The transition from training to work roles

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Ashaan Garstang
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Abstract

Joining the RNZAF (Royal New Zealand Air Force) is a significant career commitment and navigating through the early phases of this can be a daunting process. Training prepares newcomers to take on junior work roles and the relative success of this onboarding process will be influenced by the newcomer, depending on their personal growth, competence, and social integration. The aim of this study is to examine the experiences of newcomers who have transitioned through this process and to investigate the factors that made this easier or harder for them. 5 Logistics Operators were interviewed for the study. They had all completed recruit training and the logistics operator (junior) course, and were in an early work role. A qualitative methodology (thematic analysis) was used to gain and examine the data. Themes were broadly categorised into developing competence and overcoming social challenges. The development of competence was dependant on the relevance of training, the ability for newcomers to control their own workplace role, and the reliability of their workplace norms and expectations. Social challenges were managed through the building of workplace relationships, having the ability and confidence to seek clarity from supervisors, and the feeling of social integration within the wider organisation. Outcomes of this study may increase our knowledge of organisational socialisation as it applies within a military context.

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My interest in this topic primarily arose from my own experiences with joining the RNZAF when I was younger. I found it in equal parts meaningful, exciting and overwhelming. Although this research was based within a military context, I have also increased my knowledge of workplace psychology and I am grateful that I was able to go through this experience.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Organisational overview

The Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) is a relatively small military organisation. As of 2020, the RNZAF was made up of 2,573 full time personnel and 318 reserve or part time personnel (New Zealand Defence Force, 2020a). This presents unique challenges to both the recruitment process and retention of currently serving personnel. Because of the small size of the organisation, skill specialisations can be maintained by small numbers of individuals and there is an ever-present risk of the RNZAF losing institutional knowledge as service personnel retire or seek opportunities elsewhere. The small size of the organisation means that the training and socialisation of new personnel needs to be conducted in an effective and data-driven manner.

Previous research by the Ministry of Defence (2016) has focused on the complexity of the recruitment process in the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) and aimed to explore the challenges that candidates experience during recruitment. Their recommendations aimed to streamline the recruitment process and create fairer assessment criteria for new recruits. The background motivation for this kind of research is at least partially to manage the costs of recruitment and retention. Aside from the monetary costs, there are costs related to skill maintenance and operational readiness. There is a certain array of skills that needs to be maintained by the RNZAF in order for it to be an effective military force, and the relatively small population of New Zealand (and therefore small pool of candidates) means that a careful maintenance of skill specialisations and personnel across expertise areas is required.

Individual roles (trades and specialisations) are manned by varying numbers of individuals, depending on the specific demands of each trade. Although specific trade numbers are not publicly published (likely for security reasons), potential candidates can express interest in 30 roles across the RNZAF on the careers website (https://www.defencecareers.mil.nz/air-force/careers/browse-roles/). Although a small number of internal roles may not be available to external candidates, the number of publicly available roles would imply that there is an average of less than 100 personnel in each role. This makes the RNZAF susceptible to skill drainage and external events that are likely to cause attrition. For example, the 2008 economic recession resulted in the government of the day directing various public sectors to look into cost-saving measures. In response, the NZDF implemented a civilianisation process in which roles were re-assessed for their military

necessity (Controller and Auditor-General, 2013). Certain roles saw a reduction in personnel numbers as a result, and some trades (such as Administration Specialists) were entirely civilianised. Military personnel in these roles were either offered trade changes, comparable civilian positions, or severance packages. The Auditor-General commented on the shortcomings of this, including a lack of forward planning (e.g. accounting for likely personnel requirements from 2015 onwards) and the impersonal nature of the process that made service personnel feel like their loyalty and dedication was being ignored or pushed aside. This process arguably risked affecting the NZDF's ability to retain institutional knowledge.

1.2 Recruitment and training

In recent years there has been a concerted effort by the NZDF to recruit and retain skilled personnel. The NZDF utilises a stringent recruitment process that assesses candidates in many aspects, including medical health, security assessment, fitness ability, mental aptitude and educational history (New Zealand Defence Force, 2021a). A key aim of the recruitment process is to recruit applicants who are capable of adapting to the specific demands and contexts of military life. There are certain individual attributes that may be less conducive to a successful military career than others. For example, Garcia et al. (2015) found that U.S. Air Force recruits with a pre-existing mental health condition were more than four times more likely than a recruit without a mental health condition to exit the organisation within 14 months. Considering that the first year of military service life is often devoted to training (depending on the role chosen; some training periods are shorter, others are longer), this finding may reflect the stressful nature of initial military training and highlight the importance of recruiting personnel who are more likely to be capable of successfully navigating this difficult career phase.

Successful recruitment is only one part of the equation in ensuring a consistent and healthy military work force. While recruitment does an effective job in ensuring that capable candidates are accepted into initial military training, internal training units then have the responsibility of carrying out the initial training process in a way that is constructive, produces appropriately skilled personnel, and maintains the capabilities of the service. New trainees in the RNZAF generally undergo a combined recruit training course that all new recruits (except for officer cadets) undergo. This is located at RNZAF Base Woodbourne in the South Island and is a 12 week long course that builds initial military skills and serves as a

cross-trade introduction to the RNZAF. Upon successful completion of this, non-aircrew trainees (such as logistical or mechanical trades) will generally proceed into their primary trade training course (New Zealand Defence Force, 2021b). These primary trade courses differ in content and length, being tailored for each trade. After primary trade training, a period of on the job training will commence and this period (anywhere between 12 - 24 months) is served at a variety of operational and other non-training units. New trainees are generally posted to a unit at either Ohakea or Whenuapai, both Air Force bases located in the North Island, although a minority of trainees may remain in Woodbourne. This progressive transition from training roles to work roles coincides with a geographic transition from the South Island to the North Island for the majority of new trainees. This situates RNZAF Base Woodbourne as the ground training base for the RNZAF and is useful for the purposes of the present research in that the geographic shift from a 'training base' to one of two 'operational bases' helps to further demarcate the transition from trainee to junior worker.

In 2017 the NZDF introduced Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationships (SERR) training (New Zealand Defence Force, 2019). This is mandatory training that focuses on behavioural attitudes and practices within the organisation. It is delivered to small groups at a time and encourages collaboration among learners, being made up of group discussions that are self-reflective in nature and tailored to the workplace and other military settings such as barracks life and bars in camps and bases. The Ministry of Defence's recommendations in their 2016 report also emphasised the diversity of candidates as an important goal in increasing the success of the recruitment process. They compared the success rates of new candidates across ethnicity and gender and provided recommendations on how the NZDF could adjust the recruitment process in order to ensure that candidates are not disadvantaged due to their cultural background. This would make success indicators and assessment criteria more holistic in nature and create a more even playing field for diverse candidates.

It has been postulated that mandatory cultural training may be beneficial for the organisational socialisation process (Malik & Manroop, 2017), as this could enhance cultural awareness among existing organisational members and make entry into an organisation easier for a wider variety of newcomers (e.g. for ethnic minorities). Bi-culturalism is a value that the NZDF is proud to advocate, having introduced Māori traditions and knowledge into the organisation's culture. From the mid-late 1990's, the NZDF began opening marae across NZDF locations, establishing Māori cultural groups and teaching Māori practices to newcomers. For example, the official Army haka is taught during basic recruit training

(Hohaia, 2016) and the RNZAF opened the official Air Force marae at RNZAF Base Ohakea in 2016 (Te Ao Māori News, 2016).

1.3 Transitions from training

Exactly how a service member's career progresses after their initial training will vary depending on many factors, including their performance, their choices and external factors outside of their control. Throughout this process there is a gradual reduction in the structured nature of an individual's career progression, and therefore the visible practices of organisational socialisation reduce, although socialisation still takes place as newly trained employees continue their learning and orientation in a work (non-training) environment. The early phases of a newcomer's career is conducted collectively alongside other newcomers, while the career progression of trained service members gradually becomes more individualised.

The experiences that new trainees have at their first unit posting are unarguably influenced by their experiences in training, as individuals develop expectations during initial training that set the stage for their future careers. The degree to which these expectations are met will have an impact on the satisfaction and dedication that newly trained service members will show in their work roles. The process by which expectations are established can largely be attributed to organisational socialisation, "the process through which a new organisational employee adapts from outsider to integrated and effective insider" (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006, p. 492). With an organisation like the RNZAF, that utilises consistent and formal training procedures, the organisation has enough control over the organisational socialisation process to be able to effect large scale change, as required. This gives them a greater capability to react to changes in societal norms and adjust both the training and organisational culture accordingly.

One of the most important and relevant ways in gauging the success of the initial training process is by examining the attitudes and self-reflective perceptions of trained service members. Service personnel who have completed the first intensive phase of initial training and who have been posted to a working military unit are best placed to provide insights into the effects of their training. For these individuals, training is a recent and relevant event in their military careers. Often their training makes up the majority of their service experience and has likely set the stage for what they expect from a working career in the military. Initial military training teaches new recruits how to behave in a military environment, how military

life differs from civilian life, what their responsibilities are as representatives of New Zealand, what they can expect from a military career and what work life at an operationally focused unit is going to look like.

Another important concept to consider with relation to the transition from training to work roles is the psychological contract. Rousseau (2001) described the psychological contract as the relationship between individuals and organisations, that is defined by the *subjective beliefs* about the nature of the agreement between them. It has its roots in the principles of reciprocity and cooperation. An additional perspective that is relevant is the extent to which expectations are met or unmet (Irving & Montes, 2009). Met or unmet expectations describe the degree to which there is a match or a disparity between what an employee expected prior to their starting their job and what their actual job experience was (Porter & Steers, 1973). Both psychological contract and unmet expectations theories are relevant to organisational socialisation.

The aim of this thesis is to examine "How do new RNZAF service members experience the transition from training to work roles?". This question will be primarily examined through the lens of organisational socialisation, with an additional review of the psychological contract and met expectations literature, and supplementary analysis drawn from these perspectives where relevant. As they are related, it is unwise to examine them separately, but it is also important to stress their differences. Organisational socialisation is particularly relevant during the early career phases (particularly during formal training and immediately following this), as these are the periods accompanied by intense individual adjustment. In contrast, the psychological contract is an ongoing implicit set of beliefs and assumptions between an individual and employer that continues throughout the individual's tenure and arguably becomes more important the longer an individual remains with the organisation. Expectations can apply to any transitional phase in an employee's career, from initial entry to job promotion. With the principal theory of interest being organisational socialisation, it is vital to consider how this may relate to the experiences of new Air Force employees, as they navigate through the training phase of their career and adjust to their first work roles.

CHAPTER 2 - ORGANISATIONAL SOCIALISATION

2.1 Introduction to Organisational Socialisation

Organisational socialisation is the process through which individual members learn about an organisation and adjust to its conditions (Ashforth et al., 2007). It generally applies to newcomers or those in the early phases of their employment with an organisation, although it is not restricted to these individuals. As per its predominant focus on newcomers (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002), organisational socialisation is used in particular to describe and analyse the ways in which individuals adjust from an organisational outsider to an organisational insider. There is a focus on the learning elements of organisational socialisation, the adjustment strategies that newcomers utilise and the ways in which these aspects may impact on the effectiveness of the socialisation process. Generally, the success or failure of socialisation is measured by looking at staff turnover (Carr et al., 2006), intentions to quit, individual and group performance (Chen, 2005) and job satisfaction (Richards et al., 2020).

Some early academic explorations of organisational socialisation theory saw a variety of broad approaches taken to the concept, often focusing on an individual's working career in its entirety, rather than focusing on organisational socialisation within a single organisational tenure. This is partly reflective of society at the time, as many workers were occupying long-term roles at an organisation. In many cases, employees could spend the entirety of their career at one organisation - a situation that is now very rare. With this overarching approach to organisational socialisation, Becker and Strauss (1956) looked at the influence of employment and career progression on an individual's socialisation within wider society. One key finding was that certain career stages are related to varying levels of psychological stress in individuals and this stress can carry over into both an individual's home life and social life. This foreshadowed a key concept in organisational socialisation theory: that new employees who are transitioning through a period of intensive learning and cognitive adjustment can be strongly influenced by feelings of anxiety (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006), and this hyper-emotional state can play a large role in determining the relative success or failure of the organisational socialisation process.

Later academic writings began to take a narrower approach to organisational socialisation, looking at the concept as a stand-alone and separate entity to other non-work aspects of an individual's life (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). There was also a more

generalised approach to occupational choice - where before stress was often associated with specific professions more than others, organisational socialisation theory now considered stress to be a relevant factor within all occupations. The antecedents, processes and outcomes of organisational socialisation were starting to be mapped within single occupational roles, although there was a significant amount of variation in terms of the focus that different researchers took to the theory (Batistič, & Kaše, 2015). Some researchers looked at organisational socialisation from a primarily organisational perspective and how organisations could manipulate the process in order to bring about more successful changes in newcomers, while other researchers considered it from the newcomers' perspective and how they could proactively seek new information from the organisation in order to reduce their levels of uncertainty (Song & Chathoth, 2010). No matter what approach was taken, it became a truism that the process of organisational socialisation accompanies each new period of employment, both between separate organisations and even between roles within the same organisation. This is because a change of employer or role is always going to be accompanied by some degree of uncertainty, and this in turn is going to require a certain amount of learning and adjustment. Although prior relevant experience can help 'veteran newcomers' to make better sense of their new role and environment, they still experience the uncertainty that is characteristic of beginning a new role or joining a new organisation (Harris et al., 2020).

This recognition coincided with an increasing trend of individuals now transitioning between multiple roles and organisations over their working career, rather than staying in single occupations or careers long-term (Bauer et al., 2007). This growing tendency helped to highlight the fact that the practice of socialisation continuously repeats itself and is relevant to all employees, from new members entering an organisation, to seasoned members rising through the organisational hierarchy. As Van Maanen and Schein describe it, "a period of socialization accompanies each passage" (p. 214).

2.2 Dimensions of Organisational Socialisation

The growing awareness of the constant and repeated nature of the organisational socialisation process emphasises the need for organisations to exert their influence over the socialisation of their employees. In order to maximise the success of their newcomers, organisations are able to monitor and change the socialising practices that they utilise in order to achieve certain levels of standardisation. It has also become an effective tool that organisations can use to help moderate the effects of the increasing levels of mobility within

the wider work force - with newcomers often bringing a raft of prior experience and expectations, the socialisation process can help to bring everybody back to a level playing field.

There is variability in the way that organisations conduct their socialisation process. Six dimension can be examined in order to determine the relative structure of organisational socialisation within any given organisation (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

The first dimension is ‘collective versus individual’ and refers to whether newcomers experience early socialisation individually or within cohorts of other newcomers. This has an influence on the standardisation of newcomers’ experiences. An individual socialisation process would induct newcomers on an ‘as needed’ basis, whereas a collective process would likely run on a more scheduled basis, with multiple newcomers joining on the same date, interacting with the same training staff and therefore developing in a more predictable and consistent fashion (from the perspective of the organisation). If a collective socialisation process is constructive and helpful, it will be helpful to everybody, and if it is detrimental or lacking, this will be so to all newcomers. While important from the perspective of uniformity, this is not directly related to the quality of the organisational socialisation process.

The second dimension is ‘formal versus informal’. A formal approach sees newcomers distinguished as trainees or probationary members and occupying a low tier of the organisational hierarchy compared to established members. An informal process would instead place newcomers in a less certain position (hierarchically), depending on the unique circumstances of the newcomer.

The third dimension is ‘sequential versus random steps’. A sequential process lays out the process for newcomers, and informs them of what is required in order for them to progress to the next stage, while a more random process may vary depending on the capabilities of the organisation, such as the availability of training staff.

The fourth dimension is ‘fixed versus variable’ and describes the consistency of training length among different cohorts or individuals at different time periods. Some organisations may have established processes supported by long-standing traditions (such as recruit training within the military) which are run consistently year after year, with minor adjustments as required. Other organisations, particularly in fast changing industries, may constantly make significant adjustments to their training inductions.

