

GLOSSARY OF MILITARY TERMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- 2nd/Cpl** – a former substantive rank below a Corporal with one stripe
- A/(Rank)** Acting Rank
- AA** Anti-aircraft
- A Echelon** Administrative Echelon of an army field unit containing the clerks, mechanics, stores personnel and cooks.
- Abatis** Obstacle or barricade made of felled trees with the branches pointing outwards.
- Acrow** A panel bridge similar to a bailey bridge developed after WWII
- ACV** Armoured Combat Vehicle
- Adjutant** Officer who assists superior officers by communicating orders and performing administrative duties.
- AES** Airfield Engineer Squadron
- AEV** Armoured Engineer Vehicle
- AFV** Armoured Fighting Vehicle
- AHQ** Army Headquarters
- Ark** A tank mounted bridge capable of bridging small gaps
- Ammo** - Ammunition
- AP** Anti-personnel as in AP Mine
- APB** Air Portable Bridge
- APC** Armoured Personnel Carrier
- APR** Air Portable Raft
- AT** Anti-tank as in AT Mine
- Arty** Artillery
- Arty Sim** – An artillery simulator used on tactical exercises that looks like a large stick of dynamite and is provided with a whistle. The pin is pulled, the whistle activates, it is then hand thrown and several seconds later it detonates.
- ASE** Army Survey Establishment
- ASG** Area Support Group
- ASU** Area Support Unit
- A Tps** Army Troops in WWI and WWII
- A Tp Coy** Army Troop Company in WWI and WWII
- Aux.** Auxiliary
- AVLB** Armoured Vehicle Launched Bridge A tank mounted bridge capable of bridging small gaps
- AVRE** Armoured Vehicle Royal Engineers
- AWOL** Absent Without Leave
- Axis, Axis of Advance and Main Axis** Usually the main road being used by a formation to move forward or the direction of the formation's main thrust
- Battle Exhaustion** The term used for Combat Stress in the Second World War
- BB** Bailey Bridge. A type of prefabricated equipment bridge developed in the Second World War and still in extensive use.
- BBE** Boat Bridge Erection, A boat used as a small tug to assemble and propel vehicle carrying rafts made from floating bridge pontoons.
- Bde** Brigade
- Bde Gp** Brigade Group
- B.E.F.** British Expeditionary Force
- Bell Tent** A circular tent with a centre pole used in the Canadian Army from the early 1900s until the late 1970s
- blanco** A polish used on webbing to make it “parade square pretty”
- Blighty** A slang term from WWI for a wound severe enough to require ones evacuation to a hospital in the UK. Also a slang term for the UK.
- Bloggins** The Canadian Forces Everyman
- BMQ** Basic Military Qualification
- Bn** Battalion
- BOHICA** Bend over here it comes again.
- Boonie Cap**—CADPAT floppy field hat worn in field environment
- BOT** Basic Officer Training

BOTC Basic Officer Training Course
Box Lunch A pre-packaged ration issued in the Canadian Forces which usually includes a sandwich, a canned or bottled beverage and a piece of fruit.
Br. Bridge
Brig Gen. or B Gen Brigadier General
Brit or Br British
BTT Basic Trades Training
CAMC Canadian Army Medical Corps
Canada COM Canada Command comprises six regions and was established at the end of the summer 2005
CANFORGEN Canadian Forces General Order
Capt Captain
CAOF Canadian Army Occupation Force
Cas. Casualties
CASF Canadian Army Active Service Force of the Second World War
CD Canada Defence Medal issued for a minimum of 12 years service.
Cdn. Canadian
CDS Chief of the Defence Staff
Cdt Cadet
CE Canadian Engineers (1903-1936) or alternatively Construction Engineering
CEF Canadian Expeditionary Force of the First World War
CERU Canadian Engineer Reinforcement Unit
CER Combat Engineer Regiment
CERB Canadian Engineer Reserve Battalion
CETC Canadian Engineer Training Centre
CETD Canadian Engineer Training Depot
CEU Construction Engineering Unit
CF Canadian Forces
CFAO Canadian Forces Administrative Orders (CFAOs) issued to supplement and amplify the Queen's Regulations and Orders (QR&O).
CFB Canadian Forces Base
CFC Canadian Forestry Corps
CFOCS Canadian Forces Officer Candidate School
CFP Canadian Forces Publication
CFR Commissioned from the ranks
CFRC Canadian Forces Recruiting Centre
CFS Canadian Forces Station
CFSME Canadian Forces School of Military Engineering (formerly RCSME)
C-4 A type of plastic explosive. As with many plastic explosives, the explosive material in C-4 is RDX which makes up around 91% of the C-4 by weight. C-4 is very stable and insensitive to most physical shocks and can be molded into almost any shape.
C4I Also known as: Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence.
Chimo Refers to a greeting used by Canadian Military Engineers meaning "friend"
CHQ Canadian Headquarters
CIC Cadet Instructor Cadre formerly **CIL** Cadet Instructor List
CIMIC Civil Military Co-operation. CIMIC detachments are part of all current operational overseas deployments and liaise with the local civil authorities on a wide variety of issues as well a support reconstruction projects.
CINC Commander IN Chief
Class A service Refers to daily military service when a reservist is only working the occasional half-day, day or weekend
Class B service Refers to military service where the reservist is working more than a week which typically consists of attendance on courses, on Milicons or an extended contract (up to 3 years) at a military base or headquarters in Canada. In general the pay rate for this service is 85% of the comparable regular force rate.
Class C service Refers to military service where the reservist is either occupying a regular force position or is deployed either on a domestic or foreign operation. The pay rate for this service is the same as the comparable regular force rate.

