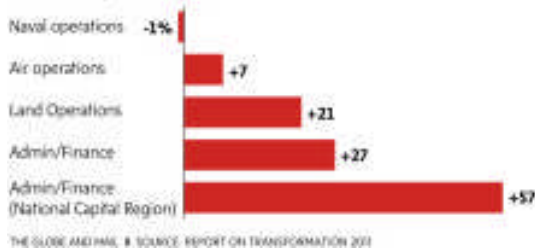


## Discord over cuts leaves direction of Canadian military up in the air

Tension between generals and officials in the Harper government has left the future direction of Canada's military up in the air.

Senior officers at National Defence headquarters, according to sources, are opposed to the recommendations of Lieutenant-General Andrew Leslie, chief of transformation, who is calling for savings of \$1-billion annually by reorganizing the Canadian Forces and chopping up to 11,000 personnel, mostly at headquarters.

RELATIVE PERSONNEL GROWTH BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING, 2004 – 2010



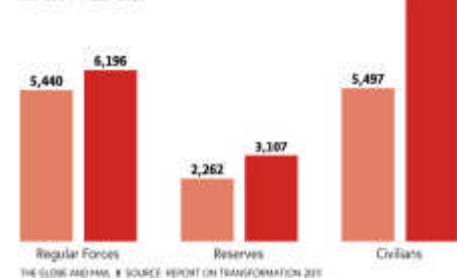
### INFOGRAPHIC

Occupational groupings of National Defence employees

### INFOGRAPHIC

Breakdown of National Defence personnel

NUMBER OF DND PERSONNEL SERVING IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION



But the report is far from dead, with officials in Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government looking closely at its cost-saving proposals as they seek to trim at least five per cent from every departmental budget to meet deficit reduction targets.

Who wins in this tug of war could determine whether Canada's armed forces emerge from the budget cuts leaner and meaner, or just smaller and weaker.

Lt.-Gen. Leslie was asked to find ways to transform the Canadian Forces now that the combat mission in Afghanistan has wrapped up and resources are shrinking. He submitted his report in July. Although it has not been released to the public, several media organizations, including The Globe and Mail, have obtained copies.

The report recommends redeploying or eliminating 7,000 regular forces personnel and civil servants, mostly at Defence headquarters; cutting the number of reservists in half, to 3,500; and chopping \$1-billion from the budget for contractors and consultants.

To achieve this, Lt.-Gen. Leslie suggests extensively reorganizing the structure of the services. According to officials who spoke on condition they not be named because they are not authorized to speak on behalf of the military or the government, Chief of Defence Staff Walt Natynczyk forwarded the report to Defence Minister Peter MacKay without a recommendation when it was completed last month. That lack of an explicit endorsement is seen as evidence that General Natynczyk is not backing the report.

Not so, said Jay Paxton, spokesman for Mr. MacKay.

Both the minister and the Chief of the Defence Staff "are grateful with the efforts of the transformation team," he said.

"This report supports our look ahead and helps us provide front-line troops with the tools they need to do the jobs asked of them."

It is hardly surprising that Gen. Natynczyk would be privately cool to Lt.-Gen. Leslie's report. Its main recommendations severely criticize the very organizational structure created by Gen. Natynczyk and Rick Hillier, the previous chief of the defence staff, describing it as filled with

“administrative incoherence ... stifling process, blurred authorities ... [and] reluctance at all levels to accept managerial risk.”

Without Gen. Natynczyk’s strong endorsement, Lt.-Gen. Leslie’s report could be consigned to the scrap heap of failed proposals for military reform. However, sources also say the document, entitled Report on Transformation 2011, has generated considerable interest within the Prime Minister’s Office.

National Defence has been ordered to prepare plans for a five-per-cent and a 10-per-cent cut to the department’s \$21-billion budget as part of the government’s efforts to eliminate the deficit.

Lt.-Gen. Leslie’s recommendations would about meet the former goal.

According to informed observers, there were tensions between the Chief of the Defence Staff and the head of transformation from the time Lt.-Gen. Leslie took up his duties.

With only a year to prepare and submit the report, the team working on it believed they lacked the budget and support staff needed to do the job.

The team lacked a mandate to look at procurement, base closings or the organizational structure of civilian personnel.

And when the report was released, the reception within Defence headquarters was cool, to say the least.

Lt.-Gen. Leslie is leaving the military for a job in the private sector. But his work might yet live on if the Harper government decides that his way is the best way to transition the army to peacetime and the Canadian Forces to smaller budgets.