The fifth dimension is ‘serial versus disjunctive’. A serial process is one in which there are organisational role models present who are able to help demonstrate the correct behaviours that are required of newcomers, while a disjunctive process could see newcomers

moved between organisational staff more frequently, depending on the phase of their learning or socialisation.

Lastly, ‘investiture versus divestiture’ refers to the degree that the organisational socialisation process seeks to affect change in newcomers. An investiture approach accepts newcomers as they already are and requires minimal identity change, whereas a divestiture approach seeks to build a new organisationally enhanced identity. Traditionally, military training has been more of a divestiture approach initially, to confirm that new recruits have a baseline level of relevant values and competency and to shape those values in line with those of more senior members. Later training may be more of an investiture approach aimed at building occupational skills.

These six dimensions are clearly related to each other, with structured approaches generally comprising one end of the spectrum and unstructured approaches making up the other (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Different types of socialisation tactics aim to achieve different outcomes and these tactics are generally categorised as being comprised of social tactics, content tactics and contextual tactics (Saks et al., 2007). Social tactics are those existing under Van Maanen and Schein’s (1979) serial and investiture dimensions and describe the extent to which an organisation uses instructors and/or supervisors to serve as role models and represent the values of the organisation. Content tactics exist under the sequential and fixed dimensions and set out the framework of role learning, in which newcomers may learn in a carefully staged manner (e.g. basic role information followed by advanced role information) or a looser and more informal mentoring process, with or without a firm timetable in which to meet learning goals. Lastly, context tactics reside under the collective and formal dimensions and determine to what extent newcomers are separated from experienced members, and whether all newcomers collectively transition through a training or induction program.

The RNZAF, as a military organisation, generally employs a structured approach. Recruits (aside from officer cadets who have their own variant of initial military training) must successfully complete formal, collective initial training. The standards are relatively consistent for all recruits, aside from minor differences for age and gender (e.g. fitness testing). Instructors play a pivotal role in mentoring recruits, teaching them the required skills and being role models by embodying the values of the RNZAF. This type of structured approach is a means of enforcing a set of behaviours and values that the organisation expects newcomers to adhere to (Howe & Hinderaker, 2018). It is most useful for larger and more complex organisations. A military organisation with broad external responsibilities and

numerous components will benefit from a structured approach to organisational socialisation, while a small start-up organisation operating in the private sector may benefit from an unstructured approach that encourages individuality and creative thinking. A direct result of this structured approach in the military context is that existing members of the RNZAF know what to expect when new trainees arrive at their units. A meta-analysis by Saks et al. (2007) found that organisations with more institutionalized (more formal and structured) practices produced employees with higher levels of commitment and performance. This finding demonstrates the benefit of a structured organisational socialisation process for newcomers within large organisations, as they have a greater sense of stability in a relatively turbulent and anxiety inducing phase of employment.

2.3 Onboarding

Organisations can implement processes to help make the cognitive transition from outsider to integrated newcomer easier, through a practice called onboarding. Onboarding refers to systematic processes that are initiated by an organisation in order to assist in both the learning and adjustment of newcomers (Klein et al., 2015). Often these are achieved by utilising "sense breaking" and "sense making" methods (Pratt, 2000) to positively orient newcomers to the organisation and form new avenues of meaning making. This also helps newcomers to cognitively adjust to the organisation's culture and norms by setting out a transparent framework and time line for their learning.

Onboarding practices can be broken down into three main categories, being those that inform, those that welcome and those that guide (Klein et al., 2015). Practices that inform newcomers vary widely, and include communication and resources that are provided by an organisation to newcomers. For example, in the recruiting process there is often a large amount of information that is provided to newcomers both informally (e.g. information gained from interviews or given over the phone) and from written sources, such as websites. Large organisations, such as the NZDF and NZ Police, have specific recruitment websites that are separate from the organisation's main website. These recruiting websites provide a plethora of information to potential newcomers. These methods of imparting information often take place prior to newcomers entering the organisation and undergoing formal training. Training is another (more direct) method of informing newcomers, and includes formal orientation programs and training courses. Regardless of the method used, increased

availability of information is linked to greater role clarity and perceptions of self-efficacy (Klein et al., 2015).

Onboarding practices that welcome newcomers are intended to present the organisation's values and demonstrate how these may be congruent with a newcomer's values. An example of this may be an orientation week (e.g. at a university), which provides opportunities for newcomers to informally ask questions and seek advice from veteran members. It is also a chance for organisations to display activities that sit outside of their core functioning, such as opportunities to play sport or to attend professional conventions.

The last category of 'guide' refers specifically to direct interpersonal assistance, usually from veteran members. This can take the form of direct mentorship, or it may be in the form of dedicated training staff.

All of these approaches to onboarding practices differ along the six dimensions that Van Maanen and Schein (1979) laid out. The way that information is offered to newcomers may be more or less formal, structured and unilateral depending on the type of organisation and the type of role that is on offer. For example, hospitals and other health care providers may focus predominantly on mentorship as the primary method of onboarding due to the complexity of the workplace environment, and the fact that newcomers already have a professional qualification that largely covers the role-learning that is required (Hall et al., 2019). In this context, mentorship may serve as the best method of informally orienting nurses to the specific organisation, and the goal is to enable newcomers to utilise their pre-existing occupational knowledge in the most appropriate way. Other organisations may have a requirement to provide specific role learning to newcomers, in addition to socially integrating them. Training that is delivered to cohorts of newcomers may benefit from more structured onboarding programs (Shanahan & Sheehan, 2020), due to the increased level of control that an organisation has over the process. Evidence has suggested that overloading newcomers with information can be detrimental to the onboarding process and that it may be better to provide information in more measured volumes (Klein et al., 2015). Additionally, onboarding practices that are perceived by newcomers to take place over a more lengthy period of time (e.g. several months rather than a few days) are more beneficial for aiding socialisation.

2.4 Goals of Organisational Socialisation

Black et al. (2019) identified goal setting and emotional control (emotional self-regulation) as being two distinctly important strategies that aided in increasing task performance and job engagement. Goal setting in the military seeks to instil a sense of purpose in newcomers and to encourage them to take a proactive and positive approach to their developing organisational identities. Recent research has shown that emphasising the teamwork component of training (and other socially driven demands) in newcomers may increase the predisposition of newcomers to form communally driven goals (Tan et al., 2016). In contrast to promoting communally driven goals, another facet of learning that onboarding programs seek to build is the development of 'role learning'. Role learning applies to an individual's grasp of their core job requirements. In the military context, the first block of collective training during recruit course is more socially focused, with communal goals and group success being emphasised. This encourages the training cohort to adopt a teamwork approach to accomplishing tasks and helps to socially bind them together in the process. Later training, including primary trade training, can be both collectively focused and individually focused, as there is a greater requirement for trainees to successfully learn the core job requirements of the specific trade that they are joining.

Emotional control is akin to the concept of personal resilience and has an elevated importance within the military context. There has been a lot of research in recent years that has focused on personal resilience in military members and the rationale for this is easy to understand. Military service members may encounter difficult situations that require a certain degree of personal resilience to cope with (Britt et al., 2013) and the extent to which these experiences result in negative emotional outcomes will partly depend on an individual's degree of personal resilience. Resilience building within the military extends beyond organisational socialisation and often takes place more intensively during pre-deployment training (Doody et al., 2019). The reason to conduct resilience training prior to overseas deployments is that deployment is the most likely time for service members to encounter unfamiliar or traumatic stimuli. Looking at it from a deeper level, there are similarities between pre-deployment training and initial military training, as both career events will be accompanied by heightened feelings of uncertainty.

Resilience training has been shown to potentially have a mitigating influence on the occurrence of depression and PTSD in individuals (Vyas et al., 2016), which in turn can improve the health of the military work force and reduce organisational costs related to health

care. To some extent, personal resilience is naturally developed during the organisational socialisation process, particularly in the early phases of it (e.g. during initial training and onboarding). As newcomers experience heightened levels of anxiety and uncertainty when joining a new organisation, one of the key aspects of orientation programmes and onboarding practices is to teach or enable newcomers to build resilience and better cope with stress. The amount of stress that newcomers experience when joining a new organisation obviously varies, but one of the possible antecedents of this is the degree to which their new organisational position extends into their private or 'non-work' life. For example, RNZAF newcomers are required to physically reside on a military base and spend every hour of every working day absorbed within their new organisation. Most other organisations do not require this level of immersion and generally newcomers are able to take breaks from the socialisation process (e.g. by sleeping at home).

Fan and Wanous (2008) looked at a new type of orientation programme that was provided to foreign graduate students and measured the levels of stress that these newcomers had at the end of their orientation and how well they had adjusted in contrast to other students who went through a more traditional programme. They found that traditional cross-cultural training programmes focused too much on national cultural entry issues and not enough on the actual organisational entry. The new orientation programme provided a more holistic approach and focused on being realistic and truthful with the information provided to newcomers and in teaching the students how to handle stress. There are some interesting similarities between foreign exchange students and military recruits. Both types of newcomer are required to go beyond what would be considered a 'normal socialisation experience'. A career in the military tends to be more encompassing than most civilian occupations, to the extent that work can overlap with non-work life and blur the boundaries between what is usually two separate realms (Pohl et al., 2016). This accentuates the demands of military life and can contribute to different or more intense types of stress than may otherwise be encountered in a lot of civilian occupations.

2.5 Organisational Socialisation within the military context

There is generally a level of consistency in how social, content and context tactics are utilised within the NZDF, usually reflecting a very structured approach to the onboarding process. Initial military training is highly standardised in the RNZAF and serves as a collective induction period for new service members. Actual role learning is just one

objective of the induction and training period, with other contextual learning and organisational adjustment taking place simultaneously.

There are some potential disadvantages with a structured approach in a military context. Howe and Hinderaker (2018) interviewed several members of the U.S. military and a common theme was that newcomers may be reluctant to attempt to influence systems or bring about organisational change. To a certain extent this is acceptable for newcomers (from the organisation's perspective), as they are still in a learning phase and may be unfamiliar with broader contexts and issues. Members of any organisation generally become more willing to critique organisational practices as they become more assimilated (Croucher et al., 2019). On the other hand, sometimes the best placed people to identify problems, especially those of a cultural or social nature, are external to the organisation or new and not yet fully assimilated. The NZDF seeks the feedback of employees through various means: including internal blog forums, and employee engagement surveys (Richards, 2017) that enable service members to communicate with higher leadership about issues that are important to them. These are some avenues for members (including junior members) to express constructive dissent, although it may still be unlikely that a newcomer to the organisation would risk exposing themselves to criticism by posting their opinion to an open message board that will be read by more senior service members.

A significant factor that is going to influence the type of onboarding program that an organisation uses is its organisational culture. Organisational culture refers broadly to a set of values and behaviours that an organisation implicitly and explicitly endorses (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Theoretically, there are three different types of organisational culture (Taormina, 2009): bureaucratic, innovative and supportive. A bureaucratic culture is one with a transparent hierarchical layout and clear roles and responsibilities. A innovative culture is one that inspires entrepreneurial behaviour and emphasises the importance of successful results. Lastly, a supportive culture is one that can be defined primarily by its encouragement of participation and trust.

The NZDF would traditionally be thought of as having a bureaucratic culture, as it has an explicit hierarchical structure, clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, and strong adherence to official policy. These facets of the NZDF's culture are highlighted during the onboarding process, and newcomers may have some difficulty in determining whether it is acceptable for them to show initiative in particular areas. Optimistically, evidence has shown that creative performance (such as innovative thinking) is not directly related to the type of organisational culture that is present (Golden & Shriner, 2019) - a somewhat unexpected

finding, considering the common perception of large bureaucratic organisations as being slow to enact change. However, Golden and Shriner did find that innovative cultures moderate the relationship between transformational leadership (a leadership style based on collaborative change) and creative performance. This means that innovative cultures are more likely to structurally encourage transformational leadership in a way that positively influences the creative efforts of employees. As this relationship was not seen in bureaucratic cultures, it indicates that the pre-existing structure and rules of an organisation can overshadow the efforts of individual leaders. This is debatably an acceptable trade off, due to the complex nature of large bureaucratic organisations. Effectively, the long-term stability of the organisation is prioritised over quick transformative change. Large organisations can incorporate innovative elements that help to counter this trend, such as through the use of internal forums and journals. The RNZAF has an innovation forum that is open to all service members to post ideas that may help to increase the efficiency or productivity of the service. This has served as a valuable channel of information that draws on the expertise of workers 'on the ground'. Additionally, the NZDF maintains an air power journal that publishes an assortment of academic articles, essays and book reviews (New Zealand Defence Force, 2020b). These are useful innovative elements that are tempered by structural checks and balances, which help to ensure that there are official avenues to discuss change, without them being disruptive to the operational capability of the organisation.

Recent years have seen a concerted effort by the NZDF to keep up with broader cultural norms, de-emphasising the importance of masculinity and toughness and instead encouraging diversity and resilience. A study by Cuyler and Guerrero (2019) in the U.S military, found that a culture of supportive leadership was related to increased mental health help-seeking attitudes among its service members. While this study was somewhat limited in scope, it is indicative of a more general trend across western military organisations that are attempting to create more supportive climates for their service personnel.

Although organisational socialisation takes place over the course of an employee's work tenure (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), the intensity of personal transformation and learning in employees is not at the same level throughout their employment. There is a surge of socialisation in the initial employment period (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002) - a period often accompanied by orientation programmes, cultural learning and job training. Socialisation processes then continue after the initial introduction and training period has been completed, but it becomes less structured and less intense. One of the reasons that a surge in socialisation is beneficial is that it helps to quickly bridge the gap between the values

and expectations of an organisation and those of a newcomer. Organisations, especially larger ones, use onboarding practices to "expedite socialization" (Klein et al., 2015, p. 263). The military practice of inducting new recruits into a full time training programme and requiring recruits to often work late into the night and on weekends, is a good example of an accelerated socialisation. It is likely that the socialisation of new recruits could be achieved in a more regular day-to-day timeframe (e.g. 9am - 5pm), but this would take longer and be more costly. Additionally, the full time hosting of newcomers within military induction programmes helps to positively reinforce the contrast between military norms and the norms of wider civilian society.

Traditionally, initial military training seeks to build a socially cohesive identity in recruits, by reducing their sense of individuality and highlighting the importance of teamwork and collective goal setting (Black et al., 2019). Social integration is a central component of basic military training and one that is enhanced through the use of a standardised orientation program. In order to promote the social integration of newcomers, recruit training seeks to instil organisational values in newcomers and develop their individual competencies. Promoting the personal growth of newcomers allows them to become more capable of operating in a group setting. Additionally, individual learning will become more important as newcomers undertake more specialised training and take a more personal pathway with their career progression.

2.6 Expectations, value congruence and previous experience

The expectations that individuals have upon entry into an organisation are likely to have major influences on their experiences during the organisational socialisation process, although conceptually, expectations can be difficult to distinguish from organisational socialisation concepts. For example, there may be considerable overlap between the outcomes of unmet expectations and the outcomes of job dissatisfaction, and the extent to which these are related is difficult to determine (Turnley & Feldman, 2000).

These expectations are comprised of three factors; pre-entry person-job fit (P-J fit), pre-entry organisational expectations, and pre-entry value congruence (Carr et al., 2006). Pre-entry expectations of person-job fit describe the degree to which a newcomer feels that their skills and abilities are going to match the job requirements of their new or impending position in the organisation. Expectations around person-job fit are often managed through the recruiting process - sometimes by specialist recruiting teams (especially in larger

organisations). Within a military context, applicants to the NZDF propose their preferred trade options and recruitment will either agree to one of these, offer alternative trade options, or decline (or stand down) an applicant. Varying levels of educational achievement are required, depending on the trade or specialisation, that help to ensure that newcomers into these roles are going to be able to successfully complete training and operate effectively once trained.