CLFCSC Canadian Land Forces Command and Staff College
CLS Chief of Land Staff
CME Canadian Military Engineers
CMP Canadian Military Pattern trucks and vehicles of the Second World War
CMTC Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre (at CFB Wainwright in Alberta)
CO Commanding Officer
Colonel Commandant is an honorary appointment assumed by a former retired senior officer of the Engineer Corps. He or she works for the benefit of the corps, has no command authority and reports to the Colonel in Chief at least once during his or her tour of duty.
Colonel in Chief of the Corps of Canadian Military Engineers is the reigning monarch and at the time of writing was Elizabeth II.
Combat Stress One of the terms used in the Canadian Forces for Post-Traumatic Stress due to combat operations
Comd Commander
Convoy A group of merchant ships sailing together under the protection of naval forces; often slow-moving, as its speed is that of the slowest vessel. Term also used for columns of motor vehicles.
COS Chief Of Staff
Coy Company. An engineering unit ranging in size from 20 to 200, the former in peace-time. The later in war-time. In 1946 all of the engineering companies became squadrons.
CP Command Post
Cpl Corporal
CORCC Canadian Overseas Railway Construction Corps
CQMS Company Quartermaster Sergeant
CSM Company Sergeant Major (normally a Warrant Officer Class II or after integration a Master Warrant Officer)
CRT Canadian Railway Troops
CRTD Canadian Railway Troops Depot
C.Scot.R. Canadian Scottish Regiment
CSIS Canadian Security and Intelligence Service
CSofC Cadet Services of Canada. Reserve Officers employed to train and supervise cadets. Replaced following integration by the tri-service CIL then the CIC.
CTP Course Training Plan
CWAC Canadian Women's Army Corps
CWO Chief Warrant Officer
Cwt hundred-weight
D4, D6, D8 etc Designations for bulldozers. The higher the number the bigger the dozer.
DAODs Defence Administrative Orders and Directives.
DCM Distinguished Conduct Medal
DCO Deputy Commanding Officer
demobilize, v. / demobilization, n. To disband military units, dispose of their equipment and return their personnel to civilian life, most notably after the end of a war.
D Day The day designated for an invasion
D Day Dinner Mess dinner held by 6 ES on the closest Saturday to the 6th of June
DEU Distinctive Environmental Uniform
Deuce and a half – 2 ½ ton 6x6 SMP truck built in the 1950s and in use by the CF until the 1980s
Div Division
DND Department of National Defence
DND 404's Military Drivers License
DOD Died of Disease
DOS Died of Sickness
DOW Died of Wounds
DSO Distinguished Service Order
Dugout An underground structure normally constructed of wood beams and corrugated iron used widely during the First World War for sleeping, as command posts and by Medical Detachments
E.D. Canadian Efficiency Decoration
Engrs Engineers

EWBB Extra Wide Bailey Bridge

ESR Engineer Support Regiment

Fd Field

Fd Coy Field Company

FBE Folding Boat Equipment

FEBA Forward Edge of the battle Area

F Echelon The Fighting Echelon of an Army field unit. In the case of an engineer unit this would consist of the field companies, squadrons, platoons or troops that do the construction or demolition work.

