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INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

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Transcription of Interview Number 31D 4 SEGUIN

LCol (Ret'd) Andre Seguin

Interviewed 9 February, 2004

By J. R. Digger MacDougall

SEGUIN: My name's Andy Seguin, spelled S e g u i n.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much, Andy. Would you start off by giving us a bit of your background, perhaps some of your military background, how you got involved in flying, and what you went through to become a pilot initially in the Canadian Army?

SEGUIN: Well, first of all, I joined the Army so I -- wasn't no intention at the start just to fly. I started out as, in the militia, in the Army cadets -- the militia, in the artillery in the militia. Then I joined the Apprentice Soldier Program with the Army Service Corps. The Soldier Apprentice Program was for 16 year olds who had -- hopefully had -- grade nine or ten. The idea would be to train and to produce an NCO Corps in the Services, such as Service Corps, and Ordnance and so on, and even the combat arms, including the artillery and the sappers, the engineers. The program was supposed to be -- you enlisted for seven years with the option of getting out with no penalty after five.

In any event, I joined the Army Service Corps because I did not speak enough English to join the Corps I wanted to join. I wanted to join the Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. I thought there was more of a trade there. But anyway, they took me in the Service Corps as a driver or driver op or driver maintainer. It changed over the years. I graduated from the program in just two years with a Junior Matric and a Group 1 as a driver in the Service Corps. I was posted to Fort Churchill. I spent a year in Churchill which was the term then. And I spent -- I went to Valcartier, to 2 Field Ambulance where I spent a couple of years. Then to Germany to 1 Field Ambulance where I spent an additional couple of years. And then in Germany, 1960, '61 rather, I was selected for Officer Candidate Program.

Again, I went back to the Service Corps School on OCP 12, which started in the fall of 1961. Graduated and was promoted to second lieutenant on the seventeenth of August 1962. Posted to 3 Transport Company, RCASC in Gagetown. At about that time, the early sixties, my parent Corps, the Service Corps, had purchased a dozen helicopters. And these were CH113As, commonly known as the Labradors. And then the Service Corps found itself in need of pilots. There were, at that time I guess, there was a need to get some younger guys to get going. But the main source of the Service Corps, really, was the ex-Air Force officers, who were in Short Service Commission in the Air Force

and had been let go, either as navigators or pilots. And some of them were very experienced and very good guys. So there was two sources. I was in Gagetown, as I mentioned.

They sent the message -- myself and three other Service Corps officers were sent to Chatham for selection. Two were further contacted. Passed medical tests and so on. And then in the fall of '63 -- in fact, it actually coincided with the weekend that the Air Canada DC-8, in Quebec, took place. Anyway, we went to London and got our Standard Air Force Air Crew Selection Process, from medical to all sorts of tests, aptitude tests and so on, dead reckoning and all the things that are the skills of a pilot. After going through this battery of tests and so on, I remember being in the bar and on my way to take a cab, to take a train back to Gagetown. The fellow who had done the interview, he told me then, "I'll see you", which then told me I'd probably be coming back. But that was only wishful thinking because, in 1964, during the summer concentration in Gagetown, my Head of Corps, Colonel Sorantis [?], met me in the woods at Gideon's Corners and said to me, "I know you and I know what you want. You want to go flying and I'll tell you, you will. But first, you'll have to pass your Part 2s."

INTERVIEWER: So that was a promotion exam?

SEGUIN: Yeah. Yeah. So, I said, "Fine. Thank you." I had passed my Part 1s, just. Then I got posted to the Service Corps School as a platoon commander in a training company. In fact, I was to be a platoon commander of 35 Platoon, which was a platoon of apprentices. And I underwent my Part 2 exams that fall. And I was presented to the board for my results. And there was Colonel Sorantis, president of the board. He said, "You're off right after the holidays. You'll be next year in Centralia." And so it was.

INTERVIEWER: Andy, so you passed your promotion exams, Part 2, lieutenant to captain. You entered your flying career. What was your impression of the training that you went through at Centralia and Rivers?

SEGUIN: Well, I'll start first with Centralia. There was two different programs altogether with different aims. At the time, we're talking about Primary Flying School at RCAF Station Centralia. [muffled] The course for the Army pilot was a unique course, consisting of 84 hours, flying hours. That was sort of the basic flight hours allocation. At that time, they were no longer doing Air Force Selection Training. That was being done in Portage. But they were doing all the Navy flying, and Army flying, was being done at Centralia. On the aviation course, number 6501, there was five of us on the course. And what was unique about -- like, the Navy guys, they spent about 20 hours. We spent 84 hours. The unique aspect of our course was the low level, which, of course, endeared the Air Force instructor to us because in the Chipmunk, flying low level was quite exciting. And that lasted until the end of April. Let me just see that. And then, so when that closed out, we had three exams, three flying exams; general handling, aerobatics navigation and instruments.