Pre-entry expectations about the organisation are the degree that a newcomer has accurate expectations of their organisation. Newcomers who arrive into an organisation with relatively accurate expectations have less difficulty in adjusting to the new organisation's values and behavioural norms. A part of the reason for this is that newcomers experience less stress when entering a new organisation if they have more realistic information about what to expect, and newcomers who believed that their initial expectations were accurate were more likely to have lower levels of turnover and to be more committed to their organisation (Taris et al., 2006). Both unmet expectations and exceeded expectations can have a negative impact on newcomers, although exceeded expectations can be positive depending on the specific expectation at hand (Irving & Montes, 2009). For example, an unexpected excess of support from superiors and co-workers is positively related to newcomer satisfaction, while an unexpected excess of training is negatively related to this. This may be dependent on the nature of the training - whether it is compulsory or optional, relevant or superfluous, and the cognitive demands of the employee's other work and training commitments. A now widely accepted method of helping to regulate the expectations of newcomers is to provide realistic job previews, which are focused on providing objective and unbiased views of the job and wider organisation. Receiving a realistic job preview is correlated with more accurate expectations (measured by asking newcomers about their following experiences), which indicates that they may be useful in contributing to lower turnover (Jacquet & Hermon, 2018). It is a little unclear to what extent realistic job previews work by either sifting out applicants with unrealistic expectations or by adjusting the expectations of those who will successfully join.

Pre-entry (and post-entry) value congruence refers to the degree that a newcomer's values and their perceptions of the values of the organisation are aligned. This can be influenced by many factors, including personal (non-work related) values, prior work experience and the development of a professional identity. For many NZDF trades there is nil requirement for relevant industry experience, which may make it harder to establish value congruence prior to organisational entry. Prior criminal history is one method of gauging the

value congruence of applications, and a police vetting check is carried out during the hiring process, with criminal records being the mechanism that allow this (Ministry of Justice, 2020). Organisations in the public sector often have strict requirements around the prior criminal history of applicants, as serious crimes may be indicative of a discrepancy in individual and organisational values. Organisations also need to be cognizant of their public image.

Shared perspectives of professional identities help to ensure that values are maintained across workers in difference organisations and industries (Forenza & Eckert, 2018). It stands to reason that the more recognised a profession is, the stronger this sense of a collective identity and value system will be. Individual conceptualisations of particular professions are likely to influence the degree to which newcomers can anticipate the values of their new organisation and occupational role and match their own values with them (Rousseau, 2001). For example, medical professions have long established principles and values (e.g. to preserve life) that bind individuals across a raft of industries and organisations, while other professions may not be bound so strongly by shared established values. Of equal importance, the general public has an awareness of shared values among medical professionals and this likely impacts on the wider societal perception and schematic understandings of the occupations. A potential downside of strong established professional identities is the concept of lingering identities (Wittman, 2019), which is the idea that newcomers in the socialisation process are driven by competing identities. Newcomers travel through the onboarding process in a psychological state of tension, where previous identities re-assert themselves and compete against an employee's new role identity. This essentially makes the socialisation process a cognitively disruptive one for newcomers, and paradoxically this can be harder for newcomers who have a greater knowledge of wider industry or occupational values.

In a similar vein, the socialisation process may be hindered or helped by newcomers' previous formal training or work experience, depending on the context of the organisation (Kowtha, 2018). Formal education appears to be related to more disruptions in the learning capability of newcomers, possibly due to newcomers having pre-conceived concepts of what their professional identity should be, which may decrease the clarity of their new role. However, prior relevant experience may help newcomers with their socialisation, possibly because they find it easier to fit in with superiors and co-workers. Other research has shown that prior occupational experience is related to greater rates of voluntary turnover, at least in the short term, but that this relationship is only significant if the socialisation process was not particularly successful in the first place (Carr et al., 2006). A successful socialisation process

appears to show a decrease in the relationship between prior occupational experience and voluntary turnover. This is an important finding as it indicates that successful socialisation can work on both experienced trainees and newcomers to the workforce. The military typically recruits younger members of society and the average age of NZDF recruits in recent history has been 20 years old (New Zealand Defence Force, 2015). With the majority of new recruits being in their late teens and early twenties, it is fair to assume that there is a limited amount of prior work experience (especially relevant work experience) among recruits.

2.7 Learning

Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2006) set out a model of organisational socialisation that provides a useful delineation of different learning sources. As they note, learning is widely regarded as "the crux of organisational socialisation" (p. 502). The ways in which one may expect certain learning sources to deliver varying types of organisational knowledge are laid out in Figure 1.

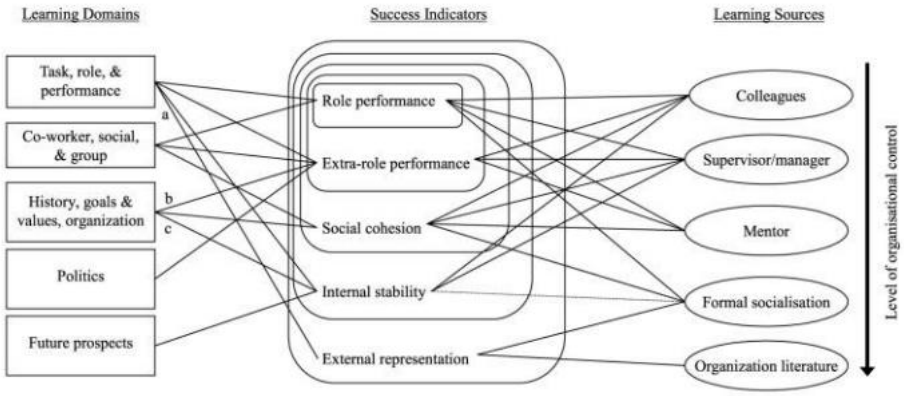

Figure 1. Learning and success indicators (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006, p. 499).

Newcomers infer their organisation's values and policies from the behaviour of their superiors and mentors (Ahmad et al., 2019). Although organisational values and policies are often explicitly taught as a part of the socialisation process, research has emphasised the importance for newcomers to see these embodied in their mentors and superiors. This is likely to be especially true in larger organisations, where there is a greater distance between top leadership and rank and file employees. In more recent times, organisations have been able to bridge this distance to some extent through the use of technology.

Individuals currently within the organisation (in contrast to newcomers) can be termed as 'socialisation agents', reflecting their direct role in the socialisation process (Klein et al., 2015). This is a broad category and can include instructors, team leaders, co-workers and management. Any person already existing in an organisation can influence a newcomer's socialisation and form an important aspect of the overall socialisation process, including individuals who are not directly involved in the training or socialisation process. The interactions between newcomers and socialisation agents can have major influences on the trainees' experience, and this is especially true for interactions that are closer to the beginning of a newcomer's organisational entry (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). The degree to which newcomers have a personal propensity to experience stress interplays with positive or negative feedback from socialisation agents. Very early interactions in a newcomer's employment are likely to stand out to an individual more than later interactions - regardless of whether they are positive or negative. This is partly due to newcomers experiencing a higher state of anxiety at the beginning of their socialisation, as they have entered a foreign environment where they are unsure of what to expect. For a military organisation, this tendency is likely to be more pronounced due to the intense training and personal modification that the military exerts on newcomers. Similar to any new experience in a foreign culture (be it a national or organisational culture), individuals take time to get over the initial culture shock, although the degree to which different individuals are able to manage and react to stress is influenced by their personality and prior experiences. Socialisation agents have a limited ability to affect the perceptions of newcomers, as some of the factors that influence a newcomers experiences are within the control of the organisation, while others are not. As the perceived level of support a superior provides either increases or decreases, a newcomer may become more capable of regulating their emotions and stress levels, while a decrease in perceived supervisor support can have a negative influence on a newcomer's resilience. This confirms the importance of supervisor support in a newcomer's socialisation, especially in the early stages, as supervisors are an anchor of information and feedback. This is especially true in larger organisations with a structured socialisation process, where newcomers are initially separated from most fully trained members, and then clearly categorised as junior members upon completion of their training. Additionally, it demonstrates how a newcomer's sense of self-efficacy is linked to the feedback that supervisors provide over time (Overdale & Gardner, 2012).

Strong supervisor support is also critical in both establishing and maintaining a strong psychological contract between newcomers and the military organisation (Pohl et al., 2016),

forming the basis for organisational loyalty. This observation is particularly important in a military context due to the risks associated with a service career and the trust that is required, both among service members, and between service members and the wider organisation. The study by Pohl et al. (2016) showed that perceived supervisor support (PSS) has a greater influence on the commitment of service members than perceived organisation support (POS). This is likely due (at least in part) to the tendency of newcomers to perceive the organisation's values from their supervisors, especially as these experienced organisational members are the primary sources of information and models of behaviour.

In Figure 1, the learning domain of formal socialisation refers to the presence or absence of formal training programs (or other orientation programs) (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006). Recruit training and primary trade training are both examples of formal training programs, although clearly the information that is passed from the organisation to the trainee is funnelled through supervisors and instructors. Once initial training is complete and new trainees are posted to an operational unit, supervisors become the overarching source of mentorship and affirmation. Organisational literature (such as base orders, internal publications and manuals) plays a role in the socialisation process as well, again depending on the specifics of an organisations onboarding practices. For example, organisational literature has a greater role in trade training within the military than it does during recruit training. Recruit training takes a more general approach to learning, focusing on military values, behaviours, history, as well as general in-role military competence (e.g. basic weapons training). In contrast, trade training increases the tempo of task learning in order to teach trainees the direct requirements and content areas of their specific trade. Upon posting to a working unit, organisational literature becomes a more important and unavoidable avenue of information. Standing orders (SOs) and routine orders (ROs) are required to be read by all service members within the RNZAF and these are formal and legal methods of passing information down from the organisational hierarchy.

Newcomers also learn the values and expected behaviours of their organisation through their socialisation with other newcomers, particularly when newcomers are gathering information from the same sources (Howe & Hinderaker, 2018). This is often encouraged within military training due to its benefits for enhancing group cohesion. The more socially inclined the socialisation process is, the more likely it is that newcomers will proactively seek new information, both from an individual standpoint and also for the benefit of the training cohort (Tan et al., 2016). This is especially true within structured socialisation processes, as newcomers generally occupy the same organisational status and have the same training goals.

This socially based self-reflective practice continues throughout a service member's career, although it is of increased benefit to junior members who are still establishing their role and identity within the military.

In addition to their role in the learning process, supervisors may also have an influence on the affective (emotional) commitment of newcomers through their external reputation, in terms of both ethics and competence. The perception of high reputation (especially for competence) is also related to lower occurrences of 'deviant' behaviour in newcomers (Neves & Story, 2015) - such as being dishonest and not arriving to work on time. Essentially, this relationship can be simplified down to ethical leadership encouraging ethical behaviour, although with the interesting caveat that ethical leadership is perhaps less influential than competent leadership.

2.8 Newcomer needs

An important area of relevance in the socialisation literature is the needs of newcomers, as they relate to the socialisation process (Taormina, 2009). Firstly, employees have a need for achievement. This is attained by successfully completing goals and striving to meet high standards. Failure can be detrimental to this need, so it is useful for organisations to set more difficult tasks incrementally as easier tasks are completed, rather than aiming too high to begin with. This need is carefully managed in a military setting, as early achievements within initial military training are often designed by instructional staff to be failed by recruits (Hodges, 2017). This deliberate practice is utilised as a means of challenging individuals' prior identities by demonstrating to recruits that relying on personal resources is not sufficient to achieve success within a military environment. The subsequent rebuilding of group identities and teamwork in recruits coincides with an increase in group achievement and success, which reinforces the positive attributes of a collective approach to military problem solving and discourages the reliance on individualistic motivations and behaviours.

Secondly, employees have a need for affiliation, which is an important interpersonal aspect of socialisation. Individuals have a desire to build relationships with other people and to feel emotionally validated. When placed in a structured socialisation process, particularly during training or other orientation programs, newcomers are generally surrounded by other newcomers that they do not already know. While this can present unique challenges for organisations that are attempting to build teamwork, it also provides opportunities in the sense that organisations can affect the quality and nature of social relationship building

among new recruits, ensuring that desirable attributes and values are promoted and socially reinforced. The net outcome of these types of processes, especially within a military context, is that organisationally bound support networks can operate in a self-contained and effective manner (Bowen et al., 2016). These support networks extend beyond training and throughout a service member's career. The *Missing Wingman Trust* is an example of an RNZAF affiliated organisation that provides support to service members and their families (Missing Wingman Trust, 2020), and is reflective of the strong social affiliation that accompanies a service member's careers within a military organisation. This trust specifically aims to support service members and/or their families in the event of death, injury or sickness. As the recipients of the trust's support are often not (or no longer) directly employed by the NZDF, their support demonstrates how affiliation within the Defence community extends beyond regular employer-employee norms.

Thirdly, employees have a need for autonomy, which is the degree to which they have personal freedom in how they conduct their work and manage their time. High degrees of autonomy do not naturally accommodate every job and profession, as there are some occupations that require a relatively rigid organisational structure and set of operating procedures. The military is a classic example of a type of organisation where newcomers are not automatically provided with autonomy - often initial military training and early career phases are defined by the absence of it (Britt et al., 2016). The low-autonomy nature of certain phases within a military career (particularly early phases when there is an intensive period of socialisation) can be difficult for individuals to manage. Various coping strategies can be applied by new service members to cope with this, and one of the more researched approaches is an acceptance of work demands. This approach is defined by an employee's acknowledgement that demands are outside of their control, but are nevertheless required to be faced to the best of their ability. Britt et al. (2016) compared this approach to proactive problem solving and denial/avoidance coping. The use of an acceptance approach was related to lower rates of stress symptoms than other approaches, although clearly the ways in which newcomers successfully cope with stress depend on the context of the organisation that they are joining. In other organisations, particularly those that hire newcomers into positions that require prior professional training and/or occupational experience (and are therefore likely to be positions with high autonomy), proactive problem solving may be a more successful strategy. In nursing occupations for example, employees with more positive attributional styles (e.g. the tendency to attribute negative events to external and temporary sources, rather than internal and consistent ones) were more likely to utilise proactive problem solving to

cope with work demands (Welbourne et al., 2007). This correlated with an increase in job satisfaction. In the nursing context, this approach to coping is more effective than it would be in a military context (during initial training), and it is understandable that the degree of autonomy that accompanies different occupational positions may be a determining factor in the relative success or failure of particular coping strategies. This need for autonomy can also vary for different types of individuals - some may desire a high degree of autonomy, while others may find too much autonomy disconcerting and aimless. In a military context, the level of autonomy that is afforded to each service member is often dependant on their trade/specialisation and rank. Certain trades/specialisations require more autonomy due to the nature of their tasks, such as pilots, who ultimately have responsibility for ensuring the safety of the aircraft that they are operating.

Lastly, employees have a need for power, which is the degree to which they want to sway others and have an impact on decision making. A need for power is not necessarily an undesirable motivation, and could be characterised as something akin to desiring responsibility and wanting to rise through the organisational hierarchy. A need for power can be constructive in allowing those with the relevant competence to progress to positions where they are able to exert a positive influence, while individuals with a need for power who are not highly successful could potentially present problems for an organisation. There is some debate about whether individuals with psychopathic and narcissistic tendencies (personality attributes that typically include a desire to wield control over others) set out to join military or police organisations - institutions that often require their members to use elevated levels of power (relative to civilian occupations) in the course of their job requirements (Preston et al., 2020). A part of the reason for this is that psychopathic traits have been shown to have some similarities and overlap with more positive traits, such as heroism (Patton et al., 2018).

An employee's level of needs will influence their perception and relative success within different learning domains of the socialisation process. Taormina (2009) described four content areas that are similar to the learning domains proposed by Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2006): training, understanding (of the job, organisation and workplace culture), co-worker support and future prospects. With regard to links between an employee's needs and their positive appraisal of different content areas of socialisation, a need for autonomy is the most highly correlated with training, understanding and future prospects. The exception was co-worker support, which was most highly correlated with an employee's need for affiliation. Essentially, employees who describe themselves as desiring higher amounts of autonomy at work, were more likely to rate the content areas of their socialisation positively

and as being more useful. These results show a need for autonomy to have a greater relationship with successful socialisation than a need for power, which may imply that learning and competence take precedence over control or career aspiration.

