

I wanted to take a minute to send this note on a variety of topics, and to maintain my commitment to frequent and timely communications with you all. Together we have succeeded in getting a Task Group to sea and continue to contribute to Canada's essential capabilities. We have clearly come through on our reputation as a national strategic asset.

In the past two weeks we have made the transition from an all-team force generation focus to one where we maintain and protect our capability through self-isolation, while continuing to support critical tasks. I pass my deep thanks and respect to each of you for your commitment and teamwork during this difficult period.

We now enter a period of continued self-isolation, with uncertainty surrounding how long this period will last, and what our support role might be in the future as we continue the necessary steps to contain this virus. Rest assured I will pass decisions onward as soon as they are communicated by our leaders, but for now, I would assume we will be in this posture for a while. We see public figures and experts state daily on television and in media figures such as 6-8 weeks, 3 months, or longer. I think those are safe assumptions, and that we will be in this posture for longer than simply a few weeks.

While we are in this posture, we will, from time-to-time, be called upon to support national essential tasks. I would expect sometimes those tasks will involve force generating ships, but they could consist of other types of production. The planning team is working at this moment in defining what types of capability we might be able to produce for civilian institutions, using some of the unique capability and equipment we possess. Similar planning is underway at FMF Cape Scott, and we are sharing ideas. Additionally, ideas have come from the workforce through the Communications Officer, and those ideas are being studied in depth and I thank you for them. Lastly, it is feasible we might need to support uniformed forces re-tasked in support of civil authorities, if those types of operations are necessary. As always, we will remain ready to support in whatever way is needed.

When conducting work, we must ensure we continue to provide sufficient protection. Just as self-isolation at home is critical in controlling the virus' spread, protection at work is necessary for the safety of the workforce and protection of our capabilities. I am committed to providing as safe a work environment as possible while supporting national needs, and invite you to let me know if there are aspects of protection that are being overlooked.

And that is the key to us getting through this together, as safely as possible – communications in all directions. My commitment in this regard is to keep you advised as much as possible as to what is occurring, and what may be coming in the future. I will try to keep you informed of emerging support tools and information, and pledge to continue important communication tools such as the Newsletter. I ask you let me know if I'm failing in this regard, either through your supervisor, or if you prefer, through the Communications Officer, Ashley Evans, at Ashley.Evans@forces.gc.ca.

We must continue to support each other, and above all, to be kind to each other. Our strength as a community and our commitment to our loved ones, and each other, will see us through.

Martin Drews