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CAF Support to Ontario Long Term Care Facilities

Brigadier-General Conrad Mialkowski
Commander Joint Task Force Central

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Agenda



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Military Support to the Provincial Response for LTCFs



Joint Task Force Central (JTFC) collaborated with the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC), in partnership with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ontario Health, to provide temporary support at long-term care homes facing unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19. Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members worked collaboratively with civilian partners, helping to stabilize the situation.

The assistance provided to these long-term care homes was unique to our domestic operations history and demonstrated the agility of CAF members to face any challenge in aid to our fellow Canadians. By our nature, as a disciplined force we were able to adapt our response and capabilities to assist Ontario during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our military teams worked in concert with frontline health care workers who were key in the stabilization of the LTCFs in Ontario. Military members assisted with the day-to-day procedures, helped with coordination of medical care, and provided general support to activities.

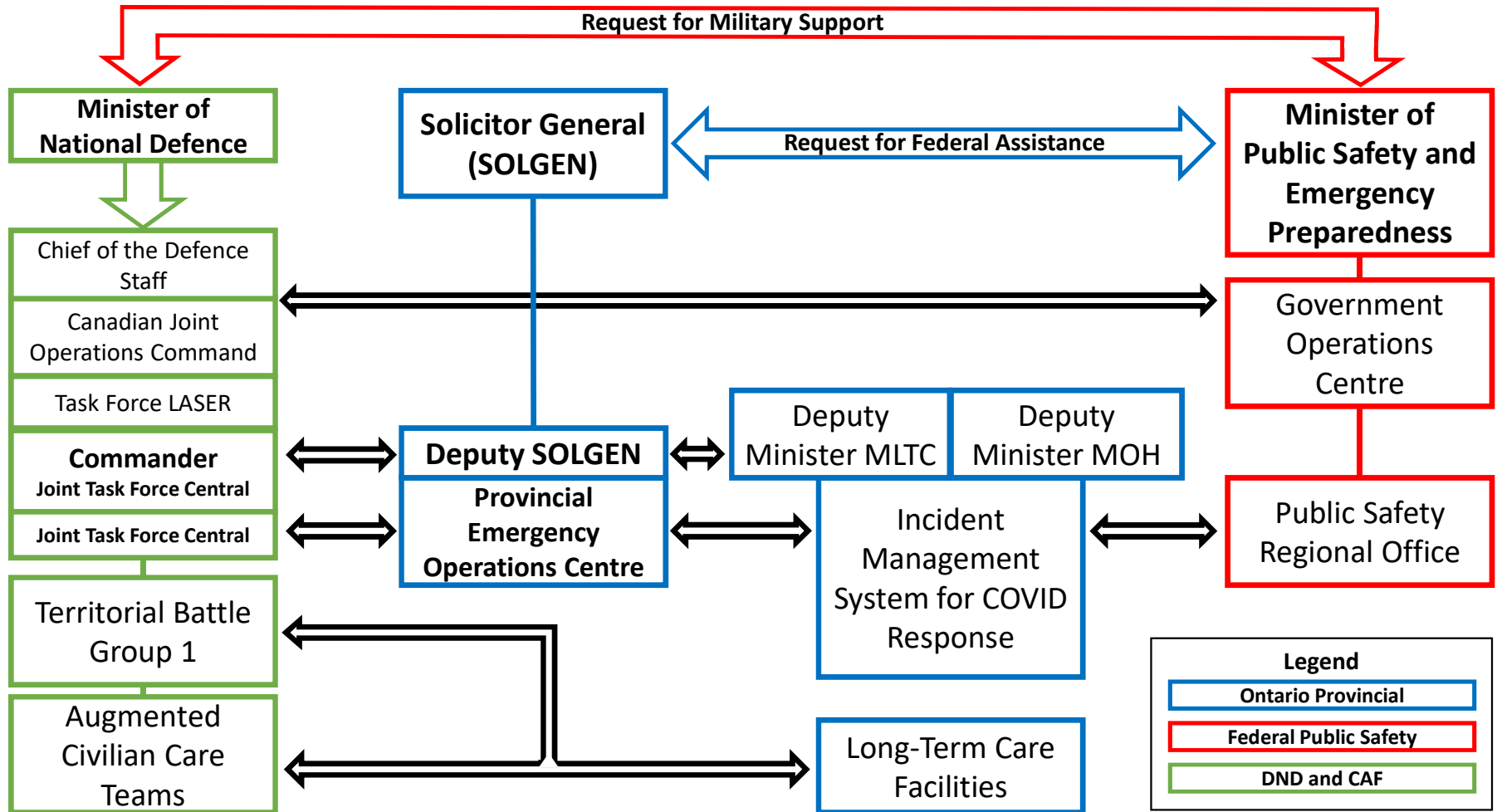
With years of experience related to working with our government partners in emergency situations, JTFC members are proud to have used this expertise to provide assistance to fellow Canadians in their time of need. The way we train - in any weather and with various and sometimes unforeseen obstacles - makes us a force that is agile and adaptable to any given situation.