FES Field Engineer Squadron

Firing Bay That part of a frontline trench from which soldiers fire their weapons

FMC Force Mobile Command (formerly the name used to define Cdn Army HQ)

FN Fabrique National Assault Rifle issued to the CF from the 1950s to the 1990s. It was a 7.62 mm weapon and came in two versions. The FNC1 was a semi-automatic weapon with a 20 round magazine issued to individual soldiers. The FNC2 was an automatic weapon with a 30 round magazine and was issued on the scale of 1 or 2 per section and served as a light machine gun.

FOO Forward Observation Officer

Formation Generic term usually referring to a grouping of units that form a brigade, division or corps

Freedom of the City The privilege granted to a military unit by a city, municipality or district to march through their streets with bayonets fixed, drums beating and flags waving. This custom derives from the British Army where the movement of soldiers through cities was always strictly controlled and is considered an honour similar to a distinguished citizen being given the keys to the city

FTX Field Training Exercise

FUBAR F***'d Up Beyond All Recognition

GMT General Military Training

G.O.s General Orders

GOC General Officer Commanding

GPMG General Purpose Machine Gun. The Browning 7.62 mm machine gun widely used throughout the Canadian Forces from 1958 to 1988.

H HOUR The designated time an advance or operation will start

Halftrack Light armoured vehicle with rubber tires in front and tank-style tracks at rear, used in the Second World War.

Haybox a large insulated container used for storing, transporting and serving food in field operations.

H.E. High Explosive

Hide A temporary overnight bivouac, sometimes but not always camouflaged

HMCS Her Majesty's Canadian Ship

Honourary Colonel and Honourary Lieutenant Colonel In the Commonwealth Army tradition many regiments and independent squadrons have either Honourary Colonels or Honourary Lieutenant Colonel. These are usually prominent citizens, community leaders or retired officers. They work for the benefit of their respective units and have no power of command.

H.Q. Headquarters

IAW In Accordance With

i/c In command

IED An improvised explosive device (IED) is the common name for explosive devices, often used in unconventional warfare or asymmetrical warfare by guerrillas or commando forces in a theater of operations.

IFOR NATO Intervention Force which ended the civil war in Bosnia in the mid 1990s.

Inglis Bridge A type of pre-fabricated equipment bridge developed in the First World War and used up until the first half of the Second World War

Ittis A small ¼ ton 4x4 vehicle that replaced the jeeps in the 1980s and was phased out 20 years later.

IMP Individual Meal Pack containing enough food for one soldier for one meal. These come as breakfast, lunch and supper meals with a wide variety of menus. These replaced **IRP** Individual Ration Packs

Inf Infantry

JAG Judge Advocate General

Kapok Assault Bridge A floating footbridge developed in 1923 in the UK and used by the Canadian Engineers between the wars and later in the campaign in Holland in WWII.

KIA Killed in Action

LCpl Lance Corporal (formerly a unit-appointed, non-substantive rank which was relinquished upon posting)

LCA Landing Craft Assault

LCI Landing Craft Infantry

LCT Landing Craft Tank

LFB Light Floating Bridge

LFR Light Floating Raft

LFWA Land Forces Western Area is an Army area created in 1991 and consisting of the four western Canadian provinces and a portion of Northern Ontario and its main headquarters in Edmonton Alberta. Lovingly referred to as Luftwaffe Headquarters until a message was sent out to cease and desist calling it that.

Lines A term deriving from “tent lines”. It is now commonly used to mean the area occupied by a unit either in the field or in garrison.

Local Headquarters Training is training carried out at a unit's drill hall or armoury

LO Liaison Officer

L of C Line of Communications.

LSgt Lance Sergeant (formerly a unit-appointed, non-substantive rank which was relinquished upon posting)

LSVW Light Support Vehicle Wheeled

Lt Lieutenant

Lt Col or LCol Lieutenant Colonel

LZ Landing Zone

Maj Major

March Past A military ceremony in which a unit marches past a senior officer or dignitary in review.

MC Military Cross

MD Military District. From the late 1890s to the late 1940s Canada was divided into a number of Military Districts. MD 11 was in British Columbia

MEAC Military Engineers Association of Canada

MCE Mapping and Charting Establishment

Med Medium

Mess Dinner A formal military dinner

Mess Kit A formal military uniform worn by officers and NCOs to mess dinners and balls. For engineers this normally consists of a red jacket, white shirt with bowtie, dark blue vest and dark blue trousers with a red seam. Mess kit is not supplied by the government and must be purchased.

