

# Transforming Canada's Post-Cold War Air Force: Part II 1991-2014

Major Bill March  
RCAF History and Heritage

# Official Declaration

- The point(s) of view offered in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the official point(s) of view and policies of the Government of Canada, the Department of National Defence and the Royal Canadian Air Force.

In fact, I can virtually guarantee that none of them do

# Outline

- General Comments on Transformation
- Transformational Periods
  - 1991-1999: Decade of Darkness
  - 1999 – 2003: Let There Be Light
  - 2002 - 2011: Oh What a Lovely War
  - 2011-2014: Peace Dividend Part Deux
- From There to Here
- From Here to There
- Concluding Thoughts – Major's Eye View

# Transformation - Definitions

- Business Definition
  - In an organizational context, a process of profound and radical change that orients an organization in a new direction and takes it to an entirely different level of effectiveness...transformation implies a basic change of character and little or no resemblance with the past configuration or structure.
- DND Definition
  - A process of strategic re-orientation in response to a tangible change to the security environment, designed to shape a nation's armed forces to ensure their continued effectiveness and relevance

# Transformation – What Does it Mean

- Who decides
  - Strategic re-orientation
  - Tangible change
  - Effectiveness and relevance
- What Triggers Transformation
- Evolutionary vice Revolutionary

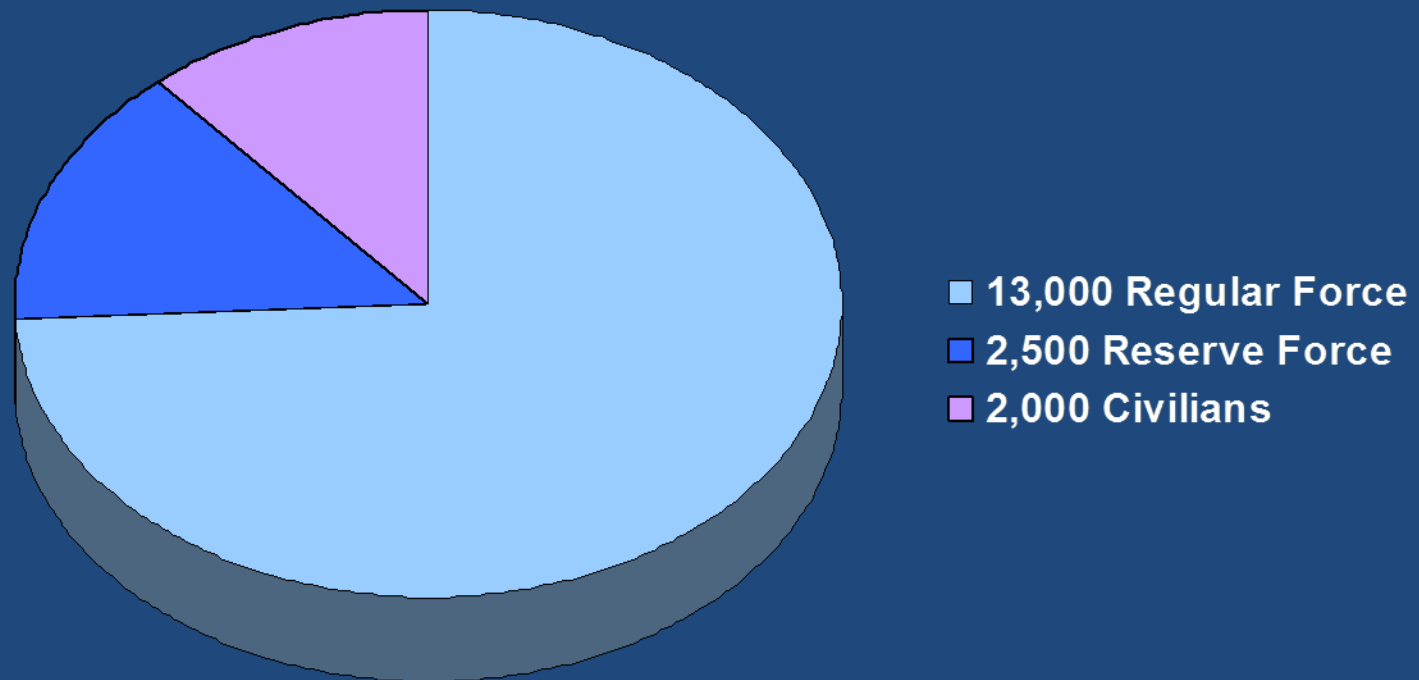


# Decade of Darkness: 1991-1999

- Strategic Re-orientation (Triggers - in order of importance)
  - Peace Dividend: Budget Reductions
  - Gulf War: Precision Guided Munitions
  - Jointness: Resistance is Futile
  - Public Support: Somalia
  - Fall of the Wall: Collapse of the Soviet Union

# Transformational Goal

- Deployable, multi-purpose, combat capable air force to fight alongside the best against the best.