We are committed to maintaining our high readiness and providing assistance to our Provincial partners, whether that be fighting fires or floods, providing assistance to Ground Search and Rescue efforts, or assisting in the Provincial effort to stabilize the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC), JTFC is the CAF regional command responsible for the conduct of domestic operations throughout the province of Ontario.

JTFC is one of six regional joint task forces of the CAF, and is responsible for leading CAF continental operations in the Province of Ontario.

Simplified Framework for CAF Support





Initiating CAF Support



The Request for Federal Assistance (RFA) was submitted by letter from the Solicitor General (SOLGEN), Sylvia Jones, to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness (MPSEP), Bill Blair, on **22 Apr 20**. On **22 Apr 20**, the Minister of National Defence (MND), Harjit Sajjan, approved the support and MPSEP responded by letter on **24 Apr 20** to SOLGEN to indicate that CAF would support the request.

Ontario requested the following support for an initial period of 14 days and no more than 30 days:

- Trained medical and associated support staff to provide humanitarian relief and medical support in long-term care homes including:
 - Liaison and reconnaissance to identify the employment protocols of CAF personnel
 - Patient management and medical care
 - General duties support
 - Coordination of nursing and logistical requirements, as well as longer-term personnel management and planning

On **23 Apr 20**, Ministry of Health (MOH) & Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC), in partnership with Ontario Health and the individual homes confirmed the five (5) sites that would be supported. This was communicated by Mike Heenan, Assistant Deputy Minister, Hospitals and Capital Division, MOH, to JTFC's Operation's Director, LCol Sean French. JTFC did not play a role in selection, but the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) did request that CAF deploy to the hardest hit homes where the most impact could be made.

On **24 Apr 20**, the CDS signed an order tasking the military to provide the support requested.



Deployment



Between **24 and 26 Apr 20**, elements of JTFC's response conducted site recces of HOLLAND CHRISTIAN, ALTAMONT, ORCHARD VILLA, EATONVILLE, and HAWTHORNE to determine what forces would be required to support each home.

Similar to the CAF response in Quebec, JTFC deployed small teams tailored to the specific needs of the homes that could provide 24/7 coverage using two shifts – these teams were called Augmented Civilian Care (ACC) Teams. Each team consisted of two nursing officers and medical technicians who provided care to residents and a team of general duty personnel who performed a variety of support tasks such as cleaning and meal delivery. Of note: CAF Nurses are provincially licenced just as civilian nurses are. Medical technicians are trained as primary care paramedics with an array of clinical skills adaptable to diverse clinical settings including support to CAF overseas missions and CAF primary care clinics. These five teams were further enabled by headquarters and support elements within the GTA.