We started our next phase of training. This time we went to CJATC in Rivers, Manitoba. The Canadian Joint Air Training Centre in Rivers, Manitoba. I should mention that all the flying at the Centralia phase was done on Chipmunks -- DHC2 Chipmunks. It's a light aerobatic aircraft, two-seater tandem and was fixed propeller, fixed undercarriage, very basic. In Rivers, it got even more basic. It was the L-19, which was basically an observation aircraft. It looked like -- in the old days the Army -- Canadian Army -- had Austers but this was new. These were all replaced by L-19s. The L-19s, we had two models: the A models, the old ones and the E models. Essentially the same aircraft. There was also, I think it was four Cessna 182 for instruments flight.

The course at Rivers was towards wings which, I think, was around 125 hours total. The first 40 were what they called general handling and whatever instrument flight was required. So that was all. The rest, the next part was all tactical, working in small fields and doing exciting things such as short field landings and take offs, sort of thing. The L-19 had a great set of flaps. You could do a lot of slow flying and so on, and hard points. So we could do photography, fixed or handheld, laying wire, dropping a message and so on. It was quite exciting. The instructors in Rivers were all Army instructors and extremely good. My instructor was particularly good, a guy named Jim McFee. Magnificent pilot.

So we graduated from that. I graduated -- well, we all graduated, I think it was the seventeenth of July. I have my logbook here. [short tape gap] July the twenty-fifth was our last flying day and you can see that. If you want to punch off now, I'll show you.

So we got our wings from Lieutenant Colonel Cross on the twenty-fifth of July, that period. We were then given leave and told to come back for helicopter conversion. So we left in late July. We were to come back for our helicopter conversion on the sixteenth of August '65. And that was to last until the eighth of October. It actually ended on the fifth.

Now, again, we actually, once we were in the Army, we were working in an outfit called the Army Tactical -- Army Aviation Tactical Training School, AATTS. But all these names changed when integration and later unification and the formation of Air Command and all. But the Training Command, at that time. When you went to the helicopter conversion it was an Air Force unit, BHTU, which incidentally, was never recorded in the history of the Air Force. But it was an Air Force unit. And it was the Basic Helicopter Training Unit. It was all Air Force officers and pilots. And they were very experienced helicopter pilots from the Air Force Search and Rescue sources. So these guys were H21 pilots, had flown in all sorts of weather and so on. So they were excellent instructors. John Watt was one of them. A little later on, we saw him through the Army side. So, that conversion finished on the -- we were finished on the fifth of October.

INTERVIEWER: How many hours and what kind of flying did you do on that course?

SEGUIN: On that course it was 60 hours, plus or minus two or three for a re-ride. It was all basic handling. All basic handling. There was no tactical or anything like that. No

flying around with 1 over 50,000 maps, and that sort of thing. It was all basic, no nonsense. Lots of auto rotations. Lots. You're forever, you know, in auto rotation. And of course, you know the Hiller auto-rotated like a bloody piano, so....

Now came a very sad part for me because I knew that something -- there had been a little meeting held at Rivers during that time. And it was all the unit COs of air units were there. And they were looking at what the crop was this year. And I was told -- and I never believed it -- that they needed French Canadian instructors in the Service Corps School. So I finished flying right there and then and was sent to the School.

INTERVIEWER: And when did you return to flying then, Andy?

SEGUIN: Now, at the school -- let's stay where we are -- on the fifth to eighth of October, I was assigned to a training platoon. At that time, the Army could rent an aircraft for all of the pilots on the base. And this was for what was called, for continuation flying. There was two aircraft we had access to, a PRC and the other one, IRX. Anyway, PRX and IRC -- anyway, we could only have one at a time. It was a Cessna 172.

So, what we had to do, right on arrival at Borden, we had to get on to it and get your private pilots license, commercial pilot's license, which we did through MOT. There was a group of us in Borden, who had then access to this aircraft, at a rate of 18 hours per pilot per quarter. Now, if you doubled the hours by two guys and only one guy counting it, you get to fly twice now. The allocation was based on strictly keeping proficiency. At no time did, was there any check rides or anything, other than what MOT wanted. So, there was about seven or eight of us in Borden that kept flying.