MG Machine gun

MIA Missing in Action

Militia Areas These replaced the older Military Districts in the late 1940s and in turn were replaced by the Brigade Groups in the early 21st Century. Pacific Militia Area was in British Columbia and it was replaced by 39 Canadian Brigade Groups.

Milcon Militia Concentration. This term replaced the older term “Summer Camp” starting in the 1970s. Normally these were held on a military base such as CFB Wainwright or Fort Lewis and were from 1 to 2 weeks long depending on funding and resources.

MM Military Medal

MFB Medium Floating Bridge

MFRC Military Family Resource Centre

MGB Medium Girder Bridge

MLVW Medium Logistics Vehicle Wheeled

MR Medium Raft

MSR Main Supply Route

MT Mechanized or motorized transport

Mtd Mounted

MWO Master Warrant Officer

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NCO Non-Commissioned Officer

NEB Non-Equipment Bridge

New Years Levy An open house hosted by military messes on January 1st each year.

NDHQ National Defence Headquarters
NLT No Later Than
NPAM Non Permanent Active Militia
NPF Non Public Fund
NREF North Russia Expeditionary Force
NSB Non Standard Bridge
Number 4 Set A Korean War vintages portable water purification unit used by militia engineer units well into the 1980s
OBE Order of the British Empire
OC Officer Commanding
O Gp Orders Group. A meeting at which orders are given for a forthcoming operation, exercise or movement.
OIC Officer in Command
OO Operations Order
OP Observation Post
OP FOR Opposing force on an exercise or in other words the “enemy”
OR Other Ranks, any soldier who is not a commissioned officer
Para Flare A rocket propelled flare launched from a small hand held disposable tube. Once the rocket reaches a certain altitude the flare ignites and it floats down supported by a small parachute.
PBI Poor Bloody Infantry
PEP Provincial Emergency Plan
PETN or Pentaerythritol tetranitrate is one of the most powerful high explosives known. It was first synthesized in 1891 and is more sensitive to shock or friction than TNT
PF Permanent Force. The term used prior to the Second World War to refer to the Canadian Army’s regular force troops.
PI Platoon. A subdivision of a company, with usually three platoons per
PLUTO Pipeline Under The Ocean (WWII innovative solution to supplying fuel from England to the Normandy beachhead
PLQ Primary Leadership Course
PMQ Private Military Quarters or Permanent Married Quarters
POW or PW Prisoner of War
QR&O’s Queens Regulations & Orders
RCA Royal Canadian Artillery
RCAC Royal Canadian Army Cadets
RCE Royal Canadian Engineers
RCEME Royal Canadian Electrical Mechanical Engineers
RCL (Royal Canadian Legion) Veterans organization originating in 1925 in response to the unsatisfactory and often unfair conditions which veterans of the First World War experienced. The Legion continues in its efforts to improve the lot of veterans and of ex-service members to this day and many benefits they enjoy are largely due to the persistence of the Legion. The Royal Canadian Legion is not part of the Canadian Forces but its influence in military social issues has been overwhelming.
RCSME Royal Canadian School of Military Engineering
RDX An explosive developed shortly before WWII and widely used since then. It is often mixed with TNT. RDX was also used in one of the first plastic explosives. There are many explanations for the name RDX, including (but not limited to) Royal Demolition eXplosive, Research Department (composition) X and Research Department eXplosive.
RE Royal Engineers
Recce Reconnaissance
Remembrance Day Annual parade and service held on November 11th to commemorate the end of WWI and pay respect to the sacrifices made by Canadian Forces personnel and their families. In North Vancouver this consists of a service at the North Vancouver cenotaph, a parade to the Lt Col J.P. Fell Armoury and a reception after.
RETS Reserve Engineer Training Squadron
RMC Royal Military College
ROs Routine Orders

ROTO Is an acronym for a rotation into an operational theatre such as Bosnia, the Middle East or Afghanistan. A rotation is typically 3 to 12 months in length with the first rotation into theatre being called Roto Zero. Follow on rotations are numbered sequentially after that 1, 2, 3 etc..

ROWPU Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit

RP4 Ration Pack 4. A field ration pack in use in the 1970s, which was replaced by IRPs, which in turn were replaced by IMPs.