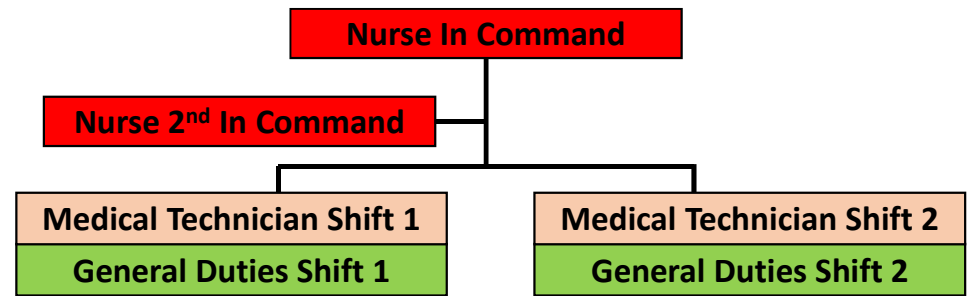
- **24-26 Apr 20** – During this period, medical and general duty teams were formed and trained for their tasks. Training included Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) procedures, the Ontario Long-term care facility (LTCF) distance learning package, mental resiliency training and elder care training.
- **27 Apr 20** – Teams moved into GTA accommodations and commenced orientation and preparatory work in LTCFs.
- **28 Apr 20** – First shifts at LTCFs.

Employment Timeline



The period of employment was from 28 Apr – 3 Jul 20.

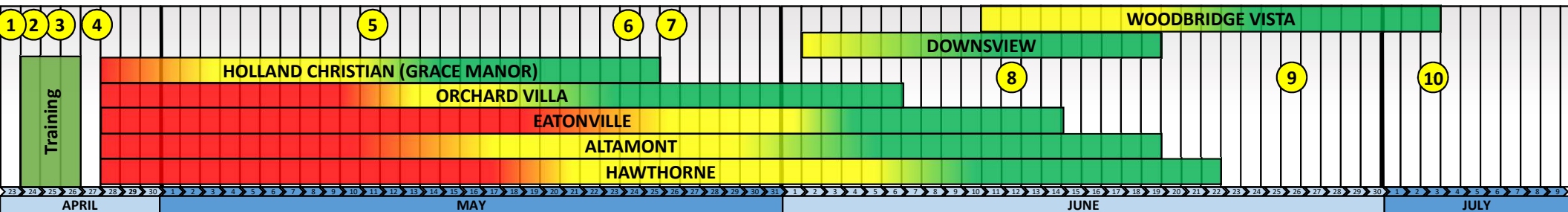
Augmented Civilian Care (ACC) Team



- 1 22 Apr 20 - RFA Submitted and approved by MND
- 2 24 Apr 20 - MPSEP letter to SOLGEN for CAF support
- 3 24 -26 Apr 20 - Liaison and Reconnaissance
- 4 27 Apr 20 - ACC Teams Deploy

- 5 11 May 20 – Request/Approval to Extend to 26 May 20
- 6 24 May 20 - Observation Report Sent to Province
- 7 26 May 20 – Request/Approval to Extend to 12 Jun 20
- 8 12 Jun 20 – Approval to Extend to 26 Jun 20

- 9 26 Jun 20 – Request/Approval of Extension to 3 Jul 20
- 10 3 Jul 20 - Close of RFA – Post-Deployment





Observation Report



In all military operations, Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members have an obligation to report their observations as they pertain to the mission.

While providing medical care and general support to LTCFs, our teams observed a number of medical professional and technical issues. These were reported concurrently up the military chain of command and to LTCF staff and management on a daily basis with civilian staff and management making efforts to correct those areas identified.

Reporting of observations helped increase patient safety and provided constructive situational awareness to the chain of command, highlighting issues that might have hindered mission success.



Observation Report



CAF supported LTCFs from **28 Apr 20 – 03 Jul 20**. While providing medical care and general support to LTCFs, our teams observed a number of medical professional and technical issues and communicated these issues to LTCF staff and management. These observations were reported continuously from the outset of the operation at the team level in an effort to immediately resolve issues that impacted resident care and wellbeing. The **Observation Report** focused on key areas of Standards and Quality of Medical Care. Its timeline is as follows:

- **7 May 20** – The first consolidated report was provided to Commander JTFC from Territorial Battle Group 1 (TBG 1) Commanding Officer.
- **9 May 20** – Commander JTFC directs the TBG 1 to compile a formal site-by-site observation report.
- **11 May 20** – TBG 1 submits formal Observation Report as directed.
- **14 May 20** – Finalized Observation Report and cover letter submitted to Commander CJOC from Commander JTFC requesting permission to share report with province.
- **24 May 20** – Permission granted and formal Observation Report shared by Commander JTFC to Deputy Minister of Long-Term Care, Richard Steele.