# Key Transformational Phrases

- arbejde smartere ikke hårdere
  - work smarter not harder
- gøre mere med mindre
  - more with less
- slankere og ondere
  - leaner and meaner
- folk er vores vigtigste aktiv
  - people are our most important asset
- Synergi
  - synergy



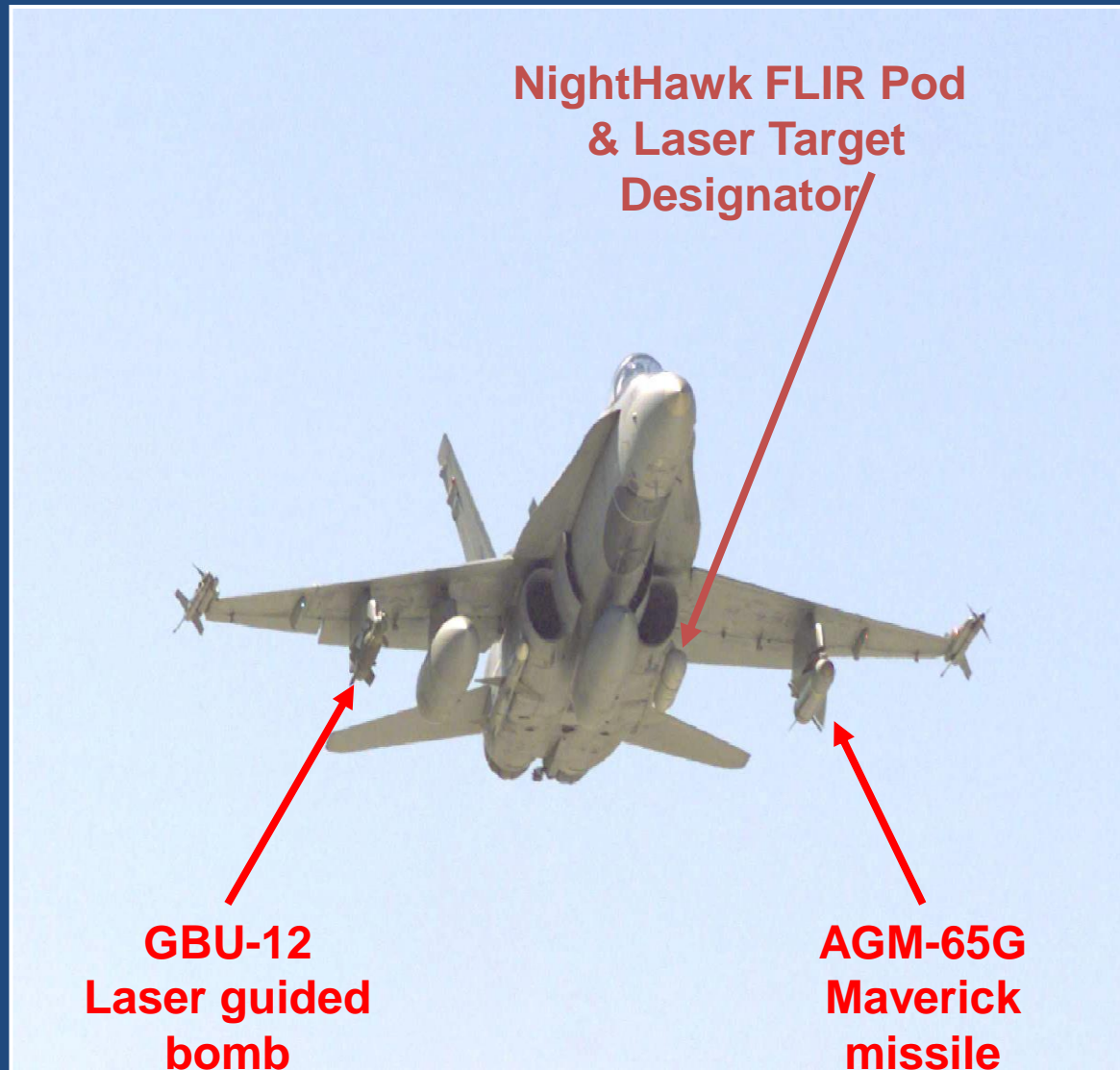


# How the Air Force Transformed

- Tangible Change
  - reduced personnel and aircraft, but not infrastructure
    - New command and control structure
    - Alternate Service Delivery



- **Tangible Change**
  - Focused on the acquisition of PGMs for the fighter force



