

# Royal Canadian Navy Adopts More Inclusive Rank Designation



Shown here in February 2017 Able Seaman (AB) Josie Simson dry starts the engine on the Zodiac rescue boat with assistance from Master Seaman (MS) John Parsons on the bridge wings on HMCS Moncton during the departure on Neptune Trident. Due to a change in rank names, able seaman will now be called a Sailor 2nd Class. ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY/ Crpl. Ryan Moulton

OTTAWA – Following a survey with over 18,000 respondents, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) has chosen a new English rank designation for its junior ranks that will result in more gender-neutral terms than the current titles, which are not reflective of the modern, progressive service that is the RCN today, according to an Aug. 27 release. The RCN is continuing to work to create a more inclusive environment within the workplaces, whether that is at sea or at home, the Canadian Armed Forces release continues.

The RCN's junior ranks will soon be known as Sailor 1st Class (formerly Ordinary Seaman), Sailor 2nd Class (formerly Able Seaman), Sailor 3rd Class (formerly Leading Seaman) and Master Sailor (formerly Master Seaman).

These changes help retain the history of these roles and align the English rank designation with the existing ranks in French. These new rank designations will be effective upon the issuance of a CANFORGEN in early September. At that point, the junior ranks will begin referring to shipmates using the new rank designations.

“By adopting gender-neutral designation for junior members of the Royal Canadian Navy, we demonstrate to all Canadians that the Canadian Armed Forces will welcome anybody who wants to

serve their country and uphold the values of inclusion and diversity,” said Harjit S. Sajjan, minister of National Defence. “We will continue to work to build a diverse force that is representative of the Canadians they protect.”

In an effort to ensure that this new rank designation reflects the thoughts and ideals of the Royal Canadian Navy, and Canadians, a survey was completed internally and externally, the results of which helped to inform decision-making for this new designation.

“The Royal Canadian Navy, our senior service, continues to adapt to better reflect Canadian society,” said Gen. Jonathan Vance, chief of the Defence staff. “Today’s announcement of changes to junior ranks nomenclature is just one example of how we continue to work to remove barriers to a more inclusive Canadian Armed Forces.”