Following the sharing of the Observation Report, CDS directs that observations be regularly reported. Observation reports become weekly and are shared from JTFC Operations Director, LCol Sean French, to Director of Long-Term Care Inspections Branch, Stacey Colameco. Weekly observation reports are submitted **14 Jun 20, 21 Jun 20, 28 Jun 20** and **5 Jul 20**.

- **30 Jul 20** - Commander JTFC sends a Final Observation Report to Canadian Joint Operations Command (CJOC).
- **31 Jul 20** - The Final Observations Report is sent by CJOC to Deputy Ministers at the Federal Level.
- **04 Aug 20** - Commander JTFC sends the Final Observation report to Deputy Minister of Long-Term Care, Richard Steele.



Extension Transition Withdrawal



Transition Criteria were agreed upon through liaison between the JTFC Operations Director, the PEOC, the MOH Incident Management Team and Public Safety. This criteria consisted of the following four categories, which were assessed and reported daily by the Augmented Civilian Care (ACC) Teams in place at each facility:

1. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care assesses that CAF support is no longer required
2. LTCF COVID-19 cases are within integral capabilities to manage
3. IPAC procedures are established and followed by LTCF
4. LTCF staffing is sufficient to the number of residents

At the operations' level, JTFC would meet daily with the PEOC, MOH Operations Centre and Public Safety to provide a general update and to discuss the broader counter-COVID effort and other issues in ON. Each week, a meeting was held with this group at the director level to specifically discuss the conditions and progress at each military-supported LTCF.

Once a LTCF met these criteria, Commander JTFC exchanged letters with D/SOLGEN for CAF withdrawal. D/SOLGEN, in consultation with MOH, MLTC and the LTCFs could request extensions. Extensions of support within the RFA window were granted by Commander JTFC and extensions outside the RFA window were granted at the national level.



Extension Transition Withdrawal Timeline



- **11 May 20** – Director Emergency Management requests initial extension, CDS approves extension to 26 May 20
- **25 May 20** – Departure HOLLAND CHRISTIAN
- **26 May 20** – Initial RFA Extension to 12 Jun 20
- **2 Jun 20** – Support commenced DOWNSVIEW
- **6 Jun 20** – Departure ORCHARD VILLA
- **11 Jun 20** – Support commenced WOODBRIDGE VISTA
- **12 June 20** – MPSEP grants extension to 26 Jun 20
- **14 Jun 20** – Departure EATONVILLE
- **19 Jun 20** – Departure ALTAMONT and DOWNSVIEW
- **22 Jun 20** – Departure HAWTHORNE
- **25 Jun 20** – D/SOLGEN requests extension to 3 Jul 20 for last remaining LTCF – CDS approves
- **3 Jul 20** – Departure WOODBRIDGE VISTA – Close of RFA



Conclusion



The men and women of Joint Task Force Central (JTFC) are proud to have responded to the needs of residents in seven of Ontario's long-term care facilities (LTCF) which were among the hardest-hit by COVID-19.

This military effort was part of a much larger Provincially-led effort to address the unprecedented challenges due to the pandemic. The frontline health care workers with whom we worked were key to the stabilization of the situation in the LTCFs and we join our fellow citizens in saluting their hard work and commitment.

The assistance provided by the military to these long-term care homes was unique to our domestic operations history. It demonstrated the agility of Canadian Armed Forces and the commitment of its members to face any challenge in aid to our fellow Canadians.

The Canadian Armed Forces and Joint Task Force Central continues to maintain a level of readiness and will be ready to assist Provincial partners, whether that be in familiar Domestic Operations like fighting fires or floods, providing assistance to Ground Search and Rescue efforts, or with the unique and evolving challenge of the current COVID-19 pandemic.