# How The Air Force Transformed

- Tangible Change
  - Placed the professional development of personnel in the hands of joint institutions
  - A degree = ethical Behaviour
- Tangible Change
  - Unstable world = unprecedented level of deployments



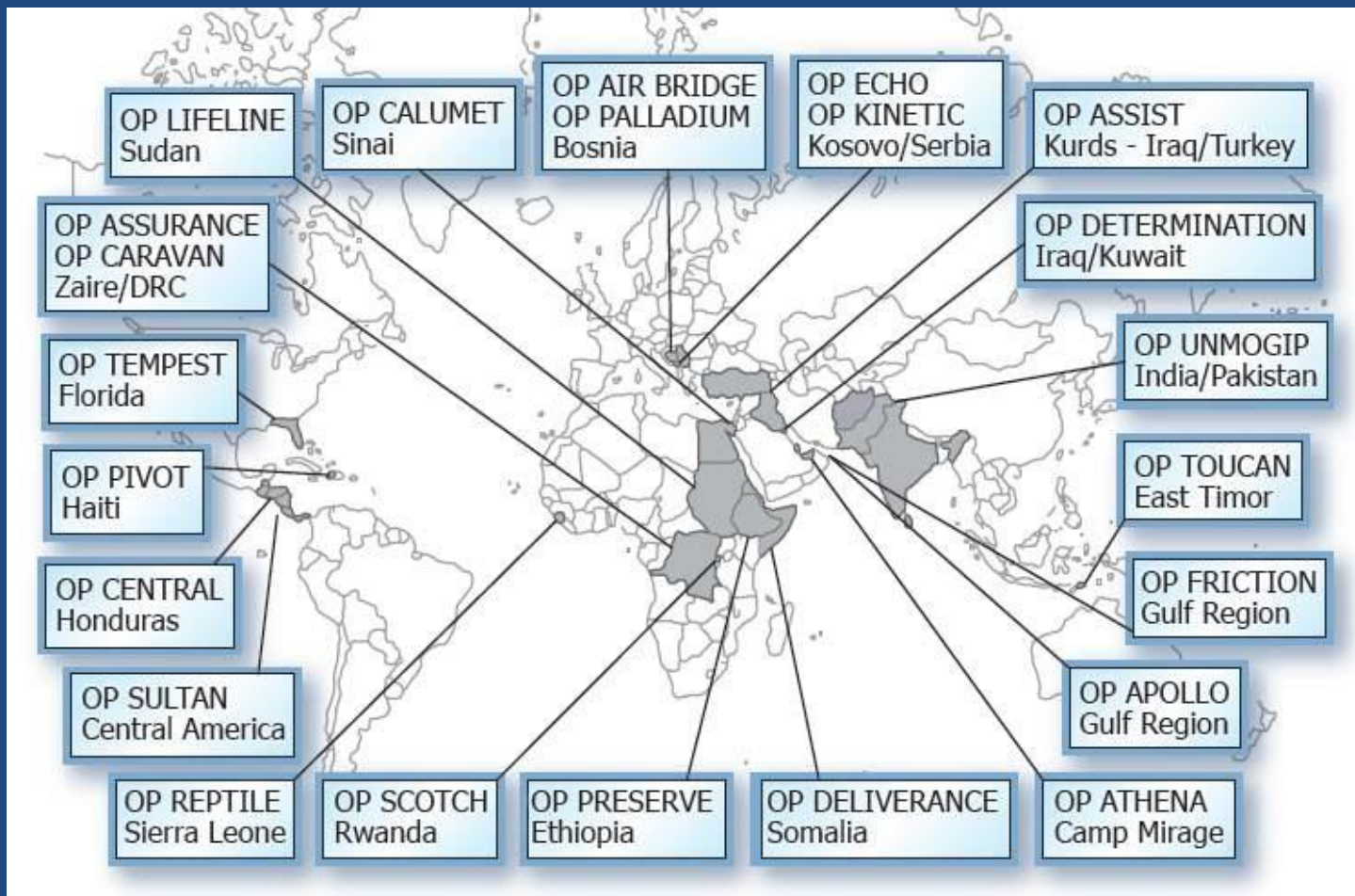
# How The Air Force Transformed

- Flight Plan 97
  - Cultural change





# Effectiveness



# Let There Be Light: 1999-2003

- Strategic Re-orientation (Triggers – in order of importance)
  - Stability: No more cuts
  - Kosovo Air Campaign: War
  - RMA: Computers and Communications
  - 11 September 2001: A New Enemy

# How the Air Force Transformed

- Tangible Change
  - Stability - Think about the future
    - Vectors 2020: An Air Force Strategic Assessment
    - Battle of Ottawa
    - Canadian Forces Aerospace Warfare Centre



