

Canadian Armed Forces statement re: Boris Mihajlovic investigation

Attributed to Captain Alan Offer, Commanding Officer, Naval Reserve

Is LS Mihajlovic still in the CAF?

Yes, Leading Seaman Boris Mihajlovic is still a member of the Canadian Armed Forces. He joined in February, 2016 as a Supply Technician and is a member of HMCS Tecumseh in Calgary, Alberta. He has approximately 3 years of service and no operational deployments.

When did the Navy become aware of his potential involvement in online hate groups?

His alleged association with online hate groups was only very recently brought to the attention of the HMCS Tecumseh Command Team when a CAF investigative body made their investigation known on November 15th, 2019. After this time, the unit's chain of command fully cooperated with the investigation and continues to do so.

Since the CAF is currently investigating this case, it would be inappropriate to provide any details or speculate as to the outcome of this case.

However, let me be plain with my sentiments regarding activities which involve organized groups which spread hatred or racism as their message, by summarizing the sentiments of the head of the Canadian Armed Forces, General Vance, the Chief of the Defense Staff, as they accurately depict our organizations, and my own views about this: The CAF is not a place for people to practice these ideologies, nor is it a place for them to advance their agendas that run counter to our ethos of respect, dignity, diversity and inclusion. It is unacceptable for any of our members to promote hatred, and if it is discovered that any member has undermined any of the ethical principles or behaviours expected of Canadian Armed Forces personnel, we will use all tools available to correct this behaviour.

Will the member be retained or released out of the CAF?

Pending the outcome of the investigation, the member may be retained if he has been rehabilitated, or could be subject to administrative actions up to and including release.

What about the specific details that he sought rehabilitation?

The Command Team at HMCS Tecumseh is unable to confirm these details, but is working to do so. It should be mentioned that there is a vast array of services offered to all members of the CAF who may have need of them at any time during their career in the CAF.

Were his supervisors aware of his activities?

The Navy had no prior knowledge of the member's alleged association with online hate groups. Furthermore, the Navy, his home unit - HMCS Tecumseh, its Commanding Officer, and the ship's company, are in full alignment with the rest of the Canadian Armed Forces policy against hateful conduct. As such, we, like the rest of the Canadian Armed Forces, have absolutely no tolerance for hateful conduct in any form. This behavior is completely incompatible with the core values and culture of the CAF, as they erode the cohesion within Canadian Armed Forces and the trust that Canadians have for the Canadian Armed Forces.

Is there an issue with hate and racism in the Canadian Armed Forces?

The vast majority of the Canadian Armed Forces honour Canada's values and have respect for the lives, dignity, and diversity of others, no matter their race, religion, or the colour of their skin. However, even one hateful member is too many. Anyone who holds hateful and degrading views of others, is not welcome in a Canadian Armed Forces uniform. Recognizing the full range of administrative and disciplinary tools available to the Chain of Command to remedy conduct and performance deficiencies of CAF members, the RCN will not hesitate to release anyone who continues to perpetuate hate in contradiction of the CAF's established military standards, ethics and values.

What are the Canadian Armed Forces doing to prevent racism, hatred, and extremism in the ranks?

We are working to foster an environment where all Canadians feel welcome. All Canadian Armed Forces members are educated early and continuously throughout their careers on the Forces regulations and policies regarding hateful conduct, as well as the legal and career consequences that go along with failing to meet the high standards we set for our people. If a member demonstrates hateful views, their suitability to serve is in serious question. Recognizing the full range of administrative and disciplinary tools available to the Chain of Command to remedy conduct and performance deficiencies of CAF members, the RCN will not hesitate to release anyone who continues to perpetuate hate in contradiction of the CAF's established military standards, ethics and values.