Now, we went into 1966, and those of us who remember 1966, it was a year where we got the first pay rise. We hadn't had a pay rise since 1957 or so. And as part of the pay rise, they doubled the pilots' pay, virtually and then took our airplanes away. So we stopped flying around the middle, and I think I should look it up in my book. There we are, 127PRX, PRX -- here we go, March the thirty-first 1966 we stopped. Our Cessna 172 was finished.

INTERVIEWER: So were you taken off continuation flying at that time?

SEGUIN: Yep. We're just told, "You're a pilot. You're a pilot " They virtually doubled our pay for not being pilots. So, from March '66, I stopped flying. I was a platoon commander, then assistant adjutant of the school, and so on. And now, we can leap to about 1968.

INTERVIEWER: Is that when you returned to flying?

SEGUIN: This is where it started again. My career manager, Mac McIssac, called me and offered me a job. He said, "Would you like to go flying because we're going to -- you've been at the school now, three years." As you recall, '65 to '68. I had occasion to

come to Ottawa. I was the best man at a wedding. I asked Mac McIssac out for dinner and we discussed our options. He offered me a job flying for the Navy, Trackers. And he offered the same job to other guys who were idle. I said, "I prefer not." But in 1967, I had visited Helicopter Troop, when I was still single and I went on holidays to Berlin. I stopped off and I saw Sparky and Jim White and these guys. And they said that they were having problems getting pilots. Anyway, I talked to Mac McIssac and I really felt that, you know, I really felt that I was really pushing it a little bit, asking to go to the Recce Troop or the Armoured Corps. So, there was a caveat put on it by me, and I think Mac McIssac as well. I don't know what he did but I said that I would be quite willing to undergo Phase 3 training with the Armoured Corps cadets if that would help the head of corps. I think it was Colonel Quinn, in FMC. I can't confirm that. But all this happened out of shot, my earshot. Anyway, I did offer to Mac McIssac, if that was required, if there's a problem, I'll hang out and I'll put the black coveralls on and get to it. As it happened, I did put the white -- the black coveralls -- but that was at the unit in Soest. I became a crew commander there.

Anyway, I went back to Borden and I got the message that I was selected to go to the Recce Squadron. But, I left and went to -- there's a picture -- to Rivers.

INTERVIEWER: Oh yeah.

SEGUIN: And started training. I think it was in September, was it?

INTERVIEWER: Yep.

SEGUIN: September.

INTERVIEWER: And you were training on Hillers, I guess, at the time, were you?

SEGUIN: Yeah. I was still on the Hillers. Sixty-nine -- this was '69, I started -- and where are we? Here we are, here. October twenty-first, I started. And that was to be, the first bit was to be, a refresher on the Hiller of ten hours. Well, you know, flying the Hiller was not an easy task, especially at first. It got better. You could master it. But, ten hours after never flying, nothing, for about three years, let alone flying a helicopter like the Hiller. I didn't start off all that well. And I had gone to BHTU for that. Anyway, they gave me another instructor, Trevor White -- not Trevor White, what was his name? Service Corps guy. Anyway, I was given a mentor and I passed my check ride. And we went off for about a hundred hours. And there was two students on the course, myself and Jerry Puck [?].

INTERVIEWER: And was that the Advanced Course?

SEGUIN: Advanced Course, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Advanced Helicopters?

SEGUIN: Yep. And that went all the way to Valentine's Day. All the way to, let's see, OK, January, [muffled] February the thirteenth.

INTERVIEWER: So did that get you ready, now, to go to the unit?

SEGUIN: Yep.

INTERVIEWER: What type of training did you do on the Advanced Helicopter Course that would have prepared you for flying with, let's say, a tactical helicopter squadron?

SEGUIN: The low level, nap-of-the-earth flying. A little more than just slightly off levels. A little more very low altitude auto rotations. Dealing with wires. Installing and flying with the litter kits, then you flew from the center of the med evac birds. And a lot of downwind, quick stop, and that sort of thing, very abrupt handling close to the ground. It was quite exact. Also, flying, though left seat, because low to the ground and into the weeds, it was handy for us to see the tail rotor because if you were in the wheat field or corn field, you could damage your tail. You wouldn't know, sitting in the middle. So, we had an observer most of the time flying with us. So, at the tactical phase, the instructor acted as the observer. The instructor, of course, they had all sorts of instructors that were laying around. Denny Hopping helped us out. Dooley Ross, that sort of thing. There was a lot of help. Of course, they all enjoyed that, themselves.