# How The Air Force Transformed

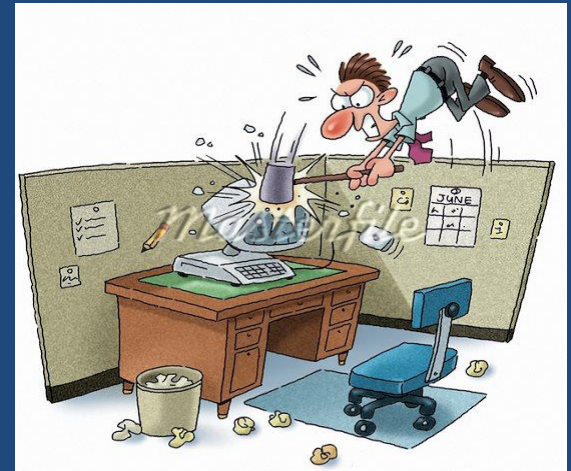
- Tangible Change
  - Kosovo Air Campaign
    - Combat (not War)
    - Alongside the best, against the...





# How the Air Force Transformed

- Tangible Change -RMA
  - Sensor to shooter
  - FMV
  - Data overload
  - Email versus staff work
  - Lessons learned...not
- Tangible Change - 9/11
  - Crime versus war
  - Alongside the best against the asymmetric
  - Importance of non-kinetic capabilities



# Effectiveness

- Transition period



- Transform the air force from a primarily static, platform-focused, post-Cold War, 20<sup>th</sup> Century air force to an expeditionary, network-enabled, capability-based, results-focused, 21<sup>st</sup> century aerospace force.

# Oh What a Lovely War: 2002-2011

- Strategic Re-orientation (Triggers – in order of importance)
  - Commitment of ground forces – casualties
  - Decision to NOT to commit fighters
  - Decision TO COMMIT fighters...in Libya
  - Length of the commitment

# How the Air Force Transformed

- Tangible Change
  - Ground Troops
    - Renewed support for air transport
      - C17s, C130Js
    - Renewed interest in supporting ground forces
      - Tactical Air Control Parties
      - Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
      - Over-land surveillance



# How the Air Force Transformed

- Tangible Change
  - Casualties
    - New Transport Helicopters
    - New Role for Utility Helicopters
    - Composite Air Wing
    - Procurement Process





# Task Force Silver Dart



Task Force Canuck



Task Force Faucon



Task Force Erebus

450 Personnel



# How the Air Force Transformed

## — No Fighters

- Renaissance within the other communities



## — Fighters in Libya

- Re-newed focus on future of fighters in Canada
- CP-140 Aurora as a strategic overland surveillance platform



# How the Air Force Transformed

- Tangible Change
  - Length
    - Virtually entire air force deployed
    - Forced to cross-pollenate communities
    - Experienced leadership
    - Ad-hoc approach





# Effectiveness

- First time the Canadian air force supported the Canadian army in combat
- Expeditionary Air Wing
- Two combat missions at the same time
- Limited ability to support ground forces (SOF)
- Ad-hoc approach

# Peace Dividend Part Deux: 2011-2014

- Strategic Re-orientation (Triggers – in order of importance)
  - Budget (election)
  - Over extension
  - Afghanistan experience
  - CP-140 Auroras over Iraq

# How the Air Force Transformed

- Tangible Change

- Budget

- Changes begun halted or significantly slowed
    - Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
    - Focus on traditional capabilities (no money for SOF)



- Over-extension

- New equipment, new capabilities, new concepts, no more people
      - Under-utilization of C130Js, re-rolling units to provide “bodies” for Chinooks; AEW at the expense of UAVs



# How the Air Force Transformed

## — Afghan experience

- Shift in focus to air-to-ground, counter insurgency warfare
- Better understanding / support from the Army (fleeting)



## — Auroras over Iraq

- IMOP – Intentional Modulation on Pulse



# From There to Here

- Transformation (23 years)
  - Combat experienced vice combat capable
  - More expeditionary in focus / capability (small packets)
  - More capable of developing air power doctrine and concepts
  - Less capable of implementing air power doctrine and concepts
  - More capable of making mistakes (ad hoc)
  - Less capable of learning from mistakes (staff work)
  - Institutionally weaker

# From Here to There (next 23 years)

- Non-kinetic capabilities will gain ascendancy over kinetic
- Reliance on capability-by-the-hour will grow
- We will continue to struggle with “maintenance of the aim” with respect to air power transformation
- Software versus hardware transformational effects
- New Challenges – weaponization of social media



# Major's Eye View

- More coherent sense of our identity as the RCAF
- Less means less
- Email has become a substitute for thought and competent staff work
- Process is king
- We need to get better at growing institutional leaders
- What is “transformation” to me is “normal” to a new member of the RCAF

# Questions



Surprise the army and navy once a day – then run like hell!