



SURVIVOR PERSPECTIVES
CONSULTING **GROUP**



STATISTICS REPORT APRIL 2024

PRESENTED BY SURVIVOR PERSPECTIVES
CONSULTING GROUP

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MISSION STATEMENT

Survivor Perspectives Consulting Group (SPCG) was founded on the idea that survivors of military sexual trauma are not broken beyond repair and have a vital role in helping change culture. Social change needs a movement that cannot be mandated with rules and orders. Instead, it needs to be through honest and direct engagement and putting the humanity of our members first.

MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA RESEARCH

Research regarding military sexual trauma (MST) has increased in recent years¹⁻³. As such, Survivor Perspectives Consulting Group (SPCG) is committed to assisting with the culture change efforts outlined by the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). Data is collected from participants who have completed SPCG's Front-Line Workshop (FLW) to help monitor perceptions and attitudes regarding MST. Several barriers have been identified in the literature as being particularly harmful for survivors of MST¹⁻³. Questions on the SPCG FLW survey are directed towards the knowledge and skills gained from the FLW which may help alleviate challenges for members moving forward. This is particularly important as SPCG aims to provide high quality information which meets the ongoing needs of CAF members.

Responses for this report were collected between 08 June 2021 until 12 October 2023. Of the SPCG Front-Line Workshop for MST serials delivered during this time, 894 participants consented to the collection of the following described data. Descriptive statistics presented in this report were analyzed using JASP software.

“Many 'awareness' packages out there (often delivered in an individualized, at-your-own-pace distance learning format) fail to engage trainees and are easily 'completed' with little or no personal integration... This course helped to open the eyes of participants to the wide-spread reality and subtleties of sexual misconduct and, more importantly, how to carefully, transparently, and safely provide front-line support to those who come forward with stories of sexual misconduct.” – Course Participant

Brown, A., Millman, H., Tam-Seto, L., Imre-Millei, B., Ibbotson, A., Buchart, L., Heber, A., Samplonius, M. E., Mulligan, A., Notarianni, M., & McKinnon, M. C. (2024). Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health, 10(1), 101-106. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jmvfh-2023-0021>

Lopes, J., McKinnon, M. C., & Tam-Seto, L. (2023). Adding insult to injury: Exploring the relation between moral injury and military sexual trauma. Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health, 9(4), 19-23. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jmvfh-2022-0045>

Smith CP, Freyd JJ. Insult, then injury: interpersonal and institutional betrayal linked to health and dissociation. Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 26(10), 1117-1131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2017.1322654>

PRE-TRAINING

Participants were asked what training, if any, had they received during military service concerning the topic of MST. Over half of the respondents indicated they had received previous training regarding sexual misconduct. The primary military-related training courses identified were the Sexual Harassment and Abuse Response Program (SHARP) and the Respect in the Canadian Armed Forces (RITCAF) course.

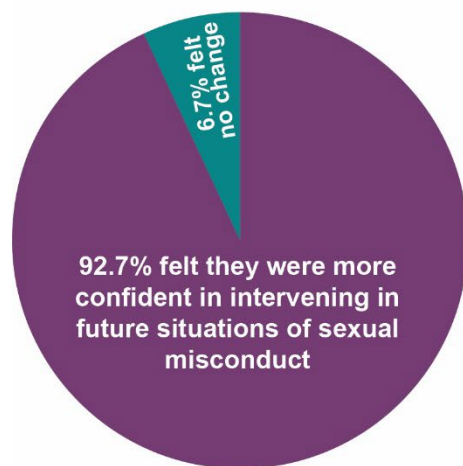
“Multiple studies demonstrate that a fumbled response to the first disclosure of a sexual assault is the single biggest cause of PTSD among people affected by military sexual trauma. Not the traumatic incident itself, but the response to it.”

– Course Participant

POST-TRAINING RESPONSES

Regarding the Front-Line Workshop’s impact on participants’ perception of their capability to intervene, 829 (92.7%) stated they felt they were more confident in intervening in future situations of sexual misconduct and 60 (6.7%) stated they felt no change in their ability. The remaining did not provide an answer.

