

Celebrating Service Past and Present

[Main AMA Page](#) | [FR](#)



Sarah Francescutti



Maj Andrea MacEachern



Cdr Ajiri Ikede



LCol Doris Bersheid-King



Col Sylvestre Bishop

Featuring: Sarah Francescutti, Maj Andrea MacEachern, Cdr Ajiri Ikede, LCol Doris Bersheid-King, and Col Sylvestre Bishop

Date and time: Wednesday, November 19, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM EST

Audience: Open to all Government of Canada employees

Link to join: [Join the event \(https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/21050193033?p=jmIla11LiKWwSIDAAn\)](https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/21050193033?p=jmIla11LiKWwSIDAAn)

Contents

Event description

[Meet our panellists](#)

[Sarah Francescutti, Senior GBA+ Culture Evolution Strategy Advisor, Materiel Group](#)

[Major Andrea MacEachern, Human Systems Integration Lead, Maritime branch, Materiel Group, National Defence](#)

[Commander Ajiri Ikede, Deputy Military Occupational Structure Code Advisor, National Defence](#)

[Lieutenant-Colonel Doris Bersheid-King, Logistics and Financial Management Officer, Business Planner, National Defence](#)

[Colonel Sylvestre Bishop, Director, Aerospace Equipment Program Management, National Defence](#)

About the Ask Me Anything series

Mission: Ask Me Anything series

[#AMACHallenge](#)

[Thank you to our contributors](#)

Join the live event

Resource Guide

[Canada.ca](#)

Session Recording

Watch on DND devices (DWAN)

Feedback Form

Post Event Article

Event description



Join us for Ask Me Anything - Military and Veterans: Celebrating Service Past and Present, a unique event that honours the dedication, courage and achievements of service members and veterans. The panellist will offer insights into the experiences and perspectives of those who have served—whether on active duty or through their transition back to civilian life. It's a chance to celebrate, learn from, and show appreciation to those who have contributed to Canada's defence and well-being. All are welcome to connect and engage in this meaningful discussion.

Join us as our speakers share their sincere stories and candid reflections on the Ask Me Anything stage!

Meet our panellists

Sarah Francescutti, Senior GBA+ Culture Evolution Strategy Advisor, Materiel Group



Sarah Francescutti began her public service journey in uniform, serving six years as a Reserve Force Resource Management Support Clerk with 11 Field Ambulance and 11 Service Battalion, as well as working with Air Cadets. Following a medical release, she continued her commitment to supporting Canada's Defence Team as a civilian — first as Administrative Officer and Business Manager within the Executive Branch at CFB Esquimalt, then through a decade of service with the Transition Centre and Office of Disability Management, where she helped ill, injured, and transitioning military and civilian members reintegrate and thrive in both military and civilian roles.

Now serving as the Senior GBA+ Culture Evolution Strategy Advisor for the Materiel Group, Sarah leads strategic initiatives to foster inclusive leadership and a culture of belonging across the Defence Team. Her dedication extends beyond the workplace through her volunteer work with the Commissionaires, as Chair of the CVIY Strategic Direction

Committee, and as a member of the National Equity Committee in support of creating meaningful employment opportunities for military veterans.

Deeply connected to the military community, Sarah is honoured to co-host this Ask Me Anything event celebrating military members past and present. She brings forward a unique perspective shaped by her own service, transition, and continued advocacy — championing recognition, respect, and inclusion for all who serve and have served.

Major Andrea MacEachern, Human Systems Integration Lead, Maritime branch, Materiel Group, National Defence



As the Human Systems Integration lead within the Maritime branch of the Materiel Group, Maj Andrea MacEachern oversees efforts aimed at ensuring human considerations are integrated into the design and management of Naval platforms. A seasoned Bioscience Officer with 26 years of service, Andrea has applied Human Factors expertise to a wide variety of Army and Navy projects over her career. At home she is a mother of five, backed by a very supportive husband. Beyond her professional role, she dedicates much of her time to coaching various sports and volunteering across her community.

Commander Ajiri Ikede, Deputy Military Occupational Structure Code Advisor National Defence



Commander A. Ikede, Deputy Military Occupational Structure Identification Code (MOSID) Advisor.

Born in Ibadan, Nigeria, Ajiri immigrated to Prince Edward Island at age 12, where he completed high school and earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology. He joined the Naval Reserves in 1997 as a Bridgewardkeeping Officer, serving aboard HMCS vessels from 1999 to 2003. He then transferred to the Regular Force as a General Duty Medical Officer and completed his medical training at Dalhousie University.

