

We'll drive the truck, you drive the body.

2 August, 2007

An army's effectiveness depends on its soldiers. With so many of its personnel deployed overseas, LFAA has been under pressure for some time to maintain its operational effectiveness at home. It has managed to do so by maximizing the use of all its resources – including the Primary Reserve. While soldiers in the Regular Force possess many skills and qualifications within their trade, they can no longer afford to be underemployed. Each full-time soldier tasked in an auxiliary, incremental or support role is one less soldier training to do his or her job.



It is within this context that I spent part of my summer on one of 8 Driver Wheeled courses run by ARTS '07. Between May and August, 151 candidates from 36th and 37th CBGs travelled to CFB Gagetown to earn

their driver's qualifications for either or both the LSVW and MLVW. Roughly 95% of these candidates came from reserve units, myself included. During the course of the training, we were taught how to service and maintain, tow, recover and (most importantly) drive the vehicles, by day or by night, regardless of weather or terrain. The course was designed to give even beginners a thorough grasp of the rules of the road, the mechanics of the vehicles, the tools required for maintenance, and the components that (frequently and invariably) need their attention. In addition to the classroom and garage portions, each student drove a minimum of 500km through rough terrain, highways, and built-up areas to earn their qualification, while bombers took an additional module to learn to tow their guns.



Helping to further alleviate underemployment of CF personnel, the driver's courses were taught entirely by civilian instructors contracted through Calian Ltd. With a workforce comprised of over 40,000 ex-Canadian military employees, all of which have a thorough practical knowledge of their respective fields, there was no question as to the quality of instruction the candidates received.

This September, thanks to the efforts of ARTS '07 and Calian Ltd., LFAA will have 151 newly-qualified drivers to be potentially tasked in auxiliary and support roles. Filling these roles with reservists will help ensure that underemployment of regular-force CF personnel is kept at a minimum, and will contribute to the operational effectiveness of LFAA.

We look forward to working with you.

Cpl. Ari Najarian, PLF