Capability of Participants to Intervene in a Future Situation of Sexual Misconduct **AFTER** Taking the **Front-Line Workshop**

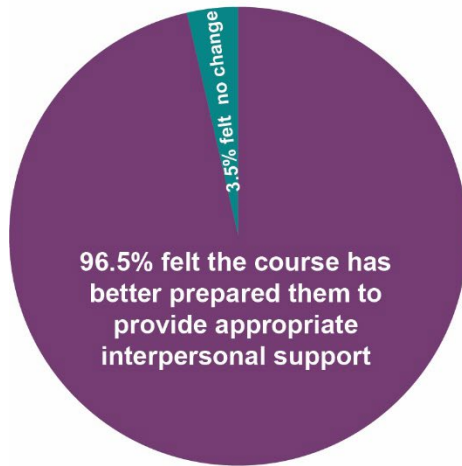


829 (92.7%) of participants stated they felt they were more confident in intervening in future situations of sexual misconduct after taking the Front-Line Workshop.

60 (6.7%) of participants stated they felt no change in their ability to intervene. The remaining did not provide an answer.

Concerning perceived personal ability to support a member who has experienced sexual misconduct, 863 (96.5%) participants indicated they felt the Front-Line Workshop has better prepared them to provide appropriate interpersonal support.

Capability of Participants to Provide Interpersonal Support to an MST Survivor **AFTER** Taking the **Front-Line Workshop**



863 (96.5%) of participants indicated they felt the course has better prepared them to provide appropriate interpersonal support to an MST survivor. 3.5% of participants indicated they felt no change in their ability to provide interpersonal support.

“The paradigms and practices presented by the experts at SPCG are what I needed from leaders and colleagues when I was mistreated during my time in the military.” – Course Participant

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IMPACT

Participants were asked which part of the FLW was most impactful for them. The most common response was the instructors' lived experiences/expertise, followed by the vignette activities and then the multimedia provided.

When asked for suggestions on how to improve the course moving forward, the most common response was that the course should be longer and address common less severe forms of sexual misconduct. Some participants also indicated a desire for more information regarding the trauma aspect of MST.

“Unlike training I've received in the past via DLN or lectures, this interactive and engaging training helped me connect with and retain the tools I need as a leader to support members responding to inappropriate behavior” – *Course Participant*

“This training was one of the most significant in my career as an officer.” – *Course Participant*

FACILITATOR NARRATIVES

Major Donna Riguidel

As the main facilitator, I am overwhelmed and validated at the sea of support we see from those that have taken the training. Regardless of rank, element, reserves/regular force/ranger/civilian, gender or sexuality, the power of this engagement is simply amazing. There are no silver bullets or one-size-fits-all in the struggle to grip sexual misconduct in the CAF, but this program is the closest we have come.

In November, it became clear that although the baseline course was meeting the needs at most ranks, we required some “Command Level” scenarios to thoughtfully engage leadership. What followed was the creation of the “Command Level” Course. This course contains the same material and the same tools, only adjusting the scenarios to be more realistic for higher levels of leadership.

I also had the incredible opportunity to present to the Canadian Army Council in mid-November. Immediately following were requests to train at the individual divisions as soon as possible.

In December, prior to lockdown, I went back to Winnipeg to train five days straight with 1 Canadian Air Division and 2 Canadian Air Division. By Thursday, we had a request to come to CFB Comox, and by Monday, a request from 1 Canadian Air Division to visit every Wing across Canada.

We also received our first request from an ADM directly, ADM(IE). This series was done on Microsoft Teams and was warmly received. We have gotten follow-up requests to train the entire department.

This has been an absolute whirlwind of activity and support from those that have taken our training, and for that, I am so grateful, as the facilitator but also as a survivor.