Out of the four content areas of socialisation, newcomers tend to place the most emphasis on their training (Taormina, 2009), regardless of what type of organisational culture dominates their workplace. Training is the most visible aspect of socialisation for a lot of newcomers, and this would especially be true in larger organisations with more formalised structures of socialisation. Successful organisations therefore should not undervalue the pre-eminent role of the training that they provide (especially initial training upon entry to the organisation) in successfully socialising newcomers.

2.9 Newcomer adjustment strategies

Newcomers have a range of adjustment strategies when becoming socialised into a new organisation, and these can be broadly sorted into three approaches (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2012). Firstly, employees can attempt to change their job through influencing their core role functions or surrounding environment. Secondly, employees can change themselves to match their job and environment. Lastly, employees may take a mixed approach to mutual development and relationship building. The obvious difference with these three approaches is the psychological avenue of change. An important factor that is going to incline newcomers towards one strategy or another is the amount of autonomy that is available during the onboarding phase. Less autonomy is going to reduce the ability of newcomers to influence existing organisational business rules and practices. Trainees in a military context have a very limited ability to affect change in the organisation, therefore necessitating a strategy that primarily consists of self-change.

Employees can change their job by utilising several different approaches. ‘Minimising’ refers to newcomers decreasing the amount of learning required, often by relying on wider professional and industry experience. This strategy becomes more effective as newcomers have greater amounts of relevant prior experience and can be a means of reducing the cognitive workload that is required during the learning process. Another method that can be used to change the job is a ‘proving’ strategy, whereby newcomers aim to demonstrate their skills and abilities in order to be given specific tasks or positions in which they are more proficient. A less obvious strategy is ‘giving’. This involves newcomers sharing their own knowledge with other employees and can be used as a way of influencing current work

practices. As an opposite of ‘giving’, ‘role modelling’ relates to the practice of copying others who newcomers perceive to be competent and high performing. Aside from ‘role modelling’, the other three strategies all require relevant prior experience in order to be effective. Newcomers without relevant experience are less capable of employing these strategies, and attempts to do so run a greater risk of the newcomer being perceived negatively by veteran employees and supervisors.

At the other end of the spectrum, newcomers can focus on their own learning in order to adapt to the new organisation and these methods can broadly be categorised under two strategies, ‘gathering’ and ‘waiting’. Gathering is when newcomers proactively investigate new information that will enable them to socialise better and learn the job functions, while waiting is a passive version of this that involves newcomers waiting for new information and resources to come to them. Another self-change strategy is ‘following’, where newcomers follow more experienced co-workers and emulate their behaviour. This is similar to ‘role modelling’, with the difference being the cognitive avenue of change (the self versus the job). Another strategy is referred to as ‘attending’ and describes the practice of participating in voluntary training, meetings and social events. This crosses over with the ‘following’ strategy, but has the added benefit of making a newcomer look motivated and enthusiastic to managers. The remaining two strategies under the self-changing approach are ‘asking’, which simply means to ask questions about the job and seek feedback, and ‘reading’ which is the non-interpersonal version of this - reading job manuals and publications, for example. The strategies under these two theoretically opposing approaches (change the job versus change the self) are not always clearly positioned in either camp, but can cross over between the two change domains. It is likely that many newcomers do not consciously identify their learning patterns and employ multiple strategies from both change domains at the same time, depending on the specifics of the organisation and their socialisation process.

The third approach is mutual development, which comprises a raft of interpersonal strategies aimed at both self-learning and building useful social relationships in the workplace (i.e. to increase co-worker support). Strategies under this approach include ‘teaming’ (to be seen as a team player), ‘befriending’, ‘exchanging’ (e.g. sharing experience or professional contacts), ‘negotiating’, ‘flattering’, ‘talking’, ‘socialising’ and ‘networking’. Most of these are self-directed, whilst socialising is more opportunistic in nature - taking advantage of occasions to build social networks as they arise. Generally speaking, this strategy falls under either self-change or changing the job, but it warrants its own categorisation due to its focus on social influencing and wide range of specific methods.

2.10 Outcomes of Organisational Socialisation

A potential issue that can arise during organisational socialisation (particularly in a structured approach) is a tendency of newcomers with low values fit to establish a veneer of becoming positively socialised. Person-Organisation (P-O) fit describes the degree to which a newcomer's personal values match the organisation's values (Lim et al, 2019) and is relevant both before a newcomer joins an organisation and after they have joined. Hewlin (2009) found that employees with perceived low P-O fit, where they perceived their own values (be they moral or political) to differ substantially from the norm, were more likely to create "facades of conformity" (p. 727). This refers to employees pretending to have values that match those of the collective majority whilst hiding their true personal values. While this is a recognisable and practical strategy, it may have several negative outcomes. Workers who employ facades of conformity are more likely to experience emotional exhaustion and have a higher intention to quit than those with a better values match. The presence of employees with low P-O fit, who are also adopting facades of conformity, is indicative of an incomplete socialisation process - particularly with regards to the adjustment of the newcomers. Newcomers who are not sufficiently adjusted to the organisation should either receive more assistance to become adjusted, or in the case that their values are not congruent enough with the organisation's values, they should be guided out during the onboarding process. This is easier in theory than in practice, as it is difficult for organisations to recognise newcomers who are not actually becoming positively socialised.

Organisations can gauge the relative success of their socialisation process by looking at distal outcomes, as they relate to the induction period (Carr et al., 2006). Generally, these can be seen as being made up of three areas: employee performance, job attitudes and turnover (Bauer et al., 2007).

Employee performance is a huge area of interest to organisations because of the implicit relationship between individual performance and organisational outcomes, and is a measure of task success. From the perspective of socialisation, employee performance can be viewed as a distal outcome of successful (or unsuccessful) socialisation practices, that falls under two different levels of analysis. The first level is task performance, such as appreciable job outputs that are directly related to an employee's position (Becton et al., 2017). These types of task performance outcomes are more likely to be formalised and articulated in an employee's contract and can directly affect an employee's pay and other benefits.

Quantitatively, task performance can be gauged by looking at several statistical factors, from the quality or success of completed tasks, especially where these are scalable (in marketing or retail for example), to maintaining work deadlines and keeping mistakes within acceptable levels.

While task performance is useful and likely has a relationship with the training and induction period, it is also influenced by individual factors such as general competencies, opportunities to display proficiency, and cognitive ability (Fu et al., 2019). Situational factors may also have an impact on task performance, such as family and home life events that affect an individuals state of mind. These factors can confound the relationship between the socialisation process and task performance and this in turn can make it problematic in identifying the degree of influence that the socialisation process has had in affecting a newcomers task performance.

The second level of analysis in employee performance are "discretionary behaviours", such as organisational citizenship behaviours (Becton et al., 2017) and extra-role tasks. These are optional behaviours (technically, at least) that do not come under core job requirements and are not explicitly written into an employee's contractual obligations. This type of behaviour can include relatively innocuous actions, such as unloading the workplace dishwasher at the end of the day or volunteering for extra jobs such as organising the work social club. Although not contractually required, discretionary behaviours can come with social and implicit expectations, from both supervisors and other employees. It has been found that as an employee's perception of their leaders demonstrating ethical values and behaviours grows, so does their own participation in discretionary behaviours (Ahmad at al., 2019). Discretionary behaviours are also a significant concept in psychological contract theory (Zhao et al. 2007), and many of the other measurements that can be used to gauge the outcomes of the organisational socialisation process overlap with outcomes in psychological contract fulfilment and breach.

Job attitudes describe a broad range of employee perceptions that manifest in observable behaviours and patterns, but a distinctly important aspect of this is organisational commitment. Organisational commitment is relatively complex phenomenon that has been illustrated to contain three distinct commitment types: affective, normative and continuance commitment (Figure 2).

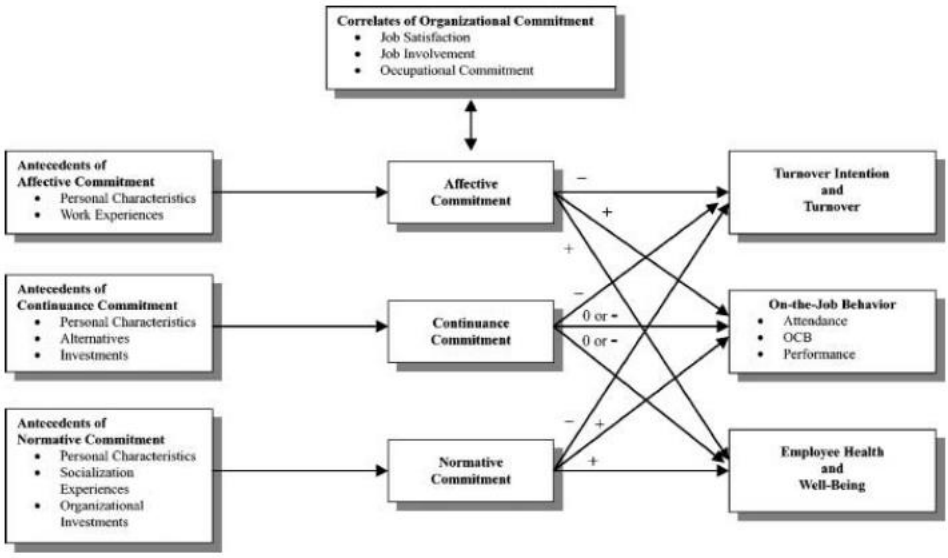

Figure 2. Commitment types, antecedents and outcomes (Meyer et al., 2002, p. 22).

Affective commitment describes the emotional attachment that an employee has with their organisation and is considered to be the biggest predictor of overall job satisfaction. This demonstrates the importance of orientation and onboarding programmes (such as initial training in the military) in laying down the foundations for developing newcomers into emotionally committed employees. Work experiences such as perceived organisational support, role ambiguity and conflict, and perceptions of workplace justice often have 'strong' correlations (+/- .50 and greater, as established by Cohen, 1988), both positive and negative, with affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Interestingly, personal characteristics have a weak relationship with affective commitment, which could indicate that the right training and socialisation process can be effective across the personality spectrum (Taormina, 2019). With perceived organisational support having a strong relationship with affective commitment, the role of supervisors is again emphasised. This link is possibly intensified in a military training setting due to the quasi-parental role that instructors play in the learning and growth of (particularly younger) recruits and trainees. The affective commitment of employees is related to both intentions to quit and actual turnover, meaning that employees with low affective commitment spend more time thinking about quitting and actually do quit more frequently than employees with higher affective commitment (Meyer et al., 2002).

Normative commitment refers to a sense of obligation that employees have to an organisation. The difference between affective and normative commitment then is the types of factors that make an employee feel like they are a part of the organisation and need to

show loyalty. Affective commitment antecedents are more positive in nature, whereas normative commitment can be either positive or negative. The antecedents of affective commitment are inherently voluntary and speak to an employee's autonomy, and are therefore likely to be predictors of an employee's tenure at an organisation. An employee with a strong sense of normative commitment might not enjoy their occupation and position, but may remain out of a sense of duty to their peers, superiors or the organisation. Employees with a strong degree of normative commitment, but a low degree of affective commitment, are more likely to experience poorer personal well-being at work, likely due in part to their conflicting motivational factors for remaining a part of the organisation.

Continuance commitment refers to a sort of 'risk-reward' calculation that employees make when considering the viability of their continued employment. A key component of this is the perceived availability of other job opportunities. For example, external events (such as an economic recession) can have a large impact on an employee's continuance commitment. This is a harder commitment type for organisations to influence, as the antecedents can be harder for them to have any control over. Continuance commitment can be a predictor of behaviours on the job, such as job performance and extra-role behaviours (such as OCBs), although it depends on the availability of external opportunities, as this is likely to affect an employee's attitude.

Job satisfaction is conceptualised as being distinct from organisational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997), although as Meyer et al. (2002) noted, there is certainly overlap between them and job satisfaction has an "affective tone" (p. 22). This appears to be a fairly safe proposition, as the relationship between positive emotional states and both job satisfaction (Welbourne et al., 2007) and affective commitment, bear similarities. Research has shown that increasing levels of organisational commitment are positively correlated with overall career satisfaction (Martínez-León, et al., 2018). Additionally, both job satisfaction and affective commitment are correlated with turnover intentions and actual turnover (Welbourne et al., 2007).

A study with physical educators who primarily work with students who have some form of disability in the U.S. found that emotional exhaustion (or burnout) was negatively correlated with job satisfaction, and positively correlated with turnover intentions and actual turnover (Richards et al., 2020) Predictably, it is common for workers in stressful jobs to express the complaint that the job stress is emotionally exhausting (Jacquet & Hermon, 2018). Personal resilience was also negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion, indicating that resilience could possibly contribute to maintaining a healthy level of perceived job

satisfaction. An interesting observation was that the degree to which physical educators were satisfied with their job was influenced by the degree to which they believed their occupation was important and appreciated by others outside the profession. This community perception was something that could be advanced through the actions of the physical educators themselves, through external representation. External representation is the degree to which employees positively advance their job position and organisation within the community and during interactions with customers and is influenced by the amount of loyalty that employees have towards their employer (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006). It makes sense then, that external representation may translate to subjective perceptions of occupational reputation and that this can in turn increase job satisfaction. In a similar vein, the degree to which employees find meaningfulness in their work is negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion (Lopez & Ramos, 2017), indicating that it is not only the physical demands of time and resources that can affect the propensity to reach emotional exhaustion, but also perceptions of meaningfulness and satisfaction (Lages, 2012).

Another notable finding (Lages, 2012) is that emotional exhaustion is negatively related to the degree of external representation that employees enact, while organisational commitment and job satisfaction are positively related to it. These results highlight the cyclical nature of external representation, job satisfaction and affective commitment. Employees who are satisfied in their job and feel positively emotionally committed are more likely to speak positively of their organisation, and having positive external representation may sway others in the community to view the role and organisation more positively, which may then increase the satisfaction of the employee.

Aside from the external representation that employees enact and the reputation of their profession or occupation, there is also the influence of their organisation's reputation. Public or widely known occurrences of unethical leadership can have a detrimental impact on the reputation of an organisation (Neves & Story, 2015), and arguably more so for organisations in the public sector whose primary goal is not one of profit - perhaps because they are perceived to be held to a higher ethical standard by the public. The NZDF was rated the second highest public organisation (behind Fire & Emergency NZ) for 2020 in terms of trust, social responsibility, leadership and fairness (e.g. treating employees fairly and encouraging diversity) by Colmar Brunton (2020), beating 52 other public sector organisations. This is a very optimistic finding, although the NZDF is obviously not immune to public scrutiny or allegations of wrong doing. The degree to which an organisation's external reputation affects the proclivity of its members to join or stay is hard to pinpoint, although in the NZDF's case

they do ask exiting service members to indicate the reasons for their departure (Controller and Auditor-General, 2009/2010). However, there would likely be additional issues of validity with collecting this specific type of information. For example, service members exiting the organisation on negative terms could conceivably indicate the organisation's reputation as a contributing factor, even if this was not a significant reason (a response bias).

The methods used to carry out the present study were intended to encourage responses that were articulated in the participants' own language and un-restrained by pre-existing theory. This necessitated the use of open-ended enquiry and subsequent interpretative analysis by the researcher.

CHAPTER 3 - METHOD

3.1 Aim

The aim of this study was to review how newly trained RNZAF logistics operators experienced the transition from training to work roles. This transition is likely to be profound in a newcomer's career and there is a myriad of factors that may influence how this transition progresses and its relative success. These factors may also vary in the sense of which parties are able to exert influence on them, from the participants own sphere of influence to the sway of organisational policies and insiders. Therefore, the objectives of the study were:

1. To learn how participants described the experience of this transition, and
2. To understand what factors may have helped or hindered this process.

