of the reserves portrayed in the media. Sources of information on the reserves and previous contact with the military by the individual or his/her family could be explored in a national attitude survey and would provide useful information on the level of knowledge the general population has of the reserves and the primary sources of that information.

D. RECRUITING

26. In recent years little formal advertising has been used for reserve recruiting purposes. However, to recruit individuals in an era of a declining youth population and increased employment opportunities, formal advertising will likely become a necessity. Data collected in a national attitude survey would be of importance in creating formal advertising campaigns directed at subgroups of the population identified as targeted recruiting groups. This information could also be used to emphasize the benefits and values of membership in the reserves which the target population also share.

27. Effective recruiting of individuals to the reserves requires the support and appreciation of the public which it serves, and a heightening of public awareness of the role and function of the reserves will likely serve to promote involvement. Parents, spouses and employers need to be convinced that membership in the reserves is valuable and worthy of support. Advertising may be used to affect the knowledge, attitudes and behavioural intentions of the targeted population. In addition, sociological studies of group behaviour suggest that stressing the uniqueness and privilege

of belonging to a select group will serve to attract a higher calibre of recruit.

PHASE THREE - NATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY PROPOSAL

A. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

28. The overriding purpose of the survey is to provide reliable, valid and timely data to support policy, analysis, evaluation and research on manpower issues. Demographic, economic, behavioural and attitudinal information is periodically needed to assess past and current attitudes. A national attitude survey focusing on motivational and social factors in conjunction with demographic characteristics will provide useful data on the recruitment intentions of specific types of individuals.

29. It is anticipated that the research results will prove useful in a variety of ways. First, they will indicate the likelihood of the reserves recruiting the manpower needed to fulfil its initiatives. Second, they may indicate policies or practices that may have to be revised or developed to attract individuals from specific subgroups of the population. Third, they may be used to evaluate current mobilization plans and beliefs. And, fourth, they will provide baseline data so that changes in attitudes toward the reserves and the characteristics of those willing to join can be assessed by conducting future surveys, of comparable nature.

B. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

30. The specific research objectives are as follows:

- (a) To determine the level of awareness primary and secondary target groups have of the reserves;
- (b) To determine the likelihood of defined groups volunteering for service in the reserves;

- (c) To determine the preference for individual elements of the reserves by those willing to join;
- (d) To define the demographic and attitudinal characteristics of those most likely and least likely to volunteer for service;
- (e) To determine the desired activity level or amount of time individuals are willing to commit to reserve activities; and,
- (f) To identify sources of information on the reserves.

C. METHOD

31. The data are to be collected through telephone interviews by a public opinion survey company. The sample is to include an equal proportion of males and females between 15 and 50 years of age. Within this age range, there are two primary groups of interest. First, the 15 to 24 year old group represents the current target recruiting population (16-24). Fifteen year olds are also included to assess knowledge of the reserves and likelihood of joining among those who will be of suitable age for entry in the next year. Traditionally the 25-40 year old group has been considered as a secondary target population for recruiting purposes. Given the objective of expanding the traditional target population, equal importance is to be given to this group in the survey. In fact, the age range is expanded to include those 41-50 years of age. This is done to take into account both the interest and availability of skilled individuals as part of an expanded recruiting base, as well as the attitudes and opinions of those who have children approaching or within the traditional recruiting age range. Given the objectives of analyzing the results by region and other population parameters, the survey is best suited to a sample of 3000 of each of the two groups of interest, with greater non-weighted representation from the non-urban areas to permit finer analyses. Accordingly, a disproportionate, random sample is suggested where the sample selected for each region would be randomly drawn, but not in proportion to its

true percentage of the Canadian population. Within each region, the sample should be representative of the proportion of urban and rural households.

32. A list of proposed questions is located in Annex A. The question order, format and wording may vary somewhat from that shown if a pretest of the survey instrument indicates such requirements. Considerable emphasis is placed on demographic information, and as much as possible, questions in this area are replications of those used by Statistics Canada for comparison purposes.

SUMMARY

33. For the third phase of the DSEA Sociological Study of the Reserves a national attitude study is to be conducted to ascertain the willingness of Canadians to join the reserves. Attitudinal questions are to be supplemented by detailed demographic information which will allow recruiting probabilities to be calculated for the target population. A study on the propensity of individuals to join the reserves and identification of factors which affect their decision to join is considered a priority as the reserves continue to recruit considerable numbers of individual in changing social and economic times. Such information will be necessary if the reserves are to be augmented at a time of a projected decline in the traditional recruiting base, and if new recruiting strategies are to be designed. A proposed list of questions which will provide useful and timely data for these purposes is attached.

