



The Royal Canadian Dragoons
Worthington Barracks
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16 January 2021

Dear Dragoons,

I am writing yet again from the Quarantine Facility (QFAC) in Kingston, spending the last few days before the bulk of the RCD Battle Group deploys to Latvia. So an update on where The Regiment stands and what activities are coming up is certainly in order. First off, I wanted to wish everyone a very Happy New Year. The past year has been disorienting and frankly saddening for a great many of us, who have not been able to spend time together or say farewell to our colleagues as we might wish to do. It is my sincere hope that 2021 brings positive news on all fronts, but most definitely the ability to assemble once again with our fellow Dragoons.

Training in Petawawa and Gagetown continues to happen, albeit with many changes as a result of the preventative health measures that need to be followed to protect our soldiers and their families. We've slowed down some activities that can take a back seat in the short term but the key message is that we're still capable of getting the job done – we've had nearly a year to work on our force protection posture and it's been proven to be effective. Dragoons across the country are ready and able to work under the applicable health measures for their region.

As the Battle Group gets ready to deploy, you'll see and hear from both the deployed Dragoons under the Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Latvia headline, as well as the Regimental rear party, ably led by the Acting CO, Major John Maerz, and the TQMS, MWO Chris Leblanc. All of our Dragoons appreciate your support as our tasks diverge for the next six months. To support the families of deploying members, a "Fireteam Domestic" page is being added to the Guild website. This will be a point of reference for anyone on the home front seeking a bit of a helping hand, whether it's finding emergency child care from the Family Resource Centre or knowing how to get in touch with community outreach programs. This Fireteam Domestic is being initiated to help with families of deployed members but is intended to remain in place as a standing resource when folks who might be new to The Regiment or to military life don't know who to ask or even how to ask the questions.

Through the winter and spring, Dragoons in Canada will remain focused on providing support to the training system, conducting some limited local training and generally maintaining their skill set as we balance the right level of new arrivals and experienced mentorship. The Armour School's training restart is now bearing new fruit in the forms of Troopers and junior officers arriving, keen and ready for their first Regimental employment. All of you can likely imagine how different this experience is for them compared to your own memories! As spring leans gently into summer, we'll look to conduct a full Regimental reorganization to recover those Dragoons from deployment, rebalance with a view to those Dragoons leaving at posting season, and posturing for a busy training year to come as we re-enter the Road to High Readiness.

The upcoming year will bring with it a new set of challenges, but we have much for which to be grateful. Our new Regimental Headquarters is being constructed faster than I thought possible

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and, not only are we not behind schedule, but the plan sees us beginning the preparations for the move in the next couple months. The RSM and I had a chance to walk around the facility one last time before departing and we were blown away by how much progress has been made. Drywall is going up inside, exterior cladding is being completed and we'll soon have a new Worthington Barracks to call home.

I am thankful for all your support to The Regiment and our soldiers, both those of us deploying and those who are holding the fort in Gagetown and in Petawawa. Your messages, emails, phone calls and letters will keep morale high under a unique set of deployment circumstances. I would encourage everyone to keep an eye on the Facebook pages belonging to both the Guild and the eFP Battle Group for frequent updates on what everyone is up to and to remain in touch with one another.

I'm particularly grateful for the assistance the Guild and our Colonel of the Regiment, BGen (ret'd) Atkinson has been able to provide in keeping our governance on track, the issues affecting soldiers front of mind, and the support to our community in place, despite the restrictions COVID has imposed. Without the expertise that the Colonel of the Regiment brings, the Guild would certainly not be able to support us as well as it does.

RSM Larouche and I hope that all Dragoons and your families are staying safe, following the rules and looking forward to a time when we can get together again. I look forward to seeing all of you again soon, hopefully to share a beverage and tell some stories about everything we've learned over the last year of pandemic operations.

Audax et Celer! / Bold and Swift!



Enno A. Kerckhoff, MSM, CD
Lieutenant-Colonel
58th Commanding Officer