These objectives were explored by sitting down with participants and asking them a series of questions. For the sake of consistency, the participants were asked the same main questions, although follow-up questions varied depending on the nature of their previous answers. The tone of the conversations was intended to be relatively informal, to both encourage the building of rapport and to reinforce the notion that the interviews were being conducted by a university student. The data from these interviews was audio recorded, transcribed into written form and then analysed.

3.2 Research design

A qualitative epistemology and methodology were used for the research. From an epistemological perspective, it was important for the researcher to allow participants to express their experiences in their own language, while allowing the data to take its own course rather than trying to strictly codify it within existing theory. Part of the reason for this was the lack of generalisable data – there are few large-scale studies that focus explicitly on the organisational socialisation of logistics personnel within an Air Force context, and none within New Zealand. Adopting an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach allowed the researcher to explore the data as provided, and to rely on participants to tell their own stories. The literature review assisted the researcher in the interpretative process and assisted him in drawing some reasonable comparisons between the findings of this study and

others, but it did not drive the results. IPA is described by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) as being an exercise that enables an observer to infer meaning from an individuals' lived experiences. It allows an individual's recounting of their experience to be valid in its own right, along with any emotional attachments/connotations, and without needing to be 'made to fit' into pre-existing theories. Smith and Osborn (2015) explain how the IPA process involves at least two levels of interpretation. Firstly, the individual or participant interprets their own experience and how it relates to their own pre-conceived knowledge. The listener (the interpreter) then tries to understand these experiences in a way that seems true to the original intent of the speaker. Naturally this process is subject to error, is not as generalisable as other methods of data analysis and is exploratory in spirit.

Qualitative methodologies allow researchers to study a chosen area of interest in depth, and to interpret the findings through the language of participants. They move the focus away from quantifiable descriptors (e.g. how many) towards a more immersive approach. Qualitative research, particularly within organisations or groups, allows researchers to move beyond the building of psychological constructs to explore the nuances of human experiences (Gioia et al, 2012), often through the participants' language and thus can explore the essence of the participants' stories. It looks at the experiences of individuals as relayed to the researcher, who will then formulate these experiences into a coherent narrative that is subjective in its telling, usually under the guidance of a particular qualitative epistemology. Essentially, qualitative research seeks to understand the way individuals derive meaning from the world around them and how they articulate this meaning to others.

The way that researchers report findings from qualitative research is naturally different than for quantitative research. It is more subjective in nature, as a hallmark of qualitative research is the non-objectivity of findings. There is a level of consistency in the ways that both the academic community and wider society interpret numbers. Words on the other hand are far more open to interpretation, and their meaning is affected by our experiences and our conceptualisations of the world around us (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

A common critique of qualitative research methodologies is their limitation on external validity. Without quantifiable results that are subjected to rigorous statistical analysis, it is difficult to determine to what degree the results from qualitative research are generalisable (Cooper et al., 2012). An effective resolution to this problem is to qualitatively study participants within the context in which they reside, and to only generalise the findings (cautiously) across the same or similar contexts (Nyirenda, 2020). This requires the researcher to immerse themselves within the research setting, and there are some qualitative

methodologies where there is an expectation that the researcher either has some degree of familiarity with the group and context that they are studying, or that they at least actively seek the guidance of informed insiders, such as in Kaupapa Māori research (Curtis, 2016).

The specific qualitative approach that was used for this research was thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach is useful for beginner researchers, as the steps that researchers need to take are clearly laid out. It is a relatively simple methodological approach that is not bound by epistemological theories. Thematic analysis is similar to (and branched out of) grounded theory in that it emphasises the practical applicability of the research to work settings. Grounded theory seeks to build theories 'from the ground up' by deriving meaning from real life work settings and forming these meanings into theories that reflect the realities of the contexts that they describe (Oktay, 2012). Grounded theory can however be quite an in-depth process, so there is an advantage in using thematic analysis instead, as it is more manageable for novice researchers. As Braun and Clarke (2006) explain, thematic analysis warrants its own status as an independent methodology as this means that "researchers need not subscribe to the implicit theoretical commitments of grounded theory" (p. 81), which in turn gives the researcher more freedom in how they conduct the research.

Under the umbrella of thematic analysis, there was a series of other decisions that the researcher decided on. The first decision was whether to take a theory-driven or data-driven perspective. A theory-driven perspective would seek to link the emerging themes in a way that could be defined by previously established theory. In this sense, it places the data within a framework of pre-existing knowledge. The present research instead takes a data-driven perspective, which aims to examine the data and themes as their own separate entities. Previous research is useful in helping to locate these themes in existing bodies of knowledge, but it is not required. The reason that the researcher took this approach was due to the specificities of the participant's context. Most valid research in organisational socialisation, and specifically within military settings, is from overseas sources. This means that while the research is useful within the wider military context, it may not be entirely generalisable to the RNZAF.

Another decision was whether to analyse the participants' data in order to identify semantic themes, latent themes, or both. Latent themes are the meanings behind individuals' words - what their words imply but may not be clearly said. A latent analysis would seek to find meanings across the range of data items in order to discuss broader trends. Semantic analysis is taking a participant's words at the surface level. Both can be used in conjunction with each other, although for this study a purely semantic analysis was taken. This was partly

necessitated by the confines of the study - it is a Masters level research project and the addition of latent analysis would extend the study beyond its initial parameters.

3.3 Participants

The research was conducted in the RNZAF. Participants were junior members of the Logistic Specialists trade, had completed both recruit training and primary trade training (a combined period of around six months), and at the time of their interview, had been posted to their first 'non-training' unit. This first unit posting is a period of service in the RNZAF that is commonly referred to as OJT (on-the-job training), as it occurs after primary trade training but precedes advanced trade training. Generally, the time period of this posting is 18 - 24 months, although there are exceptions. The participants had been in the organisation for anywhere from nine months to two and a half years. Due to the specified career stage, all eligible participants had the Aircraftman (AC) rank and were designated within their trade as 'Logistic Operators', the term applied to those members within the trade who have not yet completed advanced trade training. The invitations to take part in the research were only distributed to eligible Logistics Operators at RNZAF Base Ohakea or Whenuapai (not RNZAF Base Woodbourne). This was partly done for practical reasons, as the researcher lives in the North Island, and partly for methodological reasons. A key aspect of the shift from training to work roles is the geographical shift away from the training base at Woodbourne to an operational base at Ohakea or Whenuapai. Although there are cases where newly trained Logistics Operators remain at Woodbourne, this is a relatively small number and most newly graduated operators will post away to either Ohakea or Whenuapai.

There were five participants who agreed to take part in the research, and all were currently within their non-training unit postings. The ages of the participants was not specifically requested, although four of the five participants disclosed that they were in their early to late twenties, with the youngest being 23. Three were from RNZAF Base Ohakea and two were from RNZAF Base Auckland. The goal of the research was to seek the participation of ten individuals, so this target fell short. The Logistic Specialists trade currently has somewhere in the vicinity of 40 Logistic Operators, and so the low participation rate can be attributed, at least to some extent, to the small size of the eligible population. The recruitment of participants for this research was a difficult process, complicated by the need to enlist the participation of enough individuals to make the study viable and by the need to stress the voluntary and independent nature of participation.

3.4 Data collection plan

Data was collected via face to face interviews with participants. The researcher adopted a semi-structured interview approach, with open ended questions and follow-up suggestions that were designed to keep the interview on track, while allowing participants the space to explore and describe experiences that were not directly related to the initial interview questions (Galletta & Cross, 2013). This approach also gave the researcher the autonomy to decide when to bring an interview back on track to more relevant material, or when to prompt for more information. Annex 1 shows the seven main questions that were asked in each interview. The sub-questions were not necessarily asked in each interview, and additional questions could be asked depending on the content of the participants' responses.

Each of the seven questions was relatively open-ended and care was taken not to word them in a way that would prompt any particular type of response. Each question was worded in neutral language. Follow up sub-questions served as reminders to the researcher to raise certain topics, and as more detailed variants of the main questions, in the event that a participant did not understand a question or requested more specificity. The main questions served to discover information from the participants about the following areas:

1. How they described their experience of formal training in Woodbourne.
2. How they described their experience of their subsequent work posting.
3. How they compared and contrasted these career phases.
4. Whether they feel socially integrated at their new base location.
5. What the positive and negative factors of their current job were.
6. How their future goals were informed by the transition from training to work roles.

3.5 Procedure

Initial invitations to participate were distributed via internal NZDF email by a senior Logistic Specialist member, on behalf of the researcher. A subsequent invitation to attend a presentation at RNZAF Base Ohakea was distributed by another senior Logistic Specialist member. Finally, due to a low response rate and with the consent of the NZDF Organisation Research unit, the researcher sent an internal email to eligible participants directly with another invitation. All recipients were blind cc'd, in the interests of anonymity. Each of the

two email invitations included an information sheet that provided more information about the goals and methods of the research (Annex 2).

Whenever an individual sent an email response to the researcher advising of their interest in participating, they were sent a consent form (Annex 3). The consent form was for their information only at that stage and was not required to be signed and returned.

The interviews began with an informal introduction from the researcher and a brief explanation of the researcher's history and familiarity with the RNZAF. The researcher emphasised the voluntary nature of the interview and the ability for the participant to request that the interview be terminated or for audio recording devices to be halted. Participants were requested to read and sign a hard copy of the consent form (Annex 3) and were asked if they had any questions prior to the interview beginning. After this, the researcher turned on both audio recording devices and began the interview.

Each of the seven questions was asked and follow up points were explored. The researcher ended the interviews by reminding each participant that they would receive a copy of the transcript of their interview in the coming weeks and that they could withdraw from the research prior to them confirming (via email) that they were satisfied with the interview transcript.

Each interview took between 40 - 70 minutes. The location of the interviews was either RNZAF Base Ohakea or RNZAF Base Auckland, and rooms were booked via internal website room bookings. Several participants chose to have their interview in a room at their unit, although they were offered alternative locations on base. As the researcher was a civilian member of the NZDF, there were no additional security requirements (e.g. no chaperone) needed for the researcher to enter and move around the base. The only third parties who were informed of the interview times and locations were the participants' direct management, in order for them to arrange the time off work - this was managed individually by each participant. Participants were offered the option of conducting the interview over Skype, in order for them to avoid completing the interview on base and thus removing any requirement for them to inform their command. No participants took up this option.

3.6 Data analysis

The interviewer closely followed the directions of Braun and Clarke (2006) in thematically analysing the interview data.

Phase 1: Transcribing. The interviewer transcribed the data verbatim from the audio recordings. After some initial difficulty, the interviewer set the speed for the audio transcriptions to 50% and transcribed them verbatim into an electronic document. This process involved the researcher continuously rewinding the audio tracks to confirm accuracy and clarify words. Upon completion of the transcription, each audio track was re-listened to at 100% speed to confirm accuracy and grammatical pacing.

Each interview transcript was emailed to the participants for confirmation and/or amendments. Most of the participants made some form of amendment to their transcript before sending the amended version back to the researcher. The researcher used his private (non-work) email account for these communications. All five participants confirmed at this point via email that they were happy with the transcript and nobody requested to withdraw from the research.

Phase 2: Initial coding. The next phase of the data analysis was the initial coding of the interview transcripts. This was done using Nvivo 12, and all data codes were assigned to one or more data categories.

Phase 3: Initial search for themes. The data were thematically analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2006) via the creation of hand written mind maps. Themes and sub-themes were amended throughout the initial search for themes. The themes were compared and contrasted for appropriate levels of separation and relation.

Phase 4: Reviewing themes. The researcher conferred with his supervisor and took feedback on the clarity of initial themes and their likely relevance to the literature review, bearing in mind that the study was to be driven by the data and informed by the literature review (not the other way around).

Phase 5: Confirming and naming themes. This phase involved the finalisation of two main themes and the culling of a third theme. A final mind map was drawn to illustrate the relationship between the two main themes, and their levels of separation and connectedness.

Phase 6: Producing the report. Two sub-themes were removed in the process of writing the report, as the researcher realised that there were not enough extracts to support the data under

them. Aspects of these sub-themes were incorporated into other sub-themes where appropriate, or removed entirely where there was a lack of data.

3.7 Ethics

Separate research and ethics approval applications were required from Massey University and the NZDF. Massey University approved the research 16 Jul 2019 and the NZDF approved the research 15 Aug 2019.

The researcher was previously employed by the RNZAF and currently employed (on a part time basis) by the NZDF in a civilian role. In order to avoid any perception of a conflict of interest, it was emphasised to participants and organisational stakeholders that the researcher was conducting the study in his role as a student of Massey University. It was made clear in the ethics applications that the researcher would take all possible steps to avoid being influenced (positively or negatively) by his role in the NZDF. To that end, the researcher initially avoided the use of work emails in seeking participants. When it became apparent that there was going to be difficulty in getting enough participants, the researcher approached the NZDF Organisation Research team to gain approval to send out an email invitation within the internal email system. Care was taken to hide individuals' email addresses (blind cc) on this invitation. It was emphasised to participants multiple times by the researcher that the research was being conducted in his role as a tertiary student, and not in his role as an employee of the NZDF. Nobody involved in the research and ethics approval was a part of the researchers' direct management.

Care was also taken by the researcher to inform participants that the research was not being conducted by the RNZAF or NZDF, and that the organisation did not have any editorial power over the research aside from approving its initial conduct. This was partly to avoid biasing any data (e.g. participants being too cautious to speak honestly about their experiences) and partly to maintain the separation between the researcher and the organisation. These attempts by the researcher to maintain role separation created a necessity for him to be cautious in how much assistance he asked of organisational members (such as senior members in the Logistic Specialist trade). The researcher received several offers of assistance (often informally) from other NZDF members in approaching Logistic Operators for participation, but these were turned down.

CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS

Two main themes were identified from the data: developing competence, which reflected the participants' experiences of socialisation as a process in which they began to develop their job-relevant skills, and social challenges, which described the ways in which participants interacted with their new organisation, supervisors and the wider base community.

Raw themes	**Sub-themes**	**Main themes**
Pace of learning Formality of environments Military discipline	Challenges in the training environment	Developing competence
Personal freedom Lack of direction Asking questions	Transitioning through multiple learning environments	
Confusion Negative feedback Contradictory information Utility of publications Transparency	Clarity vs Ambiguity	
Lack of initial autonomy Increasing autonomy Relation to competence Self-directed work Supervisor 'interference'	Autonomy in work tasks	
Brevity of the logistics operator course Breadth of job tasks Practical constraints of learning Role-playing Building expectations	Training relevance	

Living arrangements Role of social drinking Older age of participants Contrasts to younger peers Wider base-side networking	Social integration	Social challenges
Training intervention Threat of course failure Comparison to workplace staff	Supervisor feedback (support and intervention)	

4.1 Theme 1: Developing competence

The development of competence was a prominent theme in the interviews. The participants began their career progression with recruit training, then completed the logistics operator course, and finally were posted to either Ohakea or Whenuapai. There was a reported increase in personal freedom between the recruit course and the logistics operator course, and this was accompanied by a reduction in formality and rigid discipline. This trend appeared to continue when the participants transitioned into a work role, as they described how they were given the space to exercise more personal autonomy in how they organised themselves.

Postings to Ohakea or Whenuapai are to a ‘work role’, in the sense that trainees are operating within an operationally focused unit and are expected to produce job outputs that directly relate to the unit’s work requirements. However, this also doubles as a training environment characterised by ‘on the job learning’. This made the development of competence more complex, as participants had to balance two positions (regular worker and formal trainee) at the same time.