So, when I got to the unit. We passed all right. I'll tell you something afterwards on that. We were told to go to Germany. I got married in the middle of that course. We arrived in Soest on the eleventh of March 1969. My sponsor -- now, I was not the guy that, so-called, broke the colour bar, the black beret bar. That was Jon Pellow, Queen's Own Rifle. He was first non-armoured. When I got there, he had gone. He had done his stint. I was hosted by Fred Reese and he gave me my unit checks, I think. Right here. That was four, three and a half hours with Fred. Navigation, low level, sequences, that sort of thing. I was off. By the end, we had done some nav work and so on.

Within two weeks, I was on my own, with a sergeant. And they sent me to the Bridging Camp in Hameln. And I was on my own with stretcher kit, two mechanics, a sergeant and myself and a truck, you know, with three barrels of fuel. And a wonderful, wonderful job. And my job there was to train all the officers and the NCOs of the bridging -- of the engineers -- and doing reces and so on by helicopters and so on. So I was flying every day and all day, up and down, recceing the launch bridging sites and that sort of thing. Something I had not done in Rivers but we didn't have an engineer squadron in Rivers.

INTERVIEWER: Were you actually flying down the rivers, then?

SEGUIN: Oh yeah. Yep. Yep. And not only were we flying down the rivers, but the officers or the NCOs, they would put plumb bobs and things, to measure the current, to see if they could launch. Because in the spring -- this was in April -- so there was a bit of a current. Enough to give a problem and to create an environment where people had to do some thinking. So, there was, you know, Hameln has -- there was about the twenty-

nine or thirty some odd bridge sites. And these were pre-recce and so on. But there was a lot of cables to move on rafts, you know, to move across the river, to move a cow or two[? indistinct] . So you had to be very careful. You had to watch yourself. As I said, the Hiller was there [? indistinct].

The point was, in the helicopter troop, you were expected to give as much flying as you could towards your 300 hours, Hiller time. At that time, 300 hours Hiller time, with the troop leader's check ride, you were authorized then to do auto rotations, to touchdown on your own. Before that, you would have to recover power, hit power. So that was 300 hours, you were certified. If you wish, a recce captain. I don't know what the title would be. Later on, when 10 TAG came in to being, that would have been a Cat 1 pilot.

INTERVIEWER: Category 1?

SEGUIN: It would have been Category 1. The 10 TAG system was 1, 2 and 3. And Category 1 is basically you're authorized to do what the aircraft is authorized to do, pretty well. There must be some exceptions but, I mean, you could go and do a touchdown auto rotation, no problem at all.

INTERVIEWER: Andy, you mentioned that you were out on your own with a truck and a couple of mechanics. What was this unit all about? If you could just describe that for us.

SEGUIN: OK. It was called Helicopter Troop in the days that I was there. Before that, when it first came over to Germany as a Fort Garry unit, it was called 5 Troop because of its call sign. But Hel Troop was a small troop that consisted of six helicopters, operating in pairs. In other words, three sections of two aircraft. A section consisted of aircraft, captain, sergeant observer, and their kit in the back of their aircraft. In other words, my pup tent was in my aircraft. Everything was there, camouflage, NBCW suite, everything was with you. And you slept with your observer in the pup tent. As part of your section, you had a three quarter ton truck and a three quarter ton trailer. The truck carried three barrels of av gas. The trailer carried the parts and so on -- the stretchers that we might need, the cargo wraps that we might need, spare tires, the rest of that stuff. And a tent for the flight, for the troop, if it ever laid itself out that way.

So, now, a section would be an aircraft with a crew and two NCOs, and mechanics. We - - I shouldn't call them mechanics. They were called technicians. One was a master corporal. The other one was a corporal or private. There was three of those. At the Flight Headquarters there was a troop leader with a chief observer, a staff sergeant or warrant officer, and a warrant officer technician aviation tech and a sergeant as a 2 IC, but as a member of one of the sections and an extra master corporal, who was radio. So there was eight technicians, seven pilots, seven observers and we had one trooper, drove the OC's jeep, the flight commander's jeep. So, that was a section of the Recce Squadron.

INTERVIEWER: It's a very good description. I haven't had that before.

SEGUIN: So, and also, it could operate in its sections. The only thing is that when it's operated in sections, it got a little complicated for the A echelon to get us our fuel. So a lot of times, we would get fuel from the many airports that there were around. Generally speaking, the A echelon took care of us as if we were another troop. You must remember that at that time, the Recce Squadron was a little heavy. We had three Recce Troops of seven Lynxes, there was a Flyover Troop, call sign 4. There was also an Assault Troopers Troop, with four M113s. The Assault Troopers was a very handy group to have. Of course, the Squadron Headquarters, so we were fairly large.

