



Lieutenant-Colonel Renald Nelson was born and raised in Brandon, Manitoba. He completed his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering at the University of Manitoba in 1988. Following term employment with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and eight months in the Reserves with 735 Communication Regiment in Winnipeg, he joined the Canadian Forces in September 1989. Following training in Chilliwack, he was posted in Spring of 1991 to CE in CFB/4 Wing Cold Lake. Employed in numerous positions, he also had an opportunity to deploy during the construction and initial exercise to the new FOL in Inuvik. In 1994 he was posted to 8 Wing Trenton and spent three years as the Engineering Officer in CE, working with his team on a number of projects, including the expansion associated with the arrival in Trenton of the CC-150 and the Parachute Centre.

In 1997 then-Capt Nelson was posted to the Canadian Forces School of Military Engineering, working in Chilliwack for three months before moving to the School's new home in Gaagetown. Employed first as an instructor, he moved into the position of OIC CAE Flt and eventually became the School Adjutant. Most importantly was his marriage to Diane Arsenault of Montreal, having been introduced by colleagues in Trenton. They welcomed their first daughter, Emilie, in 1999, and their son, Daniel, in 2001. In 2001, he, Diane and their young family were posted to Moncton and 1 Construction Engineering Unit (1 CEU). Initially employed as 2IC of 1 Specialist Engineer Team, he deployed with the SET to the Golan Heights. In Summer 2002 he became OIC of the Team and deployed to Bosnia (closure of Camp Normandy in Tomislavgrad) and Moscow (in aid of Foreign Affairs). Discovering he could extend his stay with 1 CEU through completion of a Post-Grad, he moved his family to Kingston in 2003 and took on the 1 CEU-sponsored geotechnical engineering masters. In addition to analyzing soil walls and obtaining his master's degree, he welcomed the birth of a second daughter, Erin, in December 2003 during exams. Posted back to 1 CEU/1 ESU in 2005, he deployed with 3 SET to KAF in support of ROTO 0. On return, he spent two months in Ottawa in a quiet hotel room working with the fledgling CANOSCOM before returning to his young, boisterous family and Moncton as 1 ESU's Operations Officer.

On promotion in 2008, then-Major Nelson was finally given a posting to his home province. He happily moved his family to Winnipeg where he was employed in A4 CE as FG3. There, he had the opportunity to work with numerous Air Force units and individuals in preparing them for deployment in support of taskings in Canada and overseas. In 2011 he returned to 8 Wing Trenton as the WCEO during the renewal and expansion to accommodate the CC-177 and the CC-130J. He deployed to Kuwait as the Task Force Engineer with Op IMPACT in April 2015. Following his return to Canada, in January 2016 he was posted to Ottawa and the Air Staff, remaining on IR until his family joined him in Summer 2017. With the Air Staff he was employed as D Air Sp 3-2, assisting with the overall RCAF infrastructure program, focusing on infra requirements for future aircraft acquisitions and in particular for the soon-to-arrive fixed-wing SAR aircraft. He also had the opportunity to deploy as a member of the recce team to Mali in preparation for Op PRESENCE.

Promoted in July 2018, LCol Nelson was posted to the Strategic Joint Staff as the DSOC Engineer. In this position, he was presented with numerous projects, including developing Directives for the Department and the Canadian Forces related to restricted conventional weapons. Having been warned by his children that any future posting would involve IR, and having been told that Winnipeg was not an option for a final move of the family, he has eagerly accepted employment with Public Services and Procurement Canada as a Project Manager in Ottawa. He will be leaving the Canadian Armed Forces at the start of March.

Renald is married to Diane Arsenault, formerly of Montreal, and they have three children, Emilie (19), Daniel (17) and Erin (15). They will remain in south-west Stittsville where Diane and Renald will suffer the future cursing of their children as they take public transit to the various post-secondary schools in the NCR.