Every day, I chat with other survivors, working with them to make sure we are properly using our platform to share their stories and experiences. I want to expand this training so that others that have suffered as a result of sexual misconduct can also lead this training and experience that same validation of being heard and being understood. And most importantly, knowing that your story, your pain, matters, and makes a difference. It is heartbreaking to know that without the CAF's support, so many requests will go unmet as I transition out of uniform.

I retain hope that something can happen to keep this momentum and effort.

Capt (Ret'd) Wyn Fournier, MSW RSW

As someone who has completed the required facilitator training and assisted with three serials of the FLW to date, it is gratifying to witness the tangible change in participants' grasp of how to support someone who discloses sexual assault, or how to identify and stop inappropriate behaviours on-the-spot. This gives me a lot of hope that this time, true culture change will happen.

My observations are that the workshop empowers those who take it by giving them skills and knowledge that hasn't been readily available before. I was a part of the CAF when SHARP training was in place. Despite the intent, similar to what happened when Operation HONOUR was established some 20 years later, there were jokes and a general resistance to embracing and applying the information. I believe this workshop is very different, and because of the facilitation coming from a survivor perspective, it is having a much more powerful, positive effect. The workshop actually gives concrete guidance for how to help someone. It also makes it really clear what the micro-aggressions are that make things unsafe for survivors, and how to address those.

In my daily work, I often provide counselling to people who have experienced workplace trauma. Without exception, for those who chose to report, one of the hardest parts of their journey is processing the response they encountered AFTER reporting. For those who didn't report, it was the fear of what would happen, *because they had witnessed what happened to others who reported*. In both scenarios, it was the lack of personal safety that became the focus of their work in counselling.

It is my strong opinion that as more CAF members receive this workshop, the CAF will become stronger as a whole. Since the CAF is a mirror of the larger society as a whole, it's simply not possible to mandate a change to everyone's attitudes and behaviour by putting out policies. What is possible, however, is using this workshop to effect these changes in those who are open to change, and weed out those who aren't. I truly hope that those who are in higher command levels, and have the authority to do so, see the benefits of integrating this workshop into the CAF forces-wide, and continue to have it presented by willing survivors.

Cdr Stephen Churm

Commander Stephen Churm joined the Royal Canadian Naval Reserves in 1997 as a Boatswain at HMCS STAR and in 1998 accepted a position as a Naval Warfare Officer. He completed training onboard HMCS BRANDON in 2001 and graduated that same year from McMaster University with honours degrees in Psychology and Gerontology. While attending university, Cdr Churm was involved with the LGBTQ2+ Centre with an emphasis on peer support and advocacy.

Upon graduation, Cdr Churm was employed fulltime with the Canadian Forces Recruiting Group in a number of roles that included Military Career Counsellor and Diversity Officer. As the Diversity Officer for South Western Ontario, Cdr Churm developed outreach programs to designated groups that included women, visible minorities, indigenous people and members of the LGBTQ2+ community. In 2008, Cdr Churm led the Canadian Armed Forces' first ever participation at a pride event by coordinating a uniformed presence at Toronto Pride. This presence was a milestone that was noted internationally.

In the fall of 2008, Cdr Churm deployed to the Middle East as a Detachment Commander for an Intermediate Staging Team with the task of facilitating the transport of equipment from Afghanistan to Canada. This mission provided a unique opportunity to work with Regular and Primary Reserve personnel from all three elements.

Cdr Churm was Commanding Officer of HMCS STAR from Jul 2016 to Jun 2020 and named the Honorary Captain of the RCN's flagship (HMCS HAIDA). While in command, Cdr Churm applied expertise regarding discrimination and harassment to promote advocacy opportunities for marginalized personnel. As a mentor to Commanding Officers in the fleet, Cdr Churm identified a need for a national advisor on workplace relations within the Naval Reserve and collaborated with stakeholders to request an establishment change.

In Jul 2020, Cdr Churm assumed the newly created role of Special Advisor Workplace Relations for the Naval Reserve. He provides post-command appreciation and subject matter expertise to Command Teams and senior officers across Canada on complex conflict, systemic racism, hateful conduct, and sexual misconduct.

