

Brigadier-General (Retired) Steve M. Irwin, CD
Colonel Commandant
Canadian Military Engineer Branch
National Defence Headquarters
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Branche du Génie militaire canadien
Quartier général de la Défense nationale
Édifice Mgén George R. Pearkes
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26 April 2021

Dear members of the Canadian Military Engineer family,

I write this letter to all members of the CME family on the eve of transferring my duties to a fine Engineer, Major-General (Ret'd) Daniel Benjamin. He is most capable and will serve you well.

Being your Colonel Commandant has been the greatest honour of my life. The last six years have passed in the blink of an eye. Although all duties were a pleasure, what I found most enjoyable was visiting your places of work to discuss the good, the bad, and the changes that needed to be made. Indeed, between trips, I was busy framing your issues for delivery to the chain of command.

We are a family that is more successful now than it has ever been and I am proud to have supported its creation for so long. I have now served 42 years in uniform and with my service at Defence Construction Canada, have a total of 47½ years with the CME. I have been fortunate.

Before I go, I want to thank everyone who generously shared their time with me. I want to thank the CME Branch CWOs especially, as they have been my partners in this endeavour. Kevin Patterson, Ron Swift, Glenn Simpkin, and Stacy Merriam supported me, taught me, led me, and are now close friends. I must also thank my wife, Deanna, and my daughters who have continually supported me. They sacrificed much for my lengthy career.

The last thoughts with which I leave you are these: The CAF and the CME welcome every Canadian into our ranks; men and women of all races and religions, regardless of sexual orientation. As such, I sincerely ask you to create an environment that welcomes and nurtures all. Finally, I ask you to live life to the fullest. Don't shy away from a challenge because it looks too difficult or can be avoided. Rather, embrace it. For when you do, you break down the barriers you might feel, preparing you to face the next even greater challenge.

You are my family.

Chimo,

Brigadier-General (Retired) S.M. Irwin, CD
Colonel Commandant
Canadian Military Engineer Branch