

Major-General Daniel Benjamin, CMM, CD (Retired)
Colonel Commandant
Canadian Military Engineers
National Defence Headquarters
MGen George R. Pearkes Building
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0K2
Canada



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Quartier général de la Défense nationale
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Holiday Message from the Colonel Commandant

Another year is ending with wars still raging in Ukraine, the Middle East, Sudan and Myanmar, not to forget tensions that are continuing to rise in East Asia. Climate change continues to generate several natural disasters here in Canada, although the Canadian Armed Forces have been less called upon this year to respond to these domestic emergencies than in previous years. This is a good thing in the context of a Force of last resort instead of first responder.

While our European Allies talk about mobilization, we are replenishing our ranks with a simplified and accelerated recruitment process, with an attrition rate that is stabilizing at the 8% that was the norm before Covid-19. This is very good news, particularly for the construction engineering trades that are in great need of reinforcements. Such needs combined with the retention necessities are well understood by the new Chief of the Defence Staff, General Jennie Carignan, who is not only the first woman to hold this position but also the first military engineer to obtain it since our reintegration into the combat arms in 1995. It is therefore quite an honour for her and our Branch.

During my visits across Canada this year with the Branch Chief Warrant Officer, I have been able to see the excellent work accomplished by our members in their respective tasks and functions and in support to the Canadian Armed Forces operations in Canada and abroad. You clearly demonstrate a very high level of professionalism and you are prepared for any eventuality. I am very proud of you and since the holiday season is approaching, please take advantage of this time off to rest and spend time with your family. For those deployed, my thoughts are with you and I am very grateful for such sacrifices on behalf of the Branch, the Canadian Armed Forces and our country.

With that, I wish you a joyful holiday season and a very happy New Year 2025.

Chimo!

MGen (Ret'd) Daniel Benjamin, CMM, CD
Colonel Commandant of the Canadian Military Engineers