

Evaluation of the Naval Experience Program Summary

Overall Assessment

Overall, based on the pilot's first year, the Naval Experience Program (NEP) addresses the need for an innovative and streamlined recruitment process, surpassing its short-term recruitment targets; however, due to processes outside of the Royal Canadian Navy's purview (medical, security and recruitment) and challenges related to development of feasible longer-term targets, sustainability is unclear.

Key Issues of Interest

1. **Media Campaign:** The NEP social and traditional media campaign had a high initial uptake in engagement/interest; however, activity has declined over time. The current absence of demographic-related targets may be impeding future marketing planning and is being addressed by NEP.
2. **Recruitment Target:** NEP has achieved its initially established target of 144 recruits in Year 1; however, identifying the program's intermediary goals and targets will require close collaboration with the Chief of Military Personnel. Improvement opportunities have been identified regarding validation of the program's future recruitment-related targets with the Canadian Forces Recruiting Group.
3. **File Closures:** Over 50 percent of NEP files do not reach enrolment, and reasons for file closures remain largely unknown.
4. **File-Processing Timeline:** The number of days required for the enrolment process has seen a decline due to an effort made by the Canadian Forces Recruitment Group to clear file backlog, and NEP timelines overall have decreased due to green file prioritization; however, sustainability is unclear.

Evaluation Scope

This evaluation was conducted between March 2023 and May 2024 by Assistant Deputy Minister (Review Services) in compliance with the Departmental Evaluation Plan—approved by the Performance Measurement and Evaluation Committee—and with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Policy on Results (2016). The evaluation provides a targeted assessment against key evaluation questions regarding early program effectiveness and efficiency. The focus was on the initial stages of the recruitment process: attraction and enrolment (Program 3.1 Recruitment). Advisory assistance was provided to the program during Year 1 of the pilot implementation using a Developmental Evaluation approach, with emphasis on the development of key performance metrics.

Program Overview

NEP is a five-year pilot program launched in Spring 2023 that falls under the Royal Canadian Navy's recruitment program. NEP addresses low recruitment levels and is one of several initiatives that responds to the Arbour Report recommendation to "restructure and simplify [the Canadian Armed Forces] recruitment, enrolment and basic training processes."