INTERVIEWER: Andy, besides the river recce missions that you flew, what other type of flying did you do with the Reconnaissance Squadron in Germany?

SEGUIN: The top priority for flying was our own proficiency and that was done through mutual flying. Flying with each other's pilots. So we had hours that were ours, to maintain proficiency. There was also a significant number of hours devoted to training observers. The observers tended to have a high turn around time in the Armoured Corps so that their careers wouldn't be badly affected by staying too long away from the squadron -- from a Sabre Squadron or a Recce Squadron. Now, there were other hours which were for Quick Trains or Snowballs or operational. The highest priority of that was to -- every year we had to take all the responsible officers from all the units through the GDP area to do their recce. And this was pretty serious stuff because this was where we're going to be if things were....

INTERVIEWER: If hostilities broke out.

SEGUIN: Yeah. Yeah. That. Now, we also had training we did with other units to help them out, for example, the Field Ambulance. Just about everybody in the Field Ambulance got to travel on our aircraft, in the stretchers. So they learned how to strap them in and strap them out and that sort of thing. We spent a lot of hours going along to units, training their headquarters personnel to marshal aircraft and how to site a helicopter landing area. So like, for example, the Van Doos would go to Fort St. Louis and they would have a bunch of guys. The Recce Platoon would be there. And everybody would take a ride in the helicopter. So we got rides then. It was helpful to us.

The other units, like the engineers, we worked a lot with them. We would go do, especially the sergeants, doing recce. The biggest thing teaching that we were doing was trying to get a guy from dimension to time, as you travel on a map of one over 50,000. You're flying at 60 miles an hour. You're flying one minute is a square. To put that in your mind, that you're not on the ground. Because, before you know it, they'd get lost, see. Training with them was always, especially the Recce Platoon, there were four. There was the Engineers and there was the three infantry battalions. Curiously enough, we probably, we actually did little if anything with the Air OP Troop that was in the brigade. But we did cover off for C and L Flight, which was at the Headquarters.

INTERVIEWER: Communications and Liaison Flight, I think it was called.

SEGUIN: Yeah. If I could just go. We went from the troop, what the troop looked like. Why don't we look at what the Brigade looked like, aviation wise. The Brigade had a C and L Flight -- Communications and Liaison Flight -- usually one, two aircraft. It could have two. And they were responsible, and they had their own little section, tent and so on. Their own fuel truck and so on, just like we did. And they were posted at Brigade Headquarters as the Air LOs and so on and they would fly officers to and from wherever they had to go.

Now, there was an Air OP Flight, consisting of L-19 aircraft. They were part of the Regiment -- very well equipped, lots of canvas, lots of vehicles, very well, a great photography capability. They were very, very well set up. But we never saw them. They were in a different mode than we were. There was also a Service Battalion unit called the Flight Maintenance Platoon. That was commanded, curiously enough, by a major, in my time, that I was there. He was a major in the RCEME. I have him on the list there.

INTERVIEWER: Chuck Penny.

SEGUIN: Chuck Penny. So, there was a C and L Flight, Hel Troop, the Air OP Troop and the Aircraft Maintenance Platoon. I say that because that's what really carried on when we moved down to Lahr. We really didn't change except that on a field in Sennelager about six months before, we all took, they all took their badges off. The Strathconas were all lined up with [General: ed] Gutknecht and there was Pat over there with his guys and they changed badges and the rest of them. Us, in the troop, we didn't change anything. So we moved down to Lahr. And this unit, these four units, formed the nucleus of what was to come as 444 Tac Hel Squadron.

All that started to happen when we got to Lahr. And then the aircraft, the Kiowa, started to arrive. They started to send our pilots home to cover off in the new squadrons back home. So we got a lot of guys posted to Germany. We had Bill Etrick [?], from the Navy. We had Danny Danyluk[?]. All sorts of people come over because they were doing things at home. They formed 444 S as an LOH squadron. Basically, it operated -- I went back there later. I'll leave it now but it operated almost as if it were the only one, except it's all under one. The command and control was one, now.

So, about that time, we're now about 1972. I was sent home to go to 430 Squadron, one of the new Tac Hel Squadrons. That was quite different. The squadron, when I got there, was a year old. It was quite a mix of people.

INTERVIEWER: Where was it situated?

SEGUIN: In Valcartier.

INTERVIEWER: In Valcartier.

