

**Armed Forces: Widespread Support for C.D. Howe
Recommendation That Employers Be Compensated for
Disruption of Reservist Employees Leaving for Active Duty**

BDO Dunwoody Weekly CEO/Business Leader Poll

By COMPAS in *Canadian Business*

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**COMPAS Inc.
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1.0 Overview

Among OECD countries, Canada has one of the smaller armed forces in absolute terms (66,000 approx.) or on a per capita basis. Our military can do what it has to do in Canada (Olympics) or abroad (Afghanistan) partly because some reservists leave their regular jobs for active duty for periods ranging from a few months to almost two years.

A recent paper released by the C.D. Howe Institute recommends that Canada follow in the footsteps of the U.K. and Australia and provide compensation to employers, for example, with respect to the costs of finding replacements or retraining reservists upon their return.

An overwhelming majority of CEOs and business leaders on the COMPAS business panel advocate government compensation for employers who lose employees in the reserves to active duty. Panelists feel this way strongly both in fairness to employers who experience disruption and to employees in the reserves so that they do not have to fear discrimination in the regular job market.

Opinion is more divided about whether our regular armed forces should be expanded in size.

These are the key findings from this past week's Internet survey of CEOs and business leaders on the COMPAS panel. The weekly business survey is undertaken for *Canadian Business* magazine under sponsorship of BDO Dunwoody LLP.



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2.0 Detailed Findings

Table 2: (Q1) On a 7 point agreement scale where 1 means disagree strongly and 7, agree strongly, how much do you agree with the following opinions?¹

| | MEAN | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | DNK |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|-----|
| Canada should compensate employers for the disruption caused by reservists' active duty in order to be fair to those employers who experience the disruption | 5.3 | 33 | 25 | 17 | 11 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| Canada should compensate employers for the disruption caused by reservists' active duty so that employees who are in the reserves do not have to fear discrimination in the regular job market | 5.3 | 31 | 26 | 19 | 10 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 0 |
| Canada should expand the size of its regular armed forces in order to depend less on turning to the reserves for fulltime, temporary service | 4.3 | 22 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 10 | 15 | 8 | 2 |

Table 2, above, displays the scale responses of panelists while the following verbatims provide a nuanced sense of panel opinion:

¹ Question preamble: Among OECD countries, Canada has one of the smaller armed forces in absolute terms (66,000 approx.) or on a per capita basis. Our military can do what it has to do in Canada (Olympics) or abroad (Afghanistan) partly because some reservists leave their regular jobs for active duty for periods ranging from a few months to almost two years.

Australia and the U.K. both assist those few employers whose businesses are disrupted by the departure of a reservist.

A recent paper released by the C.D. Howe Institute recommends that Canada also provide compensation to employers, for example, with respect to the costs of finding replacements or retraining reservists upon their return.



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A thankless job, unless you get a ride down the "Highway of Heroes".

What a joke, in how successive governments have screwed over the grunts. Life insurance, death benefits, rehab, the lists is endless.

To those that serve and their families THANK YOU.

Canada is a large country as well as a strong and leading member of the international community; it should have a larger contingent of armed forces to fulfill its commitment to itself as well as the international community.

Canada should make sure they also compensate the families of the dead and wounded.

Canada should quit being a pawn of US foreign policy, it cost us millions we can't afford but much more importantly it cost us the precious lives of our people.

Canada's Reservists play an important part in the military's directives. They are well trained, have a high sense of patriotism and place their lives on the line in the exact same fashion as regular troops. They give their time because they want to. Employers should receive compensation for a Reservists time away from employment as the country has received valuable support from the individual.

Employers benefit by having very highly trained employees that come from the reservists. Our company has a policy of topping up the wages of the reservists when they are called for action or training.

How many reservists do we have?

I don't agree with war and especially not the ones started by the irresponsible former US administration. However, as part of NATO we have to honour our commitment. Now if only Cheney and the gang of dishonest Republicans would keep



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their traps shut and let the current administration clean up their mess without interference perhaps the world will stand a much better chance of moving forward in peace. Every time Cheney spews his hate the parts of the world which hated the USA are reminded why they did and old wounds are reopened and dying negative embers rekindled and we are drawn in.

It should also be illegal for employers to force employees to burn off vacation days to participate in training exercises while in the reserves. Too few employers see that such activities build better employees.

Just more burden for the government if you ask me.

Most provinces now have legislation protecting jobs of reservist when called to active duty...much like maternity leave protects jobs of pregnant women and new parents.

Our armed forces are small and not sufficient for a war like Afghanistan, but this is an exceptional war. I prefer that the forces be about the same size with a stronger reserve system.

The Reserves are something that Canadians and employers should encourage. It would be shameful if an employer were to discriminate against a member of the Reserves. Our "inconvenience" pales in comparison with the service they provide to the country.

There is no doubt that the size of the armed forces is not sufficient or big enough for the size of the country. A strong militia is also most important, one big enough for a reserve unit to take the field if required.

Time to be realistic about how effective the present level armed forces personnel can be, are we over extended?



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We should establish mandatory national armed forces like Israel, Germany, and Switzerland, practically every euro nation. It is about time that we invest in democracy in this country and that there be a social price to pay for freedom! That should be the question in this survey, not if a company should get 50% of the workers pay back, which is BS, when there would be no market to operate if it were not for the commitment of these brave men and women.

With record high unemployment and shortage in armed forces why not recruit more on a permanent basis?

[The following comments are from a single respondent].

As it happens I am a retired officer of the Army reserve and have some strong views on the subject. Chief among them is that Canada's armed force is too small to cover its land mass, adjacent oceans and international commitments. The Army Navy and Air forces should be expanded but realistically less than 20% should be on active service except when issues like Afghanistan, and before it Bosnia, arise.

This would mean that 80% of our defence capacity would be paid only when needed and, taking the needs of training and equipment in account, would cost the nation no more than 30% of its active service equivalent.

The result would be that Canada would be in a position to deploy trained and equipped personnel in the event of a territorial incursion, threat to a trade route, natural disaster or to meet the need to support an international obligation.

Furthermore, a policy that bases the provision of a defence "product" primarily in the hands of soldiers, sailors and airmen based in the community will, inevitably, allow the



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community at large to determine the scope and need for its own defence and to participate in its delivery.

For much of the last part of the last century Canada's "official" view of its place in the world was based on a naïve policy that assumed that the nastiness of the world would pass us by – it didn't.

For a dramatic example of how the nation views its defenders you might want to look at the process by which Honour House (www.honourhouse.ca) in Vancouver is being developed and the enormous public support which has made it possible.

3.0 Methodology

The COMPAS web-survey of CEOs and leaders of small, medium, and large corporations was conducted January 11-13, 2010. Respondents constitute an essentially hand-picked panel with a higher numerical representation of small and medium-sized firms.

Because of the small population of CEOs and business leaders from which the sample was drawn, the study can be considered more accurate than comparably sized general public studies. In studies of the general public, surveys of n=116 are deemed accurate to within approximately 9.1 percentage points 19 times out of 20. The principal and investigator on this study is Conrad Winn, Ph.D.