RSM Regimental Sergeant Major

RSO Range Safety Officer

RSM Regimental Sergeant Major

RSS Regular Support Staff. Regular Army officers, warrant officers, sergeants and junior non-commissioned officers attached or posted into a reserve unit to assist in the training and administration of the unit. These first appeared after the Second World War and could vary from as few as a single individual up to maximum of a half dozen supplemented by additional reservists on Class B contracts, all dependant on budgets and availability of personnel.

RV Rendezvous

R Wpg Rif Royal Winnipeg Rifles

Sap Trench projecting out at right angles to the front line. Saps allowed small parties of men to get close to the enemy so they could raid, observe or snipe.

SBG Single box girder bridge

Scheme (or FTX) - field exercises

Section – Currently an 8 to 12 person sized organization inside an engineer troop commanded by a Master Corporal or Sergeant. Normally there are 3 to 4 sections in a troop. From WWI to mid-WWII sections contained 30 to 50 sappers and were commanded by a lieutenant. In 1943 these sections became platoons or troops and their sub-sections became sections.

SEF Siberian Expeditionary Force

SFOR NATO Stabilization Force that replaced IFOR in Bosnia after the civil war ended in the mid 1990s

Shellshock The term used for combat stress in the First World War

Sgt Sergeant

S/Sgt Staff Sergeant

Sitrep Situation Report

Small Arms Weapons, generally portable firearms, carried by individual soldiers, including pistols, rifles and machine guns.

Smoker A military party, so called because it was quite informal and there was initially no restriction on smoking.

SMP Standard Military Pattern Trucks

SMTP Standard Military Training Plan was established in the early 1960s as part of an employment programme created by the government to help alleviate high unemployment. Instructors were provided by both the regular and militia forces and recruits received extensive military training.

SNAFU Situation Normal All Fouled Up

Sp Support

Spr Sapper

SQFT Secteur du Quebec de la Force Terrestre

SQMS Squadron Quartermaster Sergeant

Sqn Squadron. The equivalent of a company,

SSM Squadron Sergeant Major

Stand down When the “Stand to” is finished the soldiers “stand down” from their positions

Stand to Soldiers manning their weapon and positions in readiness to repel a possible attack

Stand up Army slang term for the creation, organization and training of a new military unit.

Subaltern Junior officers of Captain rank or below

Sub-Unit A component of a unit. A troop is a sub-unit of an independent squadron.

Sub-Sub Unit A sub-component of a unit. A Troop is a sub-sub-unit of a squadron that is in turn a sub-unit of a regiment

Supplementary Order of Battle Army units placed on the Supplementary Order of Battle are reduced to zero strength and are disbanded in all but name.

SWBB Standard Width Bailey Bridge

SYEP Summer Youth Employment Programme existed in the 1970s as part of an employment programme created by the government. Instructors were provided by both the regular and militia forces and in some cases recruits received extensive military training.

TEWT – tactical exercise without troops (on officer/NCO field training session)

Thunderflash – A small gunpowder filled cartridge used to simulate a hand grenade on tactical exercises

TNT Developed before WWI Trinitrotoluene (TNT) is an explosive still widely used by the military and construction companies around the world.

TOET - test on elementary training

Tp Troop

Tps Troops

Trg Training

Tun Coy Tunneling Company

2IC (pronounced Two IC) Second in Command

Ubique meaning “everywhere” a motto awarded in lieu of battle honours to recognize that engineers serve “everywhere”. It is officially recognized as both motto and a battle honour.

UNEF United Nations Emergency Force

Unit Army term for a body of troops up to battalion in size.

UNPROFOR United Nations Protection Force in the Former Yugoslavia in the early to mid 1990s

VOR Vehicle Off Road. The higher a unit’s VOR rate the fewer operational vehicles it has.

WATC Western Area Training Centre located at CFB Wainwright in Alberta

WD War Diary

WO Warrant Officer

WO1 Warrant Officer 1st Class (now Chief Warrant Officer)

WO2 Warrant Officer 2nd Class (now Master Warrant Officer)

YSTP Young Soldier Training Plan existed in the mid 1950s to the early 1960s as part of an employment program created by the government whereby recruits were trained on the weekends and in the summer. Instructors were provided by both the regular and militia forces and recruits received extensive military training.

Zombie A derogatory nickname used by volunteers during the Second World War to call conscripts.