SEGUIN: It consisted of six Hueys and eight Kiowas, if I recall. The pilots came from all over the place. They were all sorts. And not enough Francophones for the unit. The CO was bilingual. The DCO wasn't. The Army -- the squadron had been launched on the backs of the Air OP Flight of 5 RALC. I think they were the first ones. Bud Jardine - - not Bud Jardine, Charlie Panner [?], Gord Messtine [?], John McLeish, all these guys were brought in to fill in as the unit got going. It was set up in one of those new hangars. It was part of that group of squadrons, consisting of 408 in Nanaimo, 427 in Petawawa and the 430 in Valcartier. Then, there was the other two squadrons, the Operational Squadron, the Training Squadron, 403 in Gagetown and 422 in Gagetown, serving the Combat Training Centre. So, within that group which was called 10 TAG, it had also a whole host of other units thrown in there. The Air Reserve were all thrown in to it. In fact, at one time, we had Buffalo aircraft. 429 Squadron was part of FMC, 10 TAG, that sort of thing.

Generally speaking, things settled down. I served two years in Valcartier. And, unfortunately, the two years I spent, I spent most of them on training. One of the things that happened to me was -- to a lot of other guys -- is when we came back to these Hel squadrons, we came back from Germany, I had been a pilot for seven years in the Canadian Forces without an instrument rating. That, to the Air Force and Navy, is not acceptable. So, guys like Rusty Willit [?], Butch Waldrum and so on, were all sent Portage le Prairie to get instrument trained on Expeditor aircraft.

I got sent, with another guy, down to Fort Rucker, to do my instrument flight course at the Army Aviation School in Fort Rucker. That happened as soon as they could get it done. I got to Valcartier in October of '72 and I was in Fort Rucker in January '73. And that took four months, conversion to the Huey helicopter, UH1s, and then one month of flight simulator and one and a half, one month and a half on actual flying. I came back to Valcartier and then I was sent to Gagetown to do some Air OP work. And on it went. Then came back to Valcartier and then I was sent to Staff School. And that took place on both sides of Christmas, '73-'74.

So in the spring of 1974, I was told I was going to be promoted and sent to Headquarters, Mobile Command as the flight safety officer. That -- as the flight safety officer -- it was because when I was in Germany up in Soest, I had taken a US Army Flight Safety Course in Nurnberg. They remembered that in Ottawa. They sent me to Montreal.

INTERVIEWER: Was that a flying position at FMC Headquarters?

SEGUIN: No. It wasn't.

INTERVIEWER: And were you allowed to?

SEGUIN: My number two did. They wouldn't give me a helicopter, so.... I, in fact, I have to tell you, I flew a couple of times. A couple of times I had trip legs and so on. And I was in Montreal and then the CO of 430 got terribly upset with me. So, I flew

sometimes, as a passenger or as a copilot. Never logged it. On single Otters, as observer in Montreal.

INTERVIEWER: And what were your duties as flight safety officer in Army Headquarters all about then?

SEGUIN: It was -- wound up the best posting I ever had. Well, first of all, I was there for a year. The position was answering directly and solely to the commander FMC. Now, spelled out like that, doesn't -- it's easy to say. But there was a commander at 10 TAG there, and I never spoke to the commander FMC without talking to the commander of 10 TAG. I just had to do it that way.

INTERVIEWER: Um huh.

SEGUIN: I couldn't afford to have the Air Force commander -- and I would say that, here, I'm going to tell the commander of the Army this. Now, at that time, there was, I think, 17 units in FMC, flying units. There was six reserve squadrons, four reserve support units in addition to that. All these helicopter squadrons. Two fighter squadrons. So it was quite a diverse group.

I got there in 1974. It was a terrible year. They had more accidents than you can shake a stick at. So anyway, I had a wonderful job there until they formed Air Command. That was in the first of September 1975. My position at FMC became an Air Command position which was transferred over, across the street, to 10 TAG for another year. Also they wanted, I think, to have all this done -- this Air Command thing -- done before the Olympics. Got to it. So they got it going. Then in '76, I was picked and sent to Staff College.

INTERVIEWER: Did you do any continuation flying when you were at Staff College or?

SEGUIN: No. No.

INTERVIEWER: None at all?

SEGUIN: No. That's right. There was no, there was nothing for us to do.

INTERVIEWER: OK. So what was the next step in your flying order?

SEGUIN: OK. The next step is when I came out of Staff College and they sent me to the 444. Now, they sent me back to 444. I was an OC of Recce Flight. Well, B Flight, it was called B, which was Recce. Later, DCO. I was there from '77 to Christmas '79, when I was promoted and sent to Nanaimo SC 408.

INTERVIEWER: And when you were in 444 Squadron, Triple Four Squadron, what sort of missions did you fly there?