Drawing upon his expertise, Cdr Churm travels across Canada speaking to members of all ranks on culture change, diversity, inclusion, equity, and conflict resolution. Cdr Churm works closely with the Sexual Misconduct Response Centre, It's Not Just 700, CAF Health Services, and various advisory groups to promote a psychologically safe space that celebrates diversity.

On civie side, Cdr Churm is a detective with Waterloo Regional Police's Youth Protection Unit and is certified in trauma informed survivor centred approaches.

He resides in Dundas Ontario and has been married to his husband, Brian, for 18 years.

SPCG BIOS

Donna Van Leusden Riguidel, Major

Donna Van Leusden Riguidel first joined the military as a just-turned 17-year-old in 1993. Despite repeated sexual assault and harassment, she tried to navigate, eventually leaving in 1997, disillusioned and adrift.

In 2006, she once again joined the military, determined to be a part of the change, recognizing that someday her own daughter may someday want a career in uniform, serving as a Public Affairs Officer. Although the majority of those she served with did so with honour and integrity, she still faced repeated sexual misconduct.

Since 2015, recognizing that the CAF has been failing survivors, Donna has been fighting to get the military to adopt a survivor-centred, trauma-informed approach. With help from the incredible people at the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS), she created the Front-Line Workshop in 2021 and is on track to train approximately 1500 personnel before she is medically released in March 2022.

Donna believes that the CAF can become an industry leader in this change and finally build a military worthy of the exemplary people that serve in it.

Cassandra Elliott, Cpl (Ret'd)

Cassandra analyzes and refines the surveys used for monitoring and updating the workshop to ensure participant voices are both protected and included. She also ensures the data being presented is representative of current academic literature and understanding. Finally, she collects and organizes the response data taken from workshop surveys to ensure the information is presented accurately.

Cassandra is currently undergoing a Master of Education in Counselling Psychology at the University of Alberta. Her primary research focus is translating transition experiences into informative policy recommendations and monitoring outcomes of transition programs. She was medically released due to a LAV accident after serving over ten years as a vehicle technician and used her military and academic experiences to work with other researchers to better understand military culture.

Cassandra works with SPCG because she believes that many problems that currently exist in the Canadian Armed Forces can be addressed using proper training and education. As an NCM, she brings experience from the lower ranks that helps identify communication gaps between senior and junior ranks. She also understands how trauma, whether it be from war or from sexual assault, can affect peoples' perceptions, biases, and behaviours. She believes the SPCG workshop has the capability to help participants understand some of these phenomena and create a space where soldiers can speak about their experiences in a productive and engaging way. Being more open

about these conversations around sexual misconduct can create bridges of understanding and build connections between soldiers with different experiences.

MJ Batek, Ocdt (Ret'd)

MJ Batek directs and creates the branding for SPCG, including all print materials, training materials and web design. She brings over 20 years of experience in Marketing, Communications and Graphic Design to her role. While she is medically retired, her role allows her to give back in a healthy way that works around her healing process.

MJ's perspective on sexualized military culture is that it not only destroys the inherent trust required for an effective military within all ranks, but also negatively affects military spouses, partners and children who also become victims of abuse that often turns into military domestic violence.

MJ hopes, by being a part of the Survivor Perspectives Consulting Group, that she be a part of the much needed change in the toxic sexualized culture within the CAF which eventually led to her own PTSD. Seeing firsthand how the Front-Line Workshop is immediately different than any CAF-initiated training was an eye-opening experience. Unlike SHARP or other training that was treated as a joke within the organization and immediately alienated the invisible survivors in the room, the tone and format of the Front-Line Workshop stops that behaviour immediately. Witnessing participants' attitudes and biases change even in just one day has made all the difference and is the motivation behind what we do. MJ believes that SPCG gives other survivors like her, an opportunity to do something positive to enact change.