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PROPOSED QUESTIONS - NATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY

KNOWLEDGE OF THE RESERVES

1. Have you ever heard of the Canadian Military Reserves?
2. How much would you say you know about Canada's Reserve Force or Militia?
3. What was your most important source of information about the Reserves?

INTENT TO JOIN

4. In the past, have you ever considered joining the Reserves?
5. How likely are you to consider joining the Reserves in the next two or three years?
6. a) You said that you are uncertain, or would not consider joining the reserves. What are the main reasons for your lack of interest in joining the reserves?
b) You indicated that there is some likelihood that you would volunteer for service in the Reserves within the next few years. What is the main reason for your desire to join the reserves?
7. How much time would you be willing to commit to the reserves?
8. Would you be more or less inclined to join the reserves under the following situations?
 - a. no loss in seniority or status in current job
 - b. you are unemployed
 - c. Canada needed to assist another country
 - d. Canada was attacked by another country
 - e. the Reserves paid the same wage as your civilian job
 - f. there was an environmental disaster
 - g. your employer guaranteed leave for reserve training
9. Which element of the Reserves would be your first choice?

ATTITUDES

10. For each of the following statements which I will read to you about the reserves, please tell me whether you personally agree strongly, agree somewhat, have no opinion, disagree somewhat or disagree strongly.
 - a. I think a career in the reserves would be challenging and exciting.
 - b. I know that my parents would disapprove if I told them that I was going to join the reserves.
 - c. The reserves today offer a wide variety of jobs and training.
 - d. At the present time, I think that a period of time with the reserves would be a good stepping stone to the career I want to pursue.
 - e. Reservists are part-time professional soldiers.
 - f. Reservists are people who want to serve Canada.
 - g. Reservists are "play soldiers".
 - h. Reservists are people who want a part-time job.
 - i. The reserves provide travel, adventure, experience and challenges.
 - j. The Reserves do a lot of boring and routine things.
 - k. In the Reserves, people learn a trade, leadership skills and how to depend on themselves.
 - l. Reservists mostly get together for social activities.

11. Generally speaking, would you say that you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of the Canadian Reserve Force?

12. I would like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
 - a. Volunteering for service in the reserves shows my commitment to Canada.
 - b. Canadian young people should not be expected to leave their jobs in time of war.
 - c. In time of an national emergency, I would feel a greater obligation to my family than to serve Canada.
 - d. Canadian young people should not be expected to disrupt their education in time of a national emergency.
 - e. Canada should greatly increase the size of its reserve forces.

- f. Canada should spend more money on the military.
- g. I am proud of the role the Canadian Forces play in the world.
- h. The Canadian Forces is no longer relevant in todays world.
- i. Women in the Canadian Forces have the same advancement opportunities as men.

SOURCES OF INFO

- 13. What type or types of places in your community, would you expect people to go to sign up for volunteer service in the Reserves?
- 14. Do you have any friends who are now or have been in the reserves?
- 15. Do you have any relatives who are now or have been in the reserves?
- 16. Have you ever been a member of the Cadets, Reserves, or Regular Force?
- 17. Have you ever seen a parade of the Reserves, or a display about the Reserves?

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 18. What is your gender?
- 19. What is your age?
- 20. What is the highest level of schooling that you have completed?
- 21. What is your marital status?
- 22. Do you have any children?
- 23. At present, are you employed?
- 24. What is your main occupation?
- 25. What is your expected occupational status in the coming year?
- 26. a. To which ethnic or cultural group(s) do you or did your ancestors belong?
b. Were you, your mother and your father Canadian citizens at birth?

- c. Do you regularly participate in activities associated primarily with the ethnic or cultural group with which you associate or belong?
 - d. When did you or your ancestors arrive in Canada?
 - e. Are you by virtue of your race or colour, in a visible minority in Canada?
 - f. What is your current status in Canada?
27. What language do you yourself speak at home now?
28. a. What is the size of the community in which you live?
b. Would you classify your community as being rural or urban?
c. In which province do you reside?

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