SEGUIN: It was virtually identical to what had been there before with the Recce Flight. Virtually the same. The Flight, for example, the B Flight -- as commander B Flight, it was my job to stay in the hip pocket of the Recce Squadron commander. I wasn't to bother him with my echelon problems or anything. I was to be there and make sure that the flights, the sections, met up with their counterpart and then got the traces going. We would do more things like Air OP work because now A Flight was basically the C and L Flight and the Air OP people. We did a lot of gunnery up in Hohne and places like that. But, essentially, it was the same.

It was not quite the same maintenance thinking. The maintenance in 10 TAG, there was a big difference. For example, in Hel Troop, we would tell the platoon commander -- we would arrange it with the Aircraft Maintenance Platoon commander -- to have aircraft available for exercise. Like all of them. So we would, maybe, not fly for a week if it meant that we could get all our aircraft up. That was counter, totally counter, the Air Force philosophy. The Air Force, you had to have airplanes down. You can't have a hundred percent. You have to put them through. And the magic number, the Holy Cow, was the MFR. And that's what drove the train. And we spent more, we turned more fuel into noise trying to meet the MFR.

INTERVIEWER: And what was the MFR?

SEGUIN: The Monthly Flying Rate. It was -- the aircraft had to be scheduled on a graph, for example, from four hundred to one. And all your ten aircraft -- for example, if you had ten of them -- would be waiting to get in to the maintenance shop with so many hours left.

INTERVIEWER: Interview with Andy Seguin. End of Side One.

END OF SIDE ONE

INTERVIEWER: Andy, you were describing the whole maintenance requirements and how, with the coming on of the Air Force, there was a change. Would you just continue on with that story please?

SEGUIN: Well, it's not a story. It's a ... In an outfit like Hel Troop, we could afford -- because we had no outside direct tasking -- we could afford to stop flying for a week or so and wait for airplanes to get back up. And we always, virtually always, managed to get to take all our aircraft to the field for an exercise. And then come back, we would put them in the barn and they would be looked after.

Now, in the Air Force system, this was a bit new to us, when we got to our respective squadrons, the aircraft -- the magic number was the MFR and the YFR. And that was a good reason for that because that drove the maintenance philosophy. It allowed the

logistics to be preprogrammed to make sure that parts, major components and so on are brought online because the aircraft will need them at a certain hour time. So, all squadrons had, always had, every morning they looked at what they called their stagger, making sure that aircraft are staggered in such a way that you've got airplane hours to work with. If you could come off the tape for a second.

INTERVIEWER: So the Monthly Flying Rate and the Yearly Flying Rate really drove operational flying?

SEGUIN: Oh, I wouldn't push it that far but it certainly was a great factor because it affected our ability to respond to tasking, if you didn't have the aircraft serviceable. And don't forget that all these aircraft, especially the Hueys in all of the squadrons, all had an additional role of search and rescue. And you know what that means. You just can't not be able to go. But 10 TAG, as it was then, also included other units but I'm only able to comment on the units, which were rotary wing units. Those included 430, where I was at FMC, but also 408 in Edmonton, 427 in Petawawa, 450 in Ottawa with Chinooks, 447 in Nanaimo with four Chinooks, 403 Squadron, which was an operational training squadron, and 422 Squadron. The 10 TAG helicopter fleet was quite extensive.

The beauty about that system was also that there was one standard. Everybody, all the operational planning, mission planning, and everyone, is all taught at 403 Squadron. So everybody did the same thing. And then, when they come together, it was easy to make the machine work. An example of that would have been the Olympics where all the Hueys were -- that we had -- were brought in. But then, once they got into the briefing room and said, "This is the way we're going to...", everybody knew what was going on. Everybody knew the terminology. There was no question of it. And they all -- it was like meeting old Staff College people, friends. They met guys that they had trained with in 403 Squadron and so on.

After I left the FMC -- sorry, after I left 444 Squadron -- having been there one year as B Flight commander and one year as DCO, I was sent to 408. Now, 408, as I said, I got there, I was disappointed. No aircraft to fly. That was certainly was also disappointing to the Army. I have to say that command of 408 was not a happy time. But that aside, one of the key things there was an amazing CFOO -- Canadian Forces Organization Order -- which, in actual fact, when we arrived there, you really couldn't use it. Because it said words to the effect that 408 is a component of the Regular Force assigned to Air Command under the operational command of commander FMC, the operational control of commander 10 TAG, tactical command of the base commander in Edmonton and tactical control of the commander of the brigade in Calgary. And for any other purpose -- if it's search and rescue -- it is under the command of the base commander of CFB in Edmonton who is also rescue center. So, I had a lot of bosses. And I had my personal evaluation rated by one saying I was reluctant to give support to his organization, at the expense of the others and so on. It was not a very good thing. But anyway, I lasted two years. We had -- I was then sent back to the flight safety world.