Carly Arkell, Major (Ret'd)

Carly Arkell joined the Naval Reserve at age 16. At 19, she transferred to the Regular Force through the Regular Officer Training Program (ROTP) to become an Aerospace Engineering Officer (AERE). Throughout her career, she supported domestic and deployed operations for the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), the Canadian Army (CA), as well as the Canadian Special Operations Force Command (CANSOFCOM). Highlights include technical assistance visit to Afghanistan in 2006 and posting to 431 Squadron (Snowbirds) as the Squadron Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Officer. Carly has extensive experience in working in NDHQ and after career-altering medical issues, which were aggravated by the MST, she shifted focus from supporting CAF operations to being an internal activist working for change from within the institution. She briefly worked with the Sexual Misconduct Response Centre (SMRC) until she had to stop working completely due to health complications. Carly was medically released in January 2021 with over 22 years of service.

Carly testified as a witness at the 2019 Senate Committee Hearing on Bill C77 (An Act to amend the National Defence Act) and how it intersects with the Canadian Victims' Bill of Rights. Prior to joining the Survivor Perspectives Consulting Group, Carly was the Vice President of the Women Warriors' Healing Garden Board of Directors.

"Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is not unique to any particular group of CAF members, it is not based on the colour of your uniform, nor the rank on your epaulette; it happens to all kinds of people. It also impacts more than just the victim, the perpetrator, and the CAF; it permeates through us and touches everyone in our lives, especially our families and close friends. I am keenly interested in exactly how far that impact reaches and how in turn it comes back to impact the CAF itself, as an organization."

FRONT LINE WORKSHOP TESTIMONIALS

“We operate in a society where survivors of sexual misconduct are subject to process-driven response systems coordinated by supervisors with little to no understanding of trauma. The result, seen time and time again, is that people affected by sexual trauma are re-victimized, subjected to unreasonably long processes, and less likely to find meaningful engagement. No wonder that fewer than 6% of sexual assaults are reported.

Survivor Perspectives Consulting Group offers Uniformed Services Frontline Workshop on Sexual Misconduct as a professional development resource that shifts the focus back to survivors. This exceptional training is based on the collaboration of survivors, senior leaders within the Canadian Armed Forces, retired personnel, and community stakeholders. The workshop leverages a myriad of expertise to offer training and insight into trauma-informed, survivor-centred approaches.

Regardless of participants’ previous experiences and training, the Uniformed Services Frontline Workshop provides a developmental opportunity for everyone. New leaders will explore the fundamentals of trauma-informed approaches while more experienced participants can build upon previously acquired skills, address stereotypes, and strengthen communication strategies. Ultimately, this session enables participants to foster survivor engagement, identify relevant resources, and implement effective person-focused models to track and resolve complaints.

As a senior officer in the Royal Canadian Navy and a sexual assault investigator with a municipal police service, I sincerely believe that this training makes a difference and should be part of a comprehensive supervisor development program. The workshop is also an essential training resource for any organization seeking to strengthen the resilience and peer support capacity of its workforce.

Survivor Perspectives Consulting Group can’t undo past harms inflicted by process-driven systems; however, the workshop will ensure that your organization is enabled to implement a trauma-informed, survivor-centred resolution process that fosters culture change and creates a psychologically safe space. “

-Cdr / Capf S. K. Churm, CD

“I attended a Front-Line Workshop: Uniform Sexual Trauma First Aid and Intervention Course in September 2021. The course was facilitated by Donna Riguidel and the content and delivery left me deeply impacted. I gained invaluable insight in two critical areas around the subject of sexual misconduct. The first was a practical understanding of the high risk of re-traumatizing someone during their disclosure of sexual misconduct and being given the tools on how to respond and support someone through this incredibly challenging life event. I put these skills to use soon afterwards as I briefed and prepared my unit's supervisors in advance of the DND/CAF sexual misconduct class action lawsuit claim submission deadline.

The second insight was more generally related to sexual misconduct in the CAF, where I gained a greater appreciation for the extent of this crisis in our ranks and how it is affecting our members. The day long course was run by Donna in such a way as to actively involve all participants. Everyone was encouraged to share their thoughts and experiences. I witnessed senior commanders visibly moved, and members of all ranks share both troubling scenarios and regrets with past actions or with actions not taken. An additional facilitator was on hand to support anyone triggered or needing a break.

