

## Canadian Rangers make big impression on Army colonel

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Canadian Rangers from seven First Nations communities made a big impression on an army colonel during a four-day visit to Northern Ontario.

“It has been a wonderful and very useful experience,” said Colonel Jennie Carignan, chief of staff for Land Force Central Area. “I was absolutely astonished at the way the Rangers have adapted to living extremely well in their environment. They are very knowledgeable about their own areas and their role is absolutely critical to the safety of their communities.”

Col Carignan encountered severe weather conditions during her visit, with temperatures dropping to  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  and windchills reaching as low as  $-58^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Despite that, she had outdoor weapon training with the Rangers at Lac Seul, and went snowmobiling with Rangers on the shore of Hudson Bay at both Fort Severn and Peawanuck. She also observed Rangers from Attawapiskat, Kashechewan, Fort Albany and Moose Factory teaching winter survival techniques to soldiers from Toronto at a temporary training site near Moosonee.



*Col Jennie Carignan visited Canadian Rangers and got a better situational awareness of the North and what it means to live in the North and to meet its challenges*

It was the first time during her 27 years in the Army that she had travelled that far north. She said the visit gave her a better appreciation of the unique challenges faced by Northerners and the difficulties with travelling and maintaining communications in severe weather conditions.

Part of her duties at Army headquarters in Toronto are planning and directing the military response to emergencies in Ontario's Far North, where Rangers often play an essential role.

In 2008, Col Carignan, a combat engineer, was appointed Canada's first female commanding officer of a combat unit and served in Afghanistan for 10 months.

About 40 percent of the 560 Rangers in 23 First Nations communities across Northern Ontario are women. Col Carignan was impressed by their role in the Rangers and their abilities on the land.

“They seem to be very happy and proud of their role as Rangers, and as leaders in their communities as well,” she said. “The visit gave me a better situational awareness of the North and what it means to live in the North and to meet its challenges.”