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**The Impact of Military Culture on the embedding of
Continuous Improvement methodologies within the
New Zealand Army**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Quality Systems

At Massey University, Manawatu,
New Zealand

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2017

Abstract

This thesis explores the impact of military culture on the ability for the New Zealand Army to successfully embed continuous improvement methodologies; namely Lean Six Sigma, and whether NZ Army Culture is supportive of the methodology. Current literature discusses both culture and the ability for organisations to change, and this is used as the basis for informing this research. Although the military is representative of the culture from where its members are selected, Military organisations themselves represent a specific occupational culture which is relatively isolated from society. It is this difference that makes the military an interesting organisation to study, and the research will examine whether the traditional norms of military service, the beliefs, ideals and regulations, impact the NZ Army's ability to successfully grow a culture of continuous improvement.

A mixed methods research is used to analyse the relationship between Military Culture, and the New Zealand Army's effectiveness in embedding continuous improvement, with a five part questionnaire/survey being the selected data gathering method. The survey gathers specific information on;

- the training and experience of respondents with Continuous Improvement, and
- the cultural environment that exists in the NZ Army and how this impacts on continuous improvement.

I draw on the findings of the survey and the literature to answer four questions about NZ Army Culture and their journey with continuous improvement, the results of which will be of value to both the NZ Army and academics who are interested in the impact that culture has on making change within organisations such as Military forces.

Statement of Originality

This is a 90 Point Thesis for submission to Massey University for the qualification of Master of Quality Systems (MQS). This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Mark Richards

Acknowledgements

To Glenys, Natalie and Michael. Thank you for the time and space I needed to see this through. It has meant that we have missed out on doing some things as a family, but without your support I wouldn't have got to this point.

To my academic supervisors Professor Nigel Grigg and Nicky Campbell-Allen, thanks for the guidance and encouragement, and for putting up with all those times that I have had to postpone our Skype catch-ups due to work and personal commitments.

To the OCAI Institute, in particular Marcella Bremer who gave me permission to use their graphs in this Thesis. Thank you.

To the NZDF Organisational Research team, especially Kelsey Morrison, thanks for all the assistance with the structure and format of the online questionnaire, for providing the random sample of 400 participants from across the NZ Army, for helping to identify a suitable window in and amongst other research initiatives for me to conduct the data collection, and for providing the results of the survey in a format that I have been able to use.

To my NZDF Sponsor from the Directorate of Defence Excellence, Mr Barry Allen, thanks for your input and agreeing to sponsor this work on behalf of the Defence Force.

To all those from the New Zealand Army who participated in the survey, thanks for your responses. I trust that this body of work will provide an insight into both the cultural types and organisational dimensions that make the Army what it is.

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- Appendix 1. Individual respondent OCAI Graphs – 4 to a page
- Appendix 2. Hints for initiating organisational culture change in each quadrant (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, pp. 209-219)

Glossary

3CI	Courage, Commitment, Comradeship, and Integrity
CDF	Chief of Defence Force
CN	Chief of Navy
CVF	Competing Values Framework
Dx	Defence Excellence
F35	Future 35 – our strategy to 2035
LTGEN	Lieutenant General
LSS	Lean Six Sigma
NZDF	New Zealand Defence Force
OCAI	Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument
RNZN	Royal New Zealand Navy