Donna is a survivor and this was a key factor in the successful delivery of this course. This fact ensured that everyone in attendance was no longer removed at any level from the issue of sexual misconduct, being faced with a CAF survivor. Participants were focussed and real and raw conversations were had. I was also appreciative of the care that Donna took to not alienate the men in the audience and how she was focussed on moving the CAF forward.

As a Commanding Officer charged with implementing Culture Change, I feel that every CAF member in my unit should also benefit from this course. I, my officers or my senior NCMs cannot create the impact that I experienced on this course. It is by feeling this impact that my team will be better able to accept the need for change and will take active steps at the grassroots level to carry it out. By completing this course, I feel that my unit would gain a foundational and shared understanding of the issue of sexual misconduct in the CAF and that any of the next Culture Change initiatives that we take as unit would be that much more successful.”

Commander / Capitaine de frégate Dan Saunders

“I was privileged to be able to take the Sexual Misconduct Frontline Workshop Training on 23 June 2021. This training was one of the most significant in my career as an officer. As a chaplain I am already a front-line worker for sexual misconduct cases and have dealt with many such cases over the course of my career, however, this course helped me to see the reality and subtleties of lived sexual misconduct in a way I had not before, and it shook me to my core. The methodology of instruction, small group interaction, was as important to the process as the material itself. Many 'awareness' packages out there (often delivered in an individualized, at-your-own-pace distance learning format) fail to engage trainees and are easily 'completed' with little or no personal integration.

This course was in many ways, 'raw.' I could see and hear evidence from other participants that they were significantly interacting with the subject material - learning was happening; change was happening. Especially helpful in this format was the provision of support-personnel throughout the course to ensure that those who might have felt 'triggered' by the subject-matter could get the support they needed. In many ways, this support system was a tangible example of the core lessons of the training itself. I was later able to provide this support and participate in a second session on 28 September 2021 and found my positive evaluation of the program to be validated yet again.

This course helped to open the eyes of participants to the wide-spread reality and subtleties of sexual misconduct and, more importantly, how to carefully, transparently, and safely provide front-line support to those who come forward with stories of sexual misconduct. I believe that each and every member of the CAF should experience this course (in its current format) if we are to bring real culture change and healing.”

LCdr John Hounsell-Drover
Formation Chaplain, Canadian Army Doctrine and Training Centre (CADTC)

“My name is Billy Bolen, I am the supervisor for the Edmonton CCMS. I work for the Director General Integrated Conflict and Complaint Management (DGICCM) Chief Professional Conduct and Culture (CPCC). I took your training in Banff AB with 41 BG.

I must say that your training was very informative and I learned a lot. Your Stories you told were very powerful and to me an eye opener...Your training should be conducting throughout the CF. As an old Soldier who spent 37 year in the regular force. I have seen many changes and I still as you said believe in the CF and its people. We need to educate our members, and with your training. It will give our members more tools.”

William (Billy) A. Bolen, MSC, CD
Supervisor, Conflict and Complaint Management Services Centre, Edmonton

“Multiple studies demonstrate that a fumbled response to the first disclosure of a sexual assault is the single biggest cause of PTSD among people affected by military sexual trauma. Not the traumatic incident itself, but the response to it.

Survivor Perspectives Consulting Group goes straight to the source of so much of this harm that we have seen in the Defence Team and among veterans. SPCG's workshop is a uniquely designed experience that equips individuals with the skills to respond to survivors of sexual trauma in a way that supports and promotes healing.

This training is geared toward healthy, inclusive culture in the CAF/DND. It is based in human skills required by modern leaders at all levels. Emotional intelligence, empathy and compassion can be taught; SPCG probes mindsets and introduces the skills that will make Canada's military institution a world leader in thriving culture.

The workshop itself is a master class in creating psychologically safe spaces in which challenging topics can be discussed productively and in a way that strengthens teams. It also furthers the crucial conversations that need to take place in every corner of the organization. I found the emphasis on language to be very powerful, as well: language reflects culture and can change culture.

