OP FAUST Revisited Logistics Celebration 2020

Notes on the way forward

January 2019

Background

In 2020 the Netherlands intends to celebrate Op FAUST, the relief of starving Dutch at the end of WW II. The potential participation of RCLS and CFLA logisticians has been briefed to both LGen Lamarre and the CFLA senior leadership. All have approved moving forward with planning for participation.

BGen (ret) Ernie Beno has provided an excellent aide memoire, and concept paper for participation. He has also made contact with BGen (ret) Dave Patterson of Fields of Fire Battlefield Tours. Dave has met with the CFLA and offered to make the arrangements for a combined RCLS/CFLA trip to the Netherlands.

While generally considered worthwhile, there is some concern that the trip will fall embarrassingly flat due to a lack of participation. That, clearly, is not an acceptable option, so this short paper will propose a way ahead for the RCLS and CFLA.

Factor: We need a Plan and Planning Team

Nothing happens unless there is a dedicated group driving the initiative. We have generally agreed that the Logistics Branch Advisor and Branch Chief will represent the RCLS interests in this event and that the CFLA President and CFLA BoD Chair will represent the CFLA interests to start. LCol (ret) John Haylock will support. Dave Patterson will provide the technical support for the movement and accommodations issues.

Deduction

We will need to coordinate activities among this group on a regular basis to keep the project moving along. As the event grows we may need more support but this is enough for us to get out of the starting gate.

Factor: Minimum and Maximum Attendance

Dave Patterson advises that, in general, trips such as this are planned in tranches of 35 to 55 people (a bus load.) Based on that assessment, we need only surpass the threshold of 35 attendees to make the trip successful (i.e. one bus.) While not ideal, having at least one bus will demonstrate a Canadian participation in the event. As we surpass the threshold of 35, the degree of relative success will correspondingly increase. If we find that we might exceed 200 participants, then the problem becomes one of too much success, as busses and hotel rooms will become a problem.

Deduction

We should initiate a campaign of advertising as soon as possible to start getting interest up for the event so that when we ask for attendance confirmation (and deposits) we have surpassed the threshold of 35 participants.

Methodology

Those that are committed to attending the event start canvassing their friends and acquaintances to get the word out and the interest started. We hype the event at every chance to encourage those who are wealthy enough to attend without outside financial support to commit to the event.

Factor: Support to Serving Members

The cost of participation will be in excess of $4500 per person. We agree that we should plan on $5000 as the nominal cost to ensure that we have the funds available to support selected CF members to attend. Also, we have generally agreed that we would like to see a minimum of 15 Serving logisticians attend. In addition, we have assessed that a contribution of $500 per Serving attendee from his or her own resources would demonstrate good faith, suggesting that we need to raise $4500 per person or $67,500 to support bringing 15 CF personnel with us. We need a plan regarding how to select the potential CF attendees and also a plan to elicit support from the various CF units from which the members will come. Col BJ Johnson, the Branch Advisor, will consider those options and discuss them with the combined RCLS/CFLA planning team.

Deduction

Finding $67,500 may be a challenge and we need to get on this right away. We need to make a list of options, including Go Fund Me, Honorary Colonels, the Dutch Diaspora, and others right away. This should be at the top of the next meeting agenda. We should include the Logistics Branch Honorary Colonel, MGen (ret) Mark McQuillan at the next meeting so that he can reach out to the other honorary colonels and other potential donors. In addition, the units selecting individuals to attend might elect to conduct fund raising. We will require a bank account and accounting procedures for this activity. The CFLA will consider how it might handle the funds for this activity and report back.

Factor: Communications will be Key

Getting the word out to prospective attendees, raising donor awareness, and generally ensuring that the event has the internal and external publicity that it deserves and requires to become successful will be essential. We can leverage the CFLA web presence and also the Chapters to spread the word. We should ensure that all of the senior military logisticians (office and NCM) are made aware of the event and its significance. The RCLS and the CFLA must OWN this event without reservation. We need to involve the G/A/N 1, 8 and 4 leadership. There are lessons to be learned from the C&E community, where they created interest through their website and providing educational/historical information for their 2017 Vimy event. We will need to develop a comprehensive communications plan and launch it immediately. Fortunately, we have the services of our professional webmaster available to us.

Deduction

This must be a combined RCLS and CFLA plan. We can launch the communications at the 1 Feb Logistics Birthday celebrations. The CFLA will put together an initial announcement that can be distributed across the RCLS and other units participating in Log birthday events. The CFLA will also create a web page that includes the history of OP FAUST and OP MANNA so that virtual communications activities can hot link to the site. The CFLA will also establish a system to collect the names and particulars of those interested in participating and ensure that those persons are referred to Dave Patterson’s Fields of Fire agency to obtain quotes and discuss the detailed financial and travel arrangements. RCLS has access to the CF members and can ensure the widest distribution of relevant information, including using the Newsletter, informal communications and leveraging activities at the School. We need a more details communications plan and should begin to develop this virtually among the planning committee members immediately.

OK, I’m bingo time on this. May I request that recipients review, amend using Track Changes, and get this back to Michael Boomer, mike\_boomer@msn.com, as soon as possible. I’ll reissue it for our use. I’ll also set up a webpage where we can dump common information for use by the planning committee, although you may need to create and use a Gmail account to access it.