INTERVIEWER: Just before we move on, Andy, would you just describe 408 Squadron? What sort of equipment and personnel that you had and what jobs you performed?

SEGUIN: In 408, it was classic. A little background. 408 had been, at one time, had been a fighter squadron. It went from a fighter squadron to a helicopter squadron in Rivers. But anyway, the squadron that I had, at the time that I had it, had eight Hueys, CH112s, CH135s, and 10 Kiowas, CH146. There was 156 personnel, including 37 aircrew, 46 vehicles. It had three command posts, which was pretty good because it had an area of responsibility with its left boundary in the Herring Row fishing grounds of British Columbia to the Arctic Circle, back to Thunder Bay, just about short of Thunder Bay, to the 49th parallel. That was 408's terrain.

Now at that time, the 1 Brigade unit was scattered from Esquimalt to Chilliwack, to Winnipeg, to Shilo, to Edmonton, to Calgary. So, it was a lot of traveling time. So a lot of time was burnt traveling rather than working. So sometimes, if you had to do gunnery practice, you had to go for two weeks to make it work, to make it worthwhile, to get enough training in. If we wanted to get some recce training in, with the Recce Squadron of the LdSH in Calgary, that that would be at least a week exercise. We couldn't go down there and just sort of go down to Sarcee and do a trace and then come back. You had to go somewhere to do enough so that you could do proper debrief and redo it again and make sure all the car commanders and all the section commanders, that everybody knows what they're doing. And that the helicopters know what they're doing. So it was a lot of time spent traveling. It was a very busy squadron, very busy. And, as you know, the West, there's floods, fires and so on.

And of course, during my tour, we took the squadron to Gagetown on RV 81. And there, we took everything, all 18 aircraft made it to Gagetown, the last one in the back of a Herc. But it went and it got there. And we got them all back. At the same time, there was the summit conference in Ottawa, which we did. And at the same time, there was mapping and charting up in the Yukon, which we did. And then we all came home to reintroduce to our children and wives because they'd nearly forgotten what we looked like in 1981. But it was -- 408, the Squadron flying was exciting because flying in the Rockies with a single engine little Kiowa, on your way to Comox from Edmonton, it's quite a feat. There was a lot of problems that affiliated with 4 Wing. Just as an aside.

INTERVIEWER: Andy, you had quite a flying career and your last flying position was in 408 Squadron. What did you do next with in Army Aviation?

SEGUIN: Well, I went to the Directorate of Flight Safety in Ottawa. I had a staff position at the command level at FMC in 10 TAG. Now I was made DFS 2, the number two man, in the Directorate of Flight Safety. That was a position for obvious reasons in the Air Force, under the VCDS out of harm's way of the operational side. Anyway, DFS had a legend, Group Captain Joe Schultz. And the Army had a long tradition of having people at DFS. People like Lloyd McDonald, Leo Noiles Peter Dudley, people like that

went to DFS. In other words, there was always an Army aviator and always, as it turns out, not always, a Naval aviator. But there was always an Army aviator in DFS.

And DFS was divided in a way that every single officer out of the 12 or 13 had a secondary important job, such as ejection seats. But the Army had the living in the field aspects of an accident or an accident prevention program. So if we're looking at the field, or camouflaging, or looking for hidden wires, aspects of that things -- living and flying airplanes in the boonies -- there was always someone at DFS with that kind of expertise. Like I say, Al Cooper was one, Leo Noiles and Ron Hall in the Service Corps. So there was always somebody there. In my day, my Army man, though, was Peter Dudley until he retired. Then Colin Fisher, until he got killed. But that was my men.

It was a very good job in DFS. But also, it's a job where you don't make too many friends. I certainly didn't make too many friends. But we had some very, very difficult investigations to do. It was very lucky. So after four years, we had really had left no investigation as not determined. And it was quite exciting. There was some very, very, very high profile accidents, like two Hercs in collision.

INTERVIEWER: So you actually investigated accidents that were non, sort of, Army air or tactical aviation?

SEGUIN: The way it worked, every accident in the Air Force, whether it's an accident on the ground -- in fact, with a vehicle, all accidents which result in the write off of equipment and serious injuries -- are investigated by a board of inquiry, anyways. But that's the first thing that hits. The board