The paradigms and practices presented by the experts at SPCG are what I needed from leaders and colleagues when I was mistreated during my time in the military. I needed to be kept safe and, when I was exposed to dangerous behaviours, I needed support to recover. I believe I would still be serving in the Army today if these norms had been ingrained in the culture of the CAF I joined.”

**Annalise Schamuhn, Captain (Ret'd) CD
Executive Coach and Leadership Consultant**

“As a journalist interested in the SMT issue in the CAF, I was grateful to be allowed to participate in a training session for friends, family members and supporters. I found the program informative, engaging, and I learned things that I now use in my daily interactions with others. I met survivor, Annalise Schamuhn, in that workshop, and together we now have a documentary treatment on this topic currently on the desk of the CBC documentary unit. If we are successful in our pitch to get this film made, we would like to include a segment that shows this program to the public, as evidence that the CAF is actively trying to end the toxic culture of the past.”

Mick Gzowski

“Survivors Perspectives Consulting Group delivers an innovative Front-line workshop that provides participants initiatives, tools and strategies to better support victims of Military Sexual Trauma (MST). Donna Riguidel sets the stage right from the start with an uncomfortable opening ice breaker exercise, enabling participants to feel empathy for survivors who have to repeatedly tell their traumatic ordeal. The images, videos, and personal stories add context where you could palpably feel the shift in attitudes. This workshop provides leaders at all levels best practices in trauma support and provides resources on how to engage with survivors of MST with empathy and compassion. Donna’s ability to make individuals feel at ease and engage in dialogue with a heavy subject gives participants gained confidence to work together in order to help others.

Through guided syndicate work, participants are able to deconstruct scenarios, engage in dialogue and role play in small groups where every perspective is valued. I liked how the workshop highlights that you can still be a bad-ass warrior and also have empathy. Listening with empathy and showing compassionate does not weaken us as soldiers. It strengthens us all to be a better, stronger and a more well-rounded force. Talking about vulnerability, compassion in humility in order to better support those impacted by Military Sexual Trauma was a transformative experience. I came to realizations of my own bias and where I can do better, be better.

This workshop delivered from MST survivor(s), with lived experiences, helped guide me in these difficult conversations which I have never had the courage before to speak about. Much of the examples and stories resonated with me and forced me to look at my past traumas and seek support. The honest, passionate and raw examples of personal experiences helped me understand that I am not alone. Attending this workshop not only provided me with the educational foundation but gave me confidence and mechanisms to conduct meaningful training at my own unit. It empowered me to become an advocate within my own Reserve Brigade to lead transformative cultural change.

I believe this superb training enables individuals engaged in this issue to gain valuable tools, and gives hope by being able to support each other as a group, in a vulnerable setting. It is the best training that I have ever taken in my 29 year career in the CAF. I feel this training is a huge success in the way that many members come to realizations that may not have been possible without such powerfully sensitive presentations and information. I know now that I have the capacity to influence and shape our institutional culture by treating everyone with dignity and respect. This workshop gave me renewed hope that we have the capacity to reshape and renew our culture.”

Warrant Officer Carolyn Edwards, MMM, CD
G7/TBG Plans WO, Conduct & Culture Committee member, MST survivor
41 Canadian Brigade Group Headquarters

“Frontline survivor training provided me with the context of how and when members may come forward to share their experiences. Specifically, this training offered me a playbook on how to provide immediate response and support. I liken this training to Immediate Actions -- the way we use rote learning and establish muscle memory to respond to weapon stoppages or first aid scenarios.

In the six months following the Frontline survivor training course, these skills have tangibly helped me support six individuals who have raised their concerns within their own chains of command. I used this training on a daily basis as an Assisting Officer and as I supported a UDI.

I have also taken the tools from the course to all of the command teams in 33 CBG and offered them the specific narrative and "playbook" that they need for their members.