4.1.1 Challenges in the training environment

Both recruit training and the logistics operator course (referred to commonly as ‘the junior course’) were formal periods of training that participants navigated with a consistent cohort of other learners. The participants had varying degrees of confidence in their learning

abilities, and the differences between participants appeared to be more pronounced in relation to their experiences on the logistics operator course. This may be reflective of the increased emphasis on individual learning during the logistics operator course, compared to the more collective learning during recruit training. Several participants commented on their perceived learning ability during the logistics operator course:

> I found it a little bit difficult, like I said, I um take a little bit longer to learn things and then, sometimes they needed results faster than I could learn them, and I struggled a little bit with that. (Participant 1)

> It was a 12 week course [the logistics operator course], but can definitely be finished in eight weeks. But there was always a bit of time at the end of the day, and then a little bit of time at the start, to ask any questions or queries. (Participant 4)

While some participants found the workload challenging, others felt that the training pace was well within their capacity. The participants had extra time at the end of the work day during the logistics operator course to ask questions and seek clarification, which was seen as a helpful way of enabling slower learners to remain up to speed. An additional feature of the logistics operator course was the ability for trainees to go into the classroom after hours to catch up on learning:

> I know some people went back and signed out the key after hours and went back when it was night time and stuff like that, but I never did that, I just thought it wasn't needed, I thought they taught you enough in the time they gave you to be able to pass it. (Participant 3)

While the ability to access course resources after hours was seen as redundant by some, it was utilised by other trainees. It not only appeared to allow those who were struggling to get themselves up to speed, but it also seemed to encourage the trainees to take a greater amount of personal responsibility for their own learning progression and exercise more individual autonomy. On a broader level, this increase in self-direction may have been a helpful step in transitioning the trainees from wide eyed newcomers to more confident and active organisational members.

4.1.2 Transitioning through multiple learning environments

The data indicated that there was a noticeable decrease in enforced discipline between recruit course and the logistics operator course, with trainees expected to moderate their own behaviour to a greater degree as they became more experienced within the organisation. Whereas individual discipline appeared to be strictly monitored during recruit training, individuals were provided with more autonomy during the logistics operator course.

> The recruit course, they're like really strict on you and then your junior course the hand comes off the throat a little bit… because obviously you're studying so they need to let you like, you need to be able to retain the information and stuff. (Participant 3)

Both phases were characterised by being formal learning environments, and to a certain extent the learning objectives seemed to be clear. However, this was not necessarily the case once the trainees had completed their formal training phases and transitioned into a work role at either Ohakea or Whenuapai:

> I remember my first day [on base], my first day when I got there, it was kind of like real shit because I just had a computer and they were like 'oh yeah here's your computer' and for the first half day, no one actually told me like what to do for my job… it took until like lunch time when I actually put it down and asked 'so like what do I actually do' and then everyone like laughed at me, and I was like 'oh it's actually a question' and then the CPL [Corporal] kind of got someone to like, got me to go shadow someone, so just I went and sat with one of the other ACs [Aircraftman - a junior rank] and just like watched exactly what they did. (Participant 3)

The cutback in supervisor direction seemed like an uncomfortable shift in pace. It was interesting that this participant commented on the lack of direct job direction, and was contrasted by them to the relatively high amount of direction that they received during their formal training in Woodbourne. In this case, the transition between a formal training environment and an informal workplace environment appeared to be jarring. It makes sense that trainees are expected to take on more responsibility for their learning once they are posted to an operational base, but the move appeared to be very sudden for several of the

participants and resulted in feelings of anxiety at a time when they were already experiencing heightened levels of stress:

> Yeah it was like if you have any questions just ask, just come around and ask, so I found that part a little bit awkward sometimes. (Participant 4)

The expectation from supervisors that newly trained ACs should approach them and ask questions if they need guidance was not something that this participant was immediately comfortable with. Several participants described incidents of supervisor push back during training for asking questions out of turn, and this set an expectation that a certain level of acquiescence was required in the military realm:

> When it came to the instructors there was just a lot of times when they would say stuff and then we'd question that and be like 'okay thanks for that information, how did you get to that because we got different answers', and then we at one point, like I was one of the people, but we questioned one of the particular things, and got told to stop being so condescending 'this is the answer and you just need to know it' and I was like 'okay'. (Participant 5)

The resulting confusion about whether it was okay to ask questions appeared to be compounded by the fact that misjudging workplace norms in the military environment could result in severe reprimands:

> I guess it's the same as a normal work place like, if you turn up and you don't know anyone you're nervous, but at a normal workplace you're not going to get destroyed for doing something wrong, but around here if you just forget a few, if you don't wear your hat outside or something, someone will fricken roast you for that. (Participant 3)

Additionally, it looked like individual supervisors could vary widely in how much autonomy they allowed newly trained ACs to have, even within the same workplace unit:

> I'm used to taking the initiative and yeah it kind of depends on your 1-up, some of them might be all for it, so if you find a better way to do something they're more than happy to

> but other ones are like ‘nah we’ve always done it this way, you’re going to do it this way’. (Participant 2)

For the participants, who were new to base and therefore lacked the contextual knowledge that would have otherwise aided them in identifying when and where it was appropriate to pro-actively push for answers, the norms of their new workplace appeared to be largely unknown and this understandably made the early phase of their transition to a work unit uncomfortable.

4.1.3 Clarity vs Ambiguity

The participants in the present study had difficulties with information clarity at times and this appeared to make their transition into a work role less predictable. Although the participants were quite knowledgeable about their career progress and learning outcomes during training, ambiguity accompanied some situations that revolved around interpersonal interactions and social expectations, specifically with regards to the military standards that others (especially supervisors) expected of them:

> I walked into a workplace similar to our one, and I walked in and took my hat off... and yeah I think I wrote SGT [Sergeant] instead of F/S [Flight Sergeant] on the paperwork so I was looking for a SGT so and so, rather than a F/S so and so, and um I walked in and asked for that and he goes “where’s your hat” and I go “I took it off” and he’s like “you know you should have your hat” and quoted the NZAP’s where if it’s not my immediate workplace I should have my hat on, whereas it’s a bit confusing for me… my immediate chain of command is also in that building, so it’s sort of, it’s confusing because “do I take my hat off because it’s my chain of command”. (Participant 1)

This incident seemed to have arisen from the participant’s confusion and a lack of clarity surrounded their workplace norms. Additionally, there appeared to be confusion around whether this unit was or was not the participants workplace, or whether it was a foreign workplace - an issue compounded by the tendency of logistics specialists and operators to be broadly spread across base at different units. This specific incident may not have occurred in the participants training environment as the rules were more consistently applied there, ensuring a greater level of accuracy from the participant in identifying the correct standards

and adhering to them. However, ambiguity surrounding disciplinary standards also appeared to be present during training:

> Yeah insubordination, that's the one, for questioning him, 'well I was asking the question' every SGT says to ask the question if you're unsure, I couldn't find the document in the online pubs, but he found it for me and it said exactly that, I had ironed everything, so it came across that I was questioning him, when I was genuinely asking a question. As they say 'don't be scared to ask any questions' so I found that quite hypocritical. (Participant 2)

This extract demonstrates how seeking information from relevant supervisors during training may have been difficult and intimidating for the participants. Interestingly, Participant 2's anecdote implies that they were verbally encouraged during their training in Woodbourne to ask their training staff questions if they were unsure about anything that was required of them. There was a sense of annoyance from this participant, as they felt that they had accepted the invitation to ask questions and had subsequently been admonished for it. The tacit invitation to seek information from training staff therefore appeared to be contradictory, or to have implicit caveats. However, within the participants new workplace, they seemed to be actively encouraged to ask questions and approach their supervisors for guidance:

> On the very first day we all sat down and the SGT and the CPL told us 'aw this is expected of you, we do this every day, you guys need to do this, if you have any questions go there'. (Participant 3)

This process of information seeking appeared to become easier as the participants transitioned into their new work roles. The new relatively informal setting of the workplace seemed to help the participants with forming relationships with their supervisors, which in turn aided their ability to seek information from them.

> Yeah my CPL was amazing, I've pretty much only worked with her, we lost one of the LACs [Leading Aircraftman] and the other one I'd say is probably on a similar learning curve to the rest of us, um but the CPLs are amazing, so good.

Interviewer: Was it quite informal? Like relative to junior course?

Yep, 100%, like you just call them by their first names, it's, the same with the SGT, it's a lot different. (Participant 5)

The participants may not have addressed their supervisors on a first name basis upon first reaching their work unit, as this mode of address may have drawn a reprimand within their prior training environment. However, as participants settled in to their new work units, the social rules regarding interactions with supervisors lessened and this gave the participants the confidence to more actively seek clear information.

4.1.4 Autonomy in work tasks

The participants' own perceptions of their autonomy was a prominent concept. Generally, logistics operators complete recruit training, then the logistics operator course and are then posted to base. But in Participant 2's case, they spent several months at Ohakea between recruit course and the logistics operator course. This jump from training, to a workplace, and then back to training, made the otherwise linear transition from trainee to worker more convoluted for them. However, it did also appear to highlight for them some of the differences between these environments, and in particular the varying levels of autonomy:

There's a few of the other guys, say one of them he did sports, like interbase, bit tired on the Friday so just messaged the SGT and asked 'is it alright if I stay behind and study today and not do PT, just cause I'm pretty sore', which is what like you do that on base… and he got reamed by the F/S for that, saying that's unprofessional and he should have brought his PT kit in anyway and asked, but that's what you'd do on base. (Participant 2)

This occurred at Woodbourne, with 'on base' referring to working at Ohakea. This was not the participant's own experience, but it did give them the opportunity to observe a key difference in formality and individual decision making between the two environments. The participant is indicating that this level of autonomy and informality was acceptable within a workplace environment, but too presumptuous in a training environment where the interactions between junior and senior members were expected to be more formal. Some of

the participants appeared to link their own perceived level of autonomy to their growth in competence, and this noticeably occurred in recollections about their workplace environment:

> They kind of leave you to your own devices, as long as you've proven that you can do the work and no one's picking up that you've done this wrong and this wrong, obviously the more you muck up the more they keep an eye on you, but if you do your work consistently and it's correct they leave you to your own devices until you ask for help. (Participant 2)

Likewise, another participant noted:

> When I think back to when I first came here, I definitely had my list [of tasks], um and now I feel like I'm in a position where I know what's required and what I need to do so I can like plan my work load around what's coming up versus what needs to be done right now, cause that's usually been pre-planned, it's already done, to allow me to look forward. (Participant 5)

As Participant 2 implied, their supervisors would provide more space for autonomy as long as they could trust that the participant would do the work with a minimal amount of errors. Supervisor interventions in the participants' work day that were perceived to be more direct were received negatively:

> Usually what we try do is we have an AC who focuses just on the emails, we have an AC who focuses on the tech requests and we have an AC that focuses on the shop floor… I'll kind of get triggered if someone [a supervisor] will say 'oh can you do all of these emails' because I'll be like 'aw well, we've kind of got a… I'm working on the shop floor today, blah blah was meant to be doing the emails', I think that's what it stems from I guess, where I get annoyed at stuff piling up, it's because of that. (Participant 3)

This extract indicates that the participant and their junior colleagues had divided and allocated their tasks in a way that they felt made them more effective. The intrusion from more senior staff was seen to be unnecessary, and a case of supervisors not trusting the junior staff to organise their tasks independently. It was interesting to note that a lack of supervisor

direction during the early phases (e.g. the first day) of an AC's workplace posting was seen to be uncomfortable, but as they grew in confidence the ability to exercise autonomy appeared to become more valued. Therefore, the data indicated that the transition from being a new worker to being an experienced worker was marked by the participants own self-efficacy. Another participant had a similar outlook:

> It's more about planning my day, what I'm going to do during the day and not getting pulled around, or disturbed, unless it's something urgent, you know, not for unnecessary stuff which like is not part of the day… yeah I don't like those random things that come up, which people don't want to do, just like 'put it on someone else', those sort of things. (Participant 4)

There was a perception here that unsavoury tasks may get shifted down to junior staff because this is the easiest way for more senior colleagues to avoid completing them. Additionally, the presence or absence of autonomy appeared to be conceptualised by this and other participants (at least in part) as the ability to plan out and execute their own work schedules. Where they were unnecessarily interrupted in this, it represented a reversal in their transition. Instead of continuing the trend of becoming more competent and more trusted by supervisors, they instead felt that they were being forced into a more passive and receptive role.

4.1.5 Training relevance

Logistics was perceived by participants to be a trade with a huge amount of variety in work tasks. The logistics operator course itself is roughly three months in length, and participants felt that there was a limited amount of time to learn a large amount of information.

> I'd say junior course teaches you maybe 20% and then when you get here it's maybe 80% kind of thing, like it gives you… the fundamentals like, and then I can just imagine if say they went, recruit course straight to 'you are a loggy on base' without the junior course, it would make it 10 times harder… it just gives you a good platform, but yeah there is a lot of stuff that they miss out. (Participant 3)

There were some areas where the relevance of training in the logistics operator course was questioned. Participant 3 spoke at length about role playing training that took place at Woodbourne, that focused on workplace interactions between junior logistics operators and members from other trades:

> So like the instructors would pretend to be a tech so they'd put a persona on, they'd put a high vis on and come into the flight store… and they'd like walk over and hang off the shelves like this, and start looking through the drawers and just ask you, try distract you and be real snappy with you… it's nothing like that [in the workplace], everyone gets along aye. (Participant 3)

Participant 3 was indicating that this training was not particularly relevant, or at least that it established an expectation that was unmet once they were posted into a work role. One of the consequences of only being able to learn a small portion of the expected role and of learning irrelevant training content may be that the subsequent transition into the work role is made more difficult. It may also create an opportunity cost, as the short time frame of the logistics operator course means that other (potentially more useful) content could be left out. For example, Participant 3 identified talking on the phone as an area that did not receive any attention during formal training, but proved to comprise a significant portion of his work role:

> I guess that's something that they don't teach you on junior course [phone etiquette]… they don't do anything like that, they don't touch on it at all and answering the phone is a big part of the day to day, like the phone rings all the time, probably once every fricken 20 minutes, you'll get someone calling up asking for something at least. (Participant 3)

These two different types of training content made for an interesting comparison, as they both relate to how one should appropriately conduct interpersonal interactions, while carrying out core job tasks. Although core job tasks vary greatly between logistical units at the operational bases, the rules and etiquette governing interpersonal interactions may be more universal.

Another participant noted many differences between what they learned during their logistics operator course and the procedures that they followed in their work roles:

> I noticed how there was a lesser, say mandatory things, their [the work unit] processes they go through to send stuff is a bit more in depth than what they made it out to be at the school, the general gist of it was 'yep that's right' but then there's a bunch of other stuff that was never brought up… I mean the gist of it is the same but there are a lot of other things that you learn on the job. (Participant 2)

While noting that there were some differences between what they had learnt during training and what they were required to perform in their work unit, participant 2 acknowledged that it would be difficult to learn all of the relevant information that they would need during training, due to the short time frame of the course:

> We'd be quite hard packed to put everything I guess into 3 months down at the school. (Participant 3)

It seemed that workplace supervisors were aware of the difficulties of this transition for new ACs, and some had implemented mechanisms to try and bridge this gap and make the training as relevant as possible for future trainees:

> I did a small list and I talked to my SGT about it, and my W/O wanted to get the list sent to him because he liaises with the school to make sure the training's actually what we're doing base side. (Participant 2)

This comment also indicated that the participant was aware of ongoing communication between the school and subject matter experts at the operational bases, orientated at ensuring that the training content in the logistics operator course is relevant to unit tasks and procedures.

4.2 Theme 2: Social challenges

This theme referred to a multitude of social exchanges that can be grouped into several types of interpersonal interactions and observations. Newcomers experiencing socialisation gather a large portion of their information from other individuals, including peers and supervisors (Klein, Polin & Leigh, 2015). Becoming socialised into a new organisation is an inherently social experience. Participants referred to other service members and their supervisors on numerous occasions and detailed how these affected their transition into a working role.