He is a Flight Surgeon and holds certifications in Family Medicine, Aerospace Medicine from the United States Air Force, and a Masters Degree in Public Health. He is an avid golfer and is the only physician in Canada to hold a Medical Level 2 certification with Titleist Performance Institute (TPI), enabling him to assess and support golfers across Canada. He is currently serving as the Deputy Occupational Advisor for all Medical Officers in the CAF.

Lieutenant-Colonel Doris Bersheid-King, Logistics and Financial Management Officer, Business Planner, National Defence



Lieutenant-Colonel Doris Bersheid-King is a highly experienced logistics and financial management officer in the Canadian Armed Forces, currently serving in Ottawa as a Business Planner with ADM(Mat) Comptrollership and the Director General Strategic Portfolio (DMGSP). Her career spans over three decades and includes a wide range of leadership roles across Canada and abroad. From 2022 to 2024, she supported the Comptroller of Chief Military Personnel remotely from Edmonton, following her tenure as Comptroller for the 3rd Canadian Division from 2017 to 2022. Between 2015 and 2017, she was part of the CJOC Comptroller staff in Ottawa, coordinating Level 2 and deployed finance assistance and inspection visits. Earlier postings include serving as Senior Logistics Officer (G4) at the Army Reserve Brigade HQ in

Winnipeg (2012–2015), and as J4 during a deployment to Afghanistan (2010–2011), where she led the closeout tour for backloading CAF equipment from Kandahar Airfield. From 2005 to 2010, she commanded the G4 Logistics Support organization at CFB Shilo, overseeing a team of approximately 160 military and civilian personnel across multiple logistics

functions. She also served as Comptroller at Camp Wainwright (1999–2005), and held finance and comptroller roles in Petawawa, including a NATO tour in Bosnia (1996–1999). Earlier in her career, she was Paymaster with the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in Winnipeg, where she was among the first women posted to the unit and deployed to Croatia during the Battle of Medak Pocket. Her foundational years included roles at CFB Calgary and 1 Service Battalion, and she began her military journey at Royal Roads Military College in Victoria, graduating in 1989 with a BA in Military and Strategic Studies, specializing in Economics and Politics.

Over the course of her career, LCol Bersheid-King has completed more than ten postings across nine locations, including four on Imposed Restriction, and has supported or experienced seven deployments involving either herself or her spouse. She is married to Chief Warrant Officer Bill King, currently serving as the Brigade Sergeant Major of 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group in Edmonton. Together, they have four daughters—two of whom are still at home or in post-secondary education—and are proud grandparents to three grandchildren. Her career has been marked by dedication, adaptability, and a deep commitment to service, making it, in her own words, “a great ride”.

Colonel Sylvestre Bishop, Director, Aerospace Equipment Program Management, National Defence



Col Bishop is originally from Montreal and enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces in 2005 as an aerospace engineer officer. After the AERE Officer Basic Course in CFB Borden, he was posted to Winnipeg, Manitoba, where he held several junior officer positions at 435 (Transport & Rescue) Squadron, and at 1 Canadian Air Division Headquarters (A4 Maint AM Stds, AM Eval, and A4 Maint TptSAR).

While in sunny Winnipeg, he participated in domestic deployments in support of national and international operations, which included a deployment as part of the Joint Task Force Afghanistan, where he was the CC-130 Hercules aircraft maintenance officer for the Tactical Airlift Unit.

He was then selected to be the Senior Aide-de-Camp for the Governor General, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, from 2012 to 2014. Subsequently, he was then posted to the DGAEPM as the CC-130 E/H Legacy Hercules Aircraft Engineering Officer and Senior Design Engineer from 2014 to 2016.

From 2016 to 2018, he was posted to Beautiful British Columbia as the Commanding Officer of 19 Air Maintenance Squadron.

In 2019, he had the privilege to be the Commandant of the Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Technology and Engineering (CFSATE), where he was greatly impressed by the staff and the new generation of Air Maintenance Branch members. Additionally during his time 16 Wing, he also had the privilege to be CFB Borden Pride Champion.

Col Bishop returned to Winnipeg in 2022 and 1 CAD A4 Maint as Officer Commanding Air Maintenance Standards & Evaluation Team (OC AMSET) and in July 2023, as the Combined Air Operation Centre (CAOC) Mission Support Division Chief for the Canadian NORAD Region as well as one of the On-duty CANR Chief of Combat Operations (CCO).