Unlike training I've received in the past via DLN or lectures, this interactive and engaging training helped me connect with and retain the tools I need as a leader to support members responding to inappropriate behavior.”

Captain Meg O'Keefe
33 IA Coy

“Sexual misconduct affects cohesion, morale and operational readiness cohesion/ morale and operational readiness and as we all know this is counter-productive to the building of strong, diverse, and inclusive teams. This program is a great tool that helped the 38 CBG Command Teams with the confidence to continue setting the tone for strong, ethical, and inclusive leadership. It helped us improve communications regarding inappropriate conduct, to continue to encourage and establish a safe environment and to provide essential support to victims to shape the CAF culture. It also provided the confidence to all of us to provide support to someone who is victimized with a survivor-first approach so they can start to feel empowered, and begin to heal. 38 CBG continues to plan this training for our soldiers, and I believe this should be considered by all CAF members.”

Gwen Bourque, MAIS, PMP
Director of Information Technology Operations
Saskatchewan Polytechnic

“In December 2021 I had the opportunity to attend the Sexual Trauma First Aid and Intervention Course. A series of the course were put on at the behest of Comd 1 CAD who believed we needed to do more in support of those members who had suffered some form of sexual trauma. The course, while full of difficult content, was well prepared and did an excellent job of informing as well as dispelling some of the myths surrounding military sexual trauma. Especially pertinent to leadership was the coaching on how to talk to survivors or victims of sexual trauma; what to say and more importantly what not to say. The training was well worth the investment of one days' time.”

Col Neil Cameron
A1, 1 Canadian Air Division

“The Uniform Sexual Trauma First Aid and Intervention Course (USTFAIC) was focused in part on dispelling the myths surrounding the sexual misconduct crisis in the CAF but more specifically on providing tools to be used by leaders and supervisors while providing ‘Sexual Trauma First Aid’. It is well known that many victims/survivors have been re-victimized during their attempts to disclose to authorities. The concept of ‘Sexual Trauma First Aid’ is that we as leaders and CAF members should always be prepared for someone to disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to us, and that by using the tools and concepts presented during the course we will be able to better support the individual and possibly also minimize the trauma associated with the incident. This would be an excellent day of training for all CAF members but maximum impact will be achieved at the junior/middle leadership level. I personally would have benefited greatly from this course during JCSP or my RCAF pre-command/command team training serial, but I could also see great value in its introduction to earlier levels of training PLQ and potentially 3rd or 4th year RMC.”

MGen Iain S Huddleston, COS CJOC

“After taking the Uniform Sexual Trauma First Aid and Bystander Training, I gained a broader perspective of the complexities which contribute to the sexual misconduct in the military. The course strengthens the voices of those who desire to uphold the organizations values and are victimized by individuals whose actions or inactions diminish the military. This course serves as a uniting forum that helps all ranks recognize barriers that MST survivors face as well as strengthen their skills to be more supportive of MST survivors. This course has provided me with hope and the belief that this training is the necessary significant change that the military requires to make serious and impactful changes to effectively combat the sexual misconduct. This course would be impactful if it expanded throughout the entire CAF and beyond.”

**Johana (Erin Snider), Cpl, Infantry, Reserves
(Medically released with PTSD due to military sexual trauma)**

“The Uniform Sexual Trauma First Aid and Bystander Training elevates the voices of MST survivors within a culture where they have been suppressed and devalued. In the CAF it is most often the voices of white, heterosexual men who present in accordance with masculine ideals and act in alignment with stoicism and hierarchical, authoritative structures whose voices are weighed in with the greatest impact. This training provides the skill set that impactful voices within the CAF can draw upon in order to influence meaningful and significant change within an organization that has enabled problematic sexual encounters to occur. It is my hope that this training will be delivered CAF wide, particularly to the naysayers who raise doubts about the extent of the problem, because this workshop gets through to people. It creates an environment that is open and supportive to learning about an uncomfortable topic, eliminates doubt about the harmful impacts of MST, and provides participants a path forward to influence change within their own circles.”

Jamie Neczkar, Capt (Ret'd)