



# A Career as an Officer

# Maritime Surface and Sub-Surface

**STRONG  
PROUD**  
TODAY'S Canadian Forces

**WHAT THEY DO** The primary function of Maritime Surface and Sub-Surface (MARS) officers is to be a part of the crew of the seagoing combatant units of Maritime Command. They are responsible for the command, coordination and control of Military Maritime Operations that require the ability to lead and make decisions, often under adverse conditions. They must possess knowledge and expertise in a wide range of activities relating to the exercise of sea power, including maritime strategy, tactics and procedures in the operation of ships, submarines and aircraft, maritime sensors, combat information and weapons systems. MARS officers also provide input into the design, procurement and evaluation of ships or systems and perform staff, training and administrative duties.

## Qualification Requirements

## Training



You must meet Canadian Forces medical standards and successfully complete a selection process that includes interviews and a wide range of examinations including tests of physical fitness.

### *Phase I: Basic Officer Training*

Following your successful application, you will be enrolled in the Canadian Forces and undertake the Initial Assessment and Basic Officer Training Course at the Canadian Forces Leadership and Recruit School in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec. You will learn the principles of leadership, the regulations and customs of the service, basic weapons handling, and first aid. You will also take part in a rigorous program of sports and fitness training. Basic Officer Training is given in English or French and successful completion is a prerequisite for further training.

### Entry Plans

**Regular Officer Training Plan** – The Regular Officer Training Plan

(ROTP) comprises a fully subsidised undergraduate education (to the Bachelor's degree level) at The Royal Military College of Canada or another accredited Canadian university, followed by a period of obligatory service in the Regular component of the Canadian Forces. To qualify for ROTP, you must have completed high school with the appropriate university-oriented credits, be in Grade 12 in an appropriate program with full expectation of successful completion, or be currently enrolled in an accredited Canadian university.

After Basic Officer Training, you may attend a second language training course lasting from two to seven months, depending on your second language proficiency.

### *Phase II: MARS Basic Training*

The training that you will undergo is intense and varied. Following language training you will spend approximately 12 months at the Naval Officer Training Centre (NOTC) in Esquimalt, British Columbia. Your NOTC training will consist of three courses that utilize classroom instruction, simulators, and ships at sea, and teach all aspects of navigation, bridgemanship,

**Direct Entry Officer** – To qualify for direct entry as an officer, you must have a university degree.

communications, relative motion, ship safety, emergency procedures and rules of seamanship. Upon completion of NOTC training, you will be posted to your first operational ship where, in approximately 24 months, you will complete at-sea requirements and on-the-job training leading to a Bridge Watchkeeping Certificate and Naval Officer Professional Qualification. Also included will be the Naval Operations Course in Halifax, Nova Scotia, oriented towards shipboard operations and tactics, and covering areas of study such as communications, helicopter operations and procedures, military law, and general naval knowledge. After six months of consolidation, you will specialize for four to six months in any of the following areas: ship navigation, above or under-water weapons direction, control and direction of helicopter operations, or management of information and communication systems.

## Working Environment

The working environment of a MARS Officer includes prolonged periods of physically and mentally demanding duties. As a Naval Officer, you are continually influenced by the sea. Seasickness is usually temporary. You will very quickly gain your "sea legs" and your newly chosen environment will become second nature to you. You must be ready to work long hours while at sea, live in small quarters and be separated from your family during your sea tours. As a junior MARS Officer your first period at sea (including training) will last approximately four and a half to five years. As you progress, further training will allow you to become the Combat Department Head in a frigate or destroyer, responsible for all of the ship's weapons, sensors and operations. As a senior MARS Officer, you could become an Executive Officer, the second in Command of a ship, or eventually command your own vessel at sea. If you are selected or request to serve in submarines, you will be sent on a Basic Submarine Training course after having completed your Naval Officer Professional Qualification. Upon completion of this very intensive program, you will sail in the new VICTORIA Class submarines.

Appropriate training, environmental clothing and equipment are provided, and Maritime Surface and Sub-Surface Officers' health, safety and morale are closely monitored.

## Related Civilian Occupations

Some of the related civilian occupations encompass positions and responsibilities in various seagoing vessels, from merchant ships to Coast Guard vessels and passenger liners. These positions (for example, Mate, Master, Captain) depend on your level of MARS qualifications, on whether the vessel is of the inland or ocean-going type, and also on the vessel's specific or design role.

Many civilian companies view Canadian Naval Training with respect. The intensity, quality

and completeness of training and employment produce ideal employees who can easily adapt to any seagoing vessel. Individuals with these skills, as well as those attained ashore in staff and management positions, are adept at working in a rapidly changing environment and provide the industry with experienced leadership.



For more information, please call the Canadian Forces Recruiting at **1-800-856-8488**, or visit our Web site: [www.forces.gc.ca](http://www.forces.gc.ca)

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