Since April 2024, Col Bishop was posted within the world of the Assistant Deputy Minister of Materiel as Director – Aerospace Equipment Program Management for the Transport fleets where he oversees the management of full lifecycle of defence weapons systems, from acquisition, through maintenance and support to disposal to meet the mandates of the RCAF.

Col Bishop holds a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering from Concordia University and a masters in Defence Studies from the Royal Military College of Canada. He is also a graduate of the Canadian Forces College's Joint Command and Staff Programme, and a member of the Professional Engineers Ontario (P.Eng).

Col Bishop enjoys the outdoors and is a fan of the great dynasty of the Montreal Canadiens.

About the Ask Me Anything series

This session is part of a series of Ask Me Anything discussions that give us a platform to share stories, listen, ask respectful questions and continue on our journey towards more inclusive organizations.

As an individual, you can't necessarily change where you live. You certainly can't change your past, but you can adjust who influences you—through the authors you read, the music you listen to, the movies you watch, and the interactions with your community. The 'Ask Me Anything' series provides you with an opportunity to increase your perspective — to learn from the lived experiences of individuals who are bravely sharing their stories to help educate and move the public service towards a culture where equity is embedded.

The series also provides an opportunity for you to know that you aren't alone. These experiences, especially the negative ones, are systemic and can happen all too frequently throughout the public service. The objective of shining this light is to continually increase the network of public servants ready to take action and move forward toward a culture of inclusivity and belonging.

Mission: Ask Me Anything series

We recognize that individuals are composed of a multitude of layers that make us who we are. We do not fit easily in one box or another and we can't be neatly counted. We represent the mosaic of Canada.

It is important that we find value in each other's experiences, differences, and unique characteristics. When we build our cultural competencies, we can work better together in our teams and respond to each other with relevance, empathy and compassion. By celebrating and sharing our authentic selves, we gain greater appreciation of each other and the diversity that surrounds us.

We know through diversity, that workplaces and communities are stronger, more successful, and resilient. And most important, it creates spaces of inclusion and fosters a sense of belonging at work where people feel valued.

We encourage others to have courageous conversations with their peers. Use the monthly Ask Me Anything sessions as an opportunity to have brave conversations in your workplaces with your teams.

#AMACHallenge

Here's what you need to do:

- Invite your leaders and colleagues in your organization to an Ask Me Anything watch party in live and watch the session together. Make sure it's on their calendar.
- Before the watch party, book an "After the AMA – Team Session" with your immediate team for the day after the event for 30-60 minutes. Share the resource guide and have these questions for discussion.

After the AMA: Team session discussion questions

1. What was my main takeaway? – Expand and share an amazing quote, story or moment
2. What made me uncomfortable/ what was one of my blind spots?
3. What is an example of systemic discrimination that I am aware of in my life?
4. What am I not going to do anymore?
5. How can I use my voice/influence? – both overtly/covertly
6. Where am I going to dig in and learn more?
7. How will I continue this conversation?

It is important that we find value in the experiences, and in the unique characteristics of each other. When we develop our cultural competence, we can work better together within our teams and respond to each other with relevant empathy and compassion. By celebrating and sharing our authentic selves, we gain a greater appreciation for each other and the diversity that surrounds us.

Thank you to our contributors

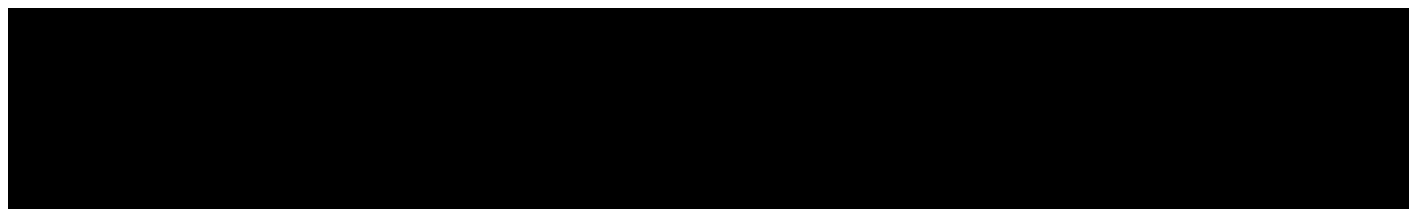
Thank you to our contributors from across the Public Service of Canada – National Defence
Production Team: Lyrique Richards, Sarah Francescutti, Marika Brown, Allison Somenzi, Samantha Moonsammy, Sandra van Starkenburg

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