4.2.1 Social integration

There was a marked difference in the way that participants described their experiences of social acceptance during training in Woodbourne and how they described this after they had transitioned into a work role. As Participant 1 explains, it was obligatory to work together as a team during early training, which forced the participants to socially integrate with one another:

> Almost immediately after as I started getting talking to everyone and everything like that, it was just that sort of first impression and just well everyone here, a couple of days later I was making a lot of good friends you know we all had to work together to get along and stuff like that. (Participant 1)

Likewise, Participant 4 referred to both developing teamwork and then utilising this teamwork in overcoming training obstacles:

> Recruit training had a few hard times, but then there were a lot of good things as well… learning team building skills and facing challenges with a team. (Participant 4)

Several of the participants in this study joined the RNZAF at a later age (mid to late 20's) than most of their fellow trainees. Age seemed to make social integration more tedious for several of these participants. This was much more noticeable during formal training due to the close proximity of their peers (e.g. living and eating together). For these individuals, the difference in age appeared to make the social aspect of their transition into a work role easier,

as the increased autonomy allowed them to pursue their own learning steps and career progression individually:

> Recruit course to begin with… it was, ah it was alright, I was kind of the smart one because I was older, I was probably like the 3rd, nah would have been the 4th or 5th oldest one on recruit course. (Participant 2)

And:

> Dealing with people who have like just come out of school, kind of like have, I want to say, mummy/daddy issues, like really need that guidance, that was probably more difficult than actually dealing with, what people would see as the stressors of recruit course, like for me recruit was just playing the game, but to them it was very emotional and draining and away from people they love, first time away from home. (Participant 5)

These older participants appeared to find the social dynamics of base life more appealing than those of Woodbourne:

> In Auckland, you get quite a big subsidy for your accommodation, but you're only eligible for it after you've done three years in the service… I'm older, so I don't really want to live with a bunch of 18 year olds in barracks, so I pay to flat. (Participant 5)

For other participants, particularly younger ones, being posted into a work role at Ohakea or Whenuapai appeared to make socially integrating with those around them more difficult, and again this was exemplified in comments about the living arrangements. Barracks accommodation at Ohakea and Whenuapai are made up of one person rooms, as opposed to the large dormitories and twin-person rooms that were present in initial training:

> Ah it's like surprisingly a lot less social than what you'd think [living in barracks on base]… we had an inspection, at the thing I had never seen the person that had lived across the hall from me, in six months. (Participant 3)

Some of the participants appeared to compensate for this drop off in sociability by expanding their social networks through participation in various types of social groups or base activities. For example, one participant was a member of a prominent social club on base and this provided them with the ability to meet other like-minded individuals:

> A lot of people don't seem to want to participate even though there's quite a few benefits and that by being a part of it, expanding your knowledge and meeting people, I enjoy it… (Participant 2)

Other participants took part in unit physical training or inter-base sport, and expanded their social interactions through these events:

> Yeah so being base side now, I don't live on base, so the ability to play all my sports that I played before, still play in my club competition, so and I play base sports as well, which is really good. (Participant 5)

Social clubs also seemed to provide an avenue for meeting new people:

> Yeah, so we've got a social club thing tonight actually. And yeah so, pretty much I joined up and a couple of weeks later we had Village Green, Corporal baggies and champagne breakfast and stuff all within like a month of first being there. (Participant 1)

Several of the participants referenced the consumption of alcohol as a means of socialising with their peers, although there were mixed views about this. One participant spoke about their personal preference not to drink and suggested that the norm of socialising through drinking could result in favouritism:

> Once they go… drinking after work hours and stuff, and then going to town, then it can get close to favouring some over others (Participant 4).

Not sharing an interest in drinking also made social integration more difficult:

> The difficult part was linking more socially at the bar because, I don't go there to drink. (Participant 4)

The process of being socially accepted and the relative importance that was attached to this as a part of transitioning into a work role, varied across the participants, most notably by age. To a certain extent, social integration was mandatory during formal training - even older participants (who liked this part of the socialisation process less) did appear to socially integrate with their peers. However, once trainees transitioned into a work role, socialisation seemed to become more self-directed. Similar to the self-direction that accompanied their job/role growth, the participants had to take a more active role in seeking out social acceptance.

Supervisors appeared to be supportive of the need for the participants to socially network and aided social integration through the allocation of specific work tasks:

> You come in and then everyone's quite friendly, so yeah you join up and then you get shown around, so when I first got to mainstore I was sent on the run, so I got to go around different bays and meet everyone. (Participant 1)

The 'run' referred to a regular delivery of logistical items around base to various units. This was mentioned by several participants and was seen as a useful tool for participants to get to know their surroundings and become familiar with the names and faced on base. Additionally, participants were provided with time off to socially network through participation in extracurricular events:

> My command at the moment is quite good at say if there's events on… and that sort of thing, because I'm quite involved in an array of events, they're more than happy to release you for sports or interbase etc to build up the social aspect. (Participant 2)

4.2.2 Supervisor feedback (support and intervention)

Supervisor feedback was present during all stages of the participants' early career, although the nature of this feedback differed depending on whether the participants were in a training or work role environment. For the most part, the feedback that participants received in their work roles was seen to be appropriate for their environment. The feedback from

supervisors here appeared to be more hands-off in its orientation, with a greater emphasis placed on the participants actively seeking assistance as they needed it, rather than the more passive learning approach that participants had experienced in training. Supervisor feedback during training however, could be quite direct and was received by some participants in a negative light (often with hindsight, from time in their work role):

> Interviewer: What's the most unexpected thing about the job you have now?
>
> Probably how much I'm treated like a person, rather than just "you do this", because obviously spending such a long time… in Woodbourne, you get the mindset where "I'm just this" and obviously you have to treat CPLs with a lot more respect. (Participant 1)

And:

> Some of the instructors talk to you like you're children and that can get frustrating, as you can imagine. (Participant 2)

As Participant 2 explained, supervisor feedback during training could be frustrating, with instructors sometimes appearing to be condescending in their approach. Direct supervisor intervention appeared to lessen once participants successfully completed their formal training and were posted to their work unit. Although there still seemed to be a degree of pressure about not looking incompetent, it was generally easier for the participants to seek positive support from their supervisors within their work roles:

> These days I find myself kind of yeah going through it a bit more actually, and like actually going through the system and trying to go through the steps, trying to find out what he [a third party] wants to know, and then it's kind of like a mixture, like I'll get up to a point and say 'oh hey CPL how do you find out this' and she'll just tell me how and I'll be able to carry on whatever, or if I hit a wall I'm like 'aw CPL can you come out and help officer blah blah' kind of thing. (Participant 3)

Several other participants also described their workplace support in a similar fashion. It was support that was available if they needed it, but they felt that they generally had some level of space (a degree of autonomy) to try and problem solve on their own as well. This

implied that the relationships between the participants and their workplace supervisors reflected a more mature relationship, comprised of a ‘give and take’ mentality:

> I get along with my SGT’s all goods and I’ve got no dramas with them at all, have some yarns with them and the higher ups, if you’ve got that mutual respect they’ll treat you like an adult as they should. (Participant 2)

In addition to it being easier to approach supervisors for assistance, there also seemed to be a wide effort by senior supervisors to help the transition of new ACs. An example of this was a regular forum specifically held for the junior members of logistics units to meet and discuss any issues that were specific to them (as the most junior members of their workplace):

> So supply has an AC forum, which is like maybe, once every eight week… So all the AC’s get together and we have an opportunity to talk about things that are working well, or problems that we’ve come up with and like ‘do you have the same problem’, and then someone each meeting is in charge of it and they collate all the information… and then take it to our W/O and OC, and they just pass on the information and we will get feedback based off that. (Participant 5)

Participant 5’s quote demonstrated how the interpersonal relationship between them and their supervisors was back and forth, in comparison to the top-down instructor style that was present in training. Participant 3 explained how their supervisors in training had built up an expectation that service members from other trades (who could be indirect supervisors, if they were a higher rank) would be an acute source of stress in the workplace:

> When they [a third party] come in… I don’t know, the pressures not really on, like it kind of is on because you want to do the best you can… get whatever they want or help them out, but yeah I find, like I’ve come to actually enjoy the interactions, at first I was scared because that’s what they [the logistics operator course instructors] kind of taught us to be scared and to have our wits about us, and then as I’ve like gotten to know people and just done it longer, it’s nothing like that. (Participant 3)

Although supervisor feedback in the workplace was largely described in positive language, there were instances where this was interpreted as being a form of intervention and was unwelcome:

> One thing I personally hate is when you're doing a job… like if your CPL comes and says 'here's the paper, you've got to do it by lunch time', you're like 'oh shit well the thing I was really just starting to get a roll on with it, I have to put it on the back burner and do this' and then it kind of like stacks as well because they'll give you that. (Participant 3)

The worry about supervisor feedback potentially interrupting the participants work flow, bears similarities to the sub-theme of wanting greater autonomy in the workplace. In this particular example, the intervention of supervisors was perceived to be intrusive and an unnecessary barrier for the participant in managing their own work demands.

CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

5.1 Developing competence

Upon joining the organisation, participants began their learning within a very structured environment. The strict scheduling of training during recruit course reduced any requirement for newcomers to exercise self-direction. This was useful in a sense, because it forced the trainees into a specific mode of adaptation. As Cooper-Thomas et al. (2012) describes, newcomers into organisations broadly adapt to their new workplace environment in one of three ways. Either they change the role and/or environment to suit their needs, change themselves to match the environment/role, or undergo a hybrid of the two strategies that revolves around mutual development. For the participants in this study, they were clearly required to change themselves to meet the values and expectations of the RNZAF. This early training therefore resulted in the participants accepting the priority of military discipline over individual needs, and they became conditioned to follow the guidance of more senior colleagues with very little questioning. It also made the subsequent changes from formal training environments to informal workplace environments more difficult to adapt to. There are potentially benefits to newcomers being forced into a passive adjustment strategy (changing themselves to match the environment) during initial military training, as an "acceptance of demands" has been linked to a greater ability to cope with the cognitive demands of basic military training and an increase in mental resilience (Britt et al., 2016).

The experiences of participants during their junior course and later their first unit posting, indicates that the increasing level of informality made choosing an appropriate adjustment strategy difficult. Where recruit training required the participants to change themselves and be passive learners of new knowledge, later learning required a more proactive approach. Participants were now invited (and therefore to a degree, expected) to ask questions and seek guidance. If considered from the perspective of navigating an adjustment strategy, this means that the participants moved from totally changing themselves to the environment, to now having some degree of influence over their environment and needing to mutually interact with their role.

Taormina (2009) describes a newcomer's need for achievement when joining a new organisation, and how this need can be fostered by successful training. Newcomers with a high need for achievement will appreciate the formal and structured nature of early military training, as it provides clear indicators of organisational success and growth. However, the

transition to less formal training and less structured direction in the workplace may make the indicators of success more difficult to identify, which in turn may push these newcomers to seek more guidance from supervisors. In the military context, there is a perceived risk of informality being accompanied by a lack of discipline and as a primary purpose of early military training is to foster discipline (both external discipline and self-discipline), informality may be perceived as being undesirable. The participants were later required to alter their expectations regarding the formality of their environment as they functioned within a work role where the learning became progressively informal. In one sense this is a circular transition, defined by sudden increases in formality (from civilian life to early military training) and subsequent decreases of it (with transition into more specialised training). From an organisational perspective, it is a useful approach that ensures early on that trainees are sufficiently capable of learning within demanding environments and adapting to changes in their situational surroundings. From a trainee's perspective, it can be an unsettling contrast that takes significant resilience and energy to adapt to. This adaptation is likely to be easier for those newcomers with more positive attributional styles (Welbourne et al., 2007) - individuals who attribute negative events to external and temporary sources, rather than proximal and internal factors. The adaptation demands on individuals during the early phases of RNZAF training may serve as a means of weeding out newcomers who are unable to cope with significant changes in their environments (which may include individuals with more negative attributional styles). The participants in this study all successfully adapted to their new workplace environment and informal learning approach, although it is clear that some found it more difficult than others.

The participants in the present study largely transitioned through their training phases and on to their unit postings with a high degree of clarity, at least with regards to their training objectives and workplace tasks. This outcome is in line with Saks et al. (2007) who found that structured socialisation tactics (such as those typically seen in larger organisations) are more likely to result in a decrease of role ambiguity among newcomers. Where ambiguity did occur, it was more likely to be in relation to military standards or interpersonal interactions. Confusion surrounding the correct military standards likely represents a failure on one party or another (either the supervisor or the participant) to correctly provide or receive information. Confusion regarding the social rules for interpersonal interactions are more complex, as these will clearly differ depending on the supervisor at hand, their history of previous interactions, the specific context of the current situation and the non-verbal

communication that accompanies the verbal discussion.

The confusion that some of the participants felt with regards to asking questions during their training courses was somewhat problematic for them in their role as an organisational newcomer. Klein et al. (2015) states that one of the key roles of a newcomer is to seek new information in order to reduce the uncertainty that inevitability accompanies the socialisation process, but this act of seeking information can be hampered by fears of being reprimanded for appearing insubordinate. Saks and Ashforth (1997) also emphasise the utility of organisations encouraging newcomers to seek information from more senior colleagues, as interpersonal sources of information are vital to newcomers and arguably more valuable than other sources, at least in the initial stages of the socialisation process. It was evident that having multiple sources of information (e.g. supervisors and written publications) could be confusing for newcomers. On the one hand, publications have a higher degree of authority within the organisation and are more formal, whereas on the other hand, newcomers are more inclined to turn to their supervisors for guidance and prioritise the information gained from them. As a key organisational method of reducing ambiguity for newcomers is to increase their access to clear information, the concept of transparency is important to consider.

Autonomy is one of the newcomers' needs that are described by Taormina (2009) in relation to socialisation dimensions. Newcomers with higher needs for autonomy and lower needs for achievement are more likely to view supervisor intervention as being obstructionist, compared to their colleagues. This variation across newcomers and their needs may well explain some of the variance in the ways that the participants in this study viewed their degree of autonomy and supervisor direction in their workplace. Another factor to take into consideration is the degree of prior work experience that a participant may have had before joining the RNZAF. For example, Participant 3 described themselves as having a large variety of prior work experience (some of it relevant, some of it not) before joining the organisation, which may help to explain why they found supervisor direction in their day-to-day work tasks more annoying than other participants did. A higher need for autonomy is related to increased perceptions of competence, and prior relevant experience is likely to help newcomers learn their roles faster (Kowtha, 2018). Most newcomers to the RNZAF are in their late teens or early 20's, and thus are unlikely to have relevant prior experience. This would explain why newcomers who are older than this (e.g. mid to late 20's, as is the case with the two participants who had more noticeably negative views of supervisor intervention) may be less satisfied with the amount of autonomy that they have.

Despite the different ways in which participants referred to autonomy, it was apparent that they valued the chance to work independently and valued being responsible for their own working schedule. One of the benefits of increased job autonomy is that it provides a greater ability for employees to influence the way that they perform in their role and carry out tasks, a process referred to as 'job crafting' (Audenaert et al., 2020). This in turn can lead to increased levels of job satisfaction. The absence of autonomy during formal training in Woodbourne may have helped to highlight the subsequent presence of it in the workplace. Although increasing autonomy and job crafting may help to make junior members more engaged with their work roles, there would obviously be realistic constraints to this, as they operate as part of a team and have an influence on the units' tasks and outputs.

Overall, there appeared to be a link between autonomy levels and time in the position. The participants' descriptions of their first experiences at their new work units often revolved around feelings of uncertainty and a reduction in supervisor direction (relative to the training environment), whereas later experiences were more relevant to the question of whether the participants had sufficient control over their own working schedule. This may indicate that supervisors at the participants' work units were successfully managing the personal growth and confidence of their junior members, and were allowing them the space to exercise autonomy as their competence increased.

Different units are responsible for different types of outputs, and this requires junior members to learn and retain an increased amount of new work processes upon each new unit rotation (roughly every six months). Therefore, the differences between what trainees learn on the junior course and what they do in their work roles may not be solely due to a lack of relevance in the training content. Instead, much of this variation may be because there are many units at Ohakea and Whenuapai who conduct logistical activities, and they have different procedures depending on their specific unit requirements. As acknowledged by several of the participants, it would be impossible to teach all of these varying procedures in a three month course. As Irving (2009) notes, an excess of skill development can lead to a decrease in employee satisfaction, due to trainees feeling overwhelmed with new information. The brevity of the junior course may therefore be well matched to the needs of newly trained AC's - detailed enough to provide them with the basic skills required as a logistics operator, but not too exhaustive as to either inundate them with too much knowledge or to instantly make significant portions of the training irrelevant upon posting to a workplace unit that does not carry out certain functions.

An interesting point raised by Participant 3 was their focus on the relevance of interpersonal training, specifically on how to interact with potentially troublesome third parties (such as members of other trades). This training caused a degree of anxiety, as it gave the participant the expectation that they would be required to navigate complex and potentially confronting social interactions within their work roles. This anxiety is easy to understand, especially considering that the participants are posted into a hierarchical environment with themselves being obviously identified as the most junior members. It is also possible that this anxiety was compounded by the subtle inference that the participants may be expected to handle a confronting social situation without immediate access to supervisor support. The RNZAF, as a military organisation, is unique from many other organisations in that newcomers are almost wholly separated from the general work force during the onboarding process. One of the potential issues of this is that the expectations that newcomers develop may be too insular and disconnected from the actual reality of their future workplace environments. Therefore, the training staff have a large role to play in fostering relevant expectations within the classroom, as these can have a large influence on how the successful trainee copes in the workplace setting. Taris (2006) describes how unmet expectations are positively related to higher levels of turnover and health complaints. A distorted view of the workplace during training can also lead to turbulence in met or unmet expectations, which may subsequently negatively influence an employee's level of job satisfaction (Turnley & Feldman, 2000).

5.2 Social challenges

The training environments during recruit course and junior course were very conducive to making friends and becoming socially integrated, as the physical living conditions and shared training experiences that accompanied these early phases inevitably resulted in newcomers forming close bonds. Accommodation during training was shared with other trainees and there was limited freedom in the ways that the participants could escape their training environment. For example, there was a no drinking policy at barracks in Woodbourne and the participants' rooms would be regularly inspected by training staff for cleanliness and orderliness. Additionally, the trainees either slept in large dormitory-style rooms, or in a barracks wing comprised of small shared rooms. Although these types of living arrangements had their own set of challenges, it did very clearly identify trainees as members

of a particular social cohort (e.g. their respective training flight) and this aided their social integration within that group.

During training, there was a clear divide between learners and supervisors, with all of the learners being on a level playing field and equal in social status. Previous research has demonstrated that a recruit's coping ability is more likely to be higher as their perceived level of social support from other recruits increases (Overdale & Gardner, 2012). The difficulty of older participants in relating to their younger peers would suggest that their initial social integration may have been more difficult, as they had less capacity for relying on peer-support. Conversely, older participants may have had an advantage in socially integrating once they were posted away from Woodbourne and into a workplace, as the avenues of social support extended beyond their immediate peers. In the case of Participant 3 (an older participant), they linked their increase in social integration within the workplace to experiencing lessened levels of stress. The fact that their description of anxiety was linked more strongly to social integration, rather than job-related competence, suggests that it was the social aspect of their onboarding that they initially found more difficult.

Once participants were posted to work units, they experienced a much more varied and decentralised social environment and this presented a different set of challenges to making friends and expanding their social networks.

Social integration for trained newcomers at Ohakea and Whenuapai was clearly an important topic and one that was referenced multiple times by participants. It appeared that there were many mechanisms (such as sports groups, cultural groups and social groups) in place at the bases for the participants to expand their social networks, and several of them remarked that their command explicitly endorsed these social mechanisms. As such, no participant spoke negatively about being socially isolated or struggling in the long term to make friends. This is a healthy sign from an organisational perspective, as socially integrated employees are much more likely be committed to the organisation. Gade et al. (2003) found that a sense of belonging was a strongly correlated factor with affective (emotional) commitment in a study on U.S. soldiers. Similarly, supportive organisational rules and support regarding home and family life further aided in feelings of organisational commitment, especially considering the tendency of work life or home life crises to spill over into the opposite domain (Martínez-León et al., 2018).

Fan and Wanous (2008) considered organisational socialisation to include an element of cultural socialisation, and although their research was conducted from the perspective of national socialisation (e.g. foreign exchange students), their findings on holistic socialisation

is applicable to this research and may be generalisable to military settings. The RNZAF, as a military organisation, has its own matrix of cultural norms that newcomers need to acclimatise to. The availability of social groups, sporting opportunities, housing, family assistance and other forms of help, as described by the participants in this study, serves to complement the more formal nature of onboarding and training by ensuring that junior members are provided with opportunities to socially engage with the wider organisation and other service members outside of the logistics trade. The availability of command and wider base support also encourages junior members to socially engage with the wider community and request further support if needed (Bowen et al., 2016). Bowen's finding indicates that for employees (and specifically new employees) there is a positive circular relationship between perceived support, and the likelihood that a socially isolated service member will then request actual support.

Trainees on junior course have only been in the RNZAF for several months, and although they have passed the first serious test of their careers (recruit training), they are not yet fully established members of the organisation. The type of support that the participants received from their training staff appeared to reflect their position as unproven learners. The training staff supported the participants early careers, but it appeared that their support could be reduced if they felt that a trainee was not putting in sufficient effort. As Davis and Van der Heijden (2018) explain, reciprocity is a key ingredient in a successful relationship between employees and their organisation. For the participants in this study, it was clear to see how the principle of reciprocity was present in their training environment, but the trust that this principle relies on was not fully established.

Supervisors are a crucial manifestation of support for newcomers. Research by Richards et al. (2020) has shown how higher levels of perceived organisational support (which is party manifested through direct supervisor support) is related to increased job satisfaction and increases in personal resilience among employees. Supervisor support was valued by the participants, and they were very articulate in describing and contrasting the ways in which this support was provided across the various phases of their onboarding. Neubauer et al., (2019) describes how younger employees are more likely to over-emphasise their experience of stress when recounting past memories, relative to older individuals. Considering the age range of the participants in this study, and the age range of newcomers to the RNZAF in general, the link between supervisor support and personal resilience is of greater importance

than it might be for other organisations that have a wider variance in the ages of newcomers. In a similar vein, research by Black et al. (2019) highlights the potential for military organisations to positively influence their junior members' levels of job engagement by providing increased levels of support. This research demonstrates the increased importance of support for military organisation members - an unsurprising finding considering the increased amount of socialisation (at both an organisational and cultural level) that newcomers to military organisations need to transition through.

Taormina (2009) explains the value of meeting an employee's need for affiliation, which can be fulfilled to some extent through supervisor support. Unlike other forms of support, such as training and skill development, an excess of supervisor and co-worker support is positively received by employees (Irving & Montes, 2009). Taormina also details how this form of support is more highly appreciated by individuals with a need for affiliation, and it could reasonably be speculated that individuals joining a military organisation are more likely than the average worker to desire organisational belonging.

Supervisor intervention, articulated in the present study as being supervisor feedback that is negative in its orientation (e.g. micro-managing or reprimands), was generally described as being a stressful occurrence for the participants. Within formal training, there may have been some deliberateness in the ways that this feedback was given by instructors. For example, Ashforth et al. (2007) states that the process of going through a stressful event with a cohort of similarly positioned individuals can help to foster a sense of belonging and group identity. Therefore, some of this stress may have been deliberately induced by training staff, and it may be the case that a natural consequence of the formal training environment is that the participants carry over expectations of stress to the workplace. The negative feedback that participants received within their formal training caused a certain degree of anxiety in the participants and made them more hesitant to seek support within the workplace, at least initially. Bravo et al. (2003) explains that newcomers experience stress more as role ambiguity is heightened. This created a somewhat circular cycle for the participants when they initially transitioned into a work role – they were uncomfortable with asking questions (due to previous negative supervisor feedback), which sometimes resulted in a lack of direction (role ambiguity), which then further increased their sense of anxiety. This cycle was not perpetual and as participants became more confident in their work roles and their more inaccurate expectations were dispelled, they grew in confidence and continued their successful transition from trainee to worker.

5.3 Limitations

Recall bias is a phenomena that is especially relevant to research where the data is obtained from interviews, specifically when participants are asked to draw on their recollections in order to describe their experiences. A potential risk with recall bias is that individuals are influenced by their contemporary emotions when describing past events, resulting in a contamination of accurate memory recollection. Howard (2011) conducted a detailed study of recall bias, as it was specifically related to its use in research. He concluded that generally speaking, participants were "reasonably good" (p. 938) at accurately recollecting their experiences. Optimistically, he also found that participants had a greater ability to accurately recollect experiences if the events had taken place recently (e.g. back 1 or 2 years). Although recall becomes worse as the length of time increases between the event and the recollection, overall it was still fairly accurate. Todd et al. (2004) had a similar conclusion, stating that although retrospective recollection may not be as accurate as relying on momentary recollections, they "might be close enough given current norms for judging measurement reliability" (p. 317).

The researcher initially aimed to interview 10 individuals for the present research, but was unsuccessful and instead gained five participants. There are several reasons why it may have been difficult to obtain participants. Firstly, the primary researcher was a part time employer of the NZDF and this required him to be careful in how he approached eligible individuals, in order to avoid giving the impression that the research was anything other than entirely voluntary and being externally conducted (e.g. being conducted by a tertiary institution, rather then being conducted by the NZDF). Secondly, the pool of eligible individuals was relatively small, numbering somewhere in the vicinity of 40 people. Thirdly, the time of year that the invitations to participate were sent out may not have been optimal, as it coincided with a busy period of work for the NZDF and a large tri-service exercise.

5.4 Conclusion

The transition from training to work roles in the RNZAF is a process that each new service member to the organisation undergoes, regardless of their entrance type or trade / specialisation. This process is informed by the organisational socialisation theory, and in the context of the RNZAF is set within a formal framework of training and career progression. It

is therefore valuable for the organisation to understand this process of socialisation, how it applies to the specific RNZAF context, and what the factors are that are likely to increase its success for organisational newcomers. This study could not examine the socialisation process across multiple trades, as there are dozens of different entry pathways which are likely to all have their own unique sets of challenges. However, the logistics trade in the RNZAF is one of the larger trades and was an apt candidate for the study. A few important findings were:

1, Participants overall felt that their training adequately prepared them for their initial work roles and period of on-the-job learning. The logistics operator trade is unique in that members of the trade will perform a huge variety of tasks, depending on the type of unit that they are posted to. There was an acknowledgement among the participants that although their training did not cover all of the functions that they subsequently carried out in their work roles, it would have been impractical for them to learn all of these during their logistics operator course. Complaints regarding the training course were directed at the expectations that the course content built for newcomers, specifically with regards to the nature of the social interactions that they were likely to encounter at Ohakea and Whenuapai.

2, Several of the participants did not appear to be well suited to the close living environments and lack of personal freedom that accompanied formal training, compared to some of their peers. These were noticeably the older participants, and it is possible that their age played a role in this. The formal training that accompanies onboarding into the RNZAF may be better suited to younger recruits, as they may gain more benefit from the close mentorship of older service members (instructors and other training staff).

3, Supervisors played crucial roles in enabling the socialisation of the participants and informing them. During all phases of the participants' transition, senior colleagues were the primary source of information and development. Joining the RNZAF involves more than just learning trade tasks and content, as there is a wider context to the organisation that newcomers need to be introduced to. It is an organisation with its own specific cultural norms and practices, its own lexicon of abbreviations and language, and a strong sense of local community. There is too much information for newcomers to learn from formal sources, and without the presence of senior colleagues, newcomers would be overwhelmed with new and incomprehensible information. Negative social experiences stuck with the participants and appeared to be a primary source of anxiety. While competence was also related to anxiety,

this relationship was only really spoken about in the context of formal training. As far as the workplace and the participants transition into a work role went, interpersonal interactions were the main sources of stress.

4, In a similar vein to the above point, other individuals appeared to be the main sources of information, satisfaction and stress. Most of the conflict situations and resulting sense of stress that the participants described in this study were attributed predominantly to other individuals, rather than to objective facets of service life. Support was spoken of mostly in the context of supervisor support. Where organisational support and benefits were referenced, they were often described in terms of how senior staff provided these (e.g. command providing leave for sporting events or home life demands). This is an interesting observation, and it indicated that the participants in this study were content with the peculiarities of service life. There was very little discussion about the hardships of service in the RNZAF – having to travel for exercises, being away from home for training… etc. Most of the participants comments were instead aimed at the internal social workings of their training and workplace and how they viewed their own competence in relation to this.

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Annex 1 – Interview Questions

Questions:

1, What was your training at Woodbourne like?

a) Start by telling me about recruit course.

b) What about your primary trade training?

2, How have you found your new job at Ohakea / Whenuapai?

a) Do you think your training prepared you well?

b) What has the AF done to help make the transition from training to your job easier?

3, From a social perspective, how well have you fit in to your new posting?

a) How is it being a junior member in your unit?

b) What's it like working alongside pers from other trades, if applicable?

4, What are the best things about the job you have now?

5, What are the worst or most challenging things about the job you have now?

6, What's the most unexpected thing (good or bad) about the job you have now?

7, How long do you think you'll stay with the Air Force?

a) What makes you want to stay or makes you want to leave?

b) How easy / hard is it to maintain a healthy work / life balance?

Annex 2 – Information Sheet

MASSEY UNIVERSITY

Participant Information Sheet

My name is Ash Garstang and I was a member of the RNZAF from 2009 – 2011, and worked for the NZDF in a civilian role from 2011 - 2017. I am currently a student at Massey University and am undertaking this research as a Thesis project. I also currently work part time for the NZDF in a civilian role at the Hokowhitu campus.

The title of my research is 'The experiences of the transition from training to work roles in the NZDF.' I want to talk to Logistics Operators who are currently in their first unit posting. I want to talk to you about your experiences and expectations, how you're finding work at an operational unit and how you see your future with the Air Force.

This research is being conducted externally by Massey University and although the NZDF has provided support for this research, there is no expectation that you must take part. Participation is entirely voluntary and confidential.

As a Massey university student, I am required to have a Research Supervisor. The supervisor for this research is Dr Dianne Gardner, who is a senior lecturer at the Massey School of Psychology (Palmerston North Campus). Dianne will oversee the research and help to ensure that it is conducted ethically.

If you would like to take part in my research, we will conduct a one-on-one interview. The interview would be between 30 - 60 minutes and it can take place in person or over Skype. Interviews will be treated confidentially and you will not be identified in the research. This interview may benefit you by giving you the opportunity to articulate your experiences and self-reflect on your role and place within the RNZAF.

Our interview will be sound recorded and the data from this will then transcribed into written format. You will be sent this transcription via email and given two weeks to advise me of any comments that you would like to add to, edit or delete. You can withdraw your participation from the research at any point prior to the confirmation of your interview transcription.

Your data will be incorporated into a Thesis publication that will be publicly available and it may include extracts from our interview. An internal report will also be published for relevant Air Force stakeholders. You will not be identified in any publications and your name and contact details will not be shared with anybody.

Your data will be stored on a personal computer with up to date anti-virus software and two external hard drives. Your consent form will be stored with Dianne (my Research Supervisor). After the study has been completed (around March 2020), your data will be removed off my computer and hard drives and handed over to Dianne. She will securely hold it in storage at the University for five years, at which point it will then be destroyed.

Thanks very much for taking the time to read this information sheet. If you would like to register your interest in participating, or ask any questions, please contact me directly.
Email: [redacted] **Phone**: [redacted].

Ash Garstang

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 19/25. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor David Tappin (Committee Chair), Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

Annex 3 – Consent Form

The experiences of the transition from training to work roles in the NZDF

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read and I understand the Information Sheet for this research. I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time prior to the confirmation of my interview transcript.

1. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.
2. I agree to the interview being sound recorded.

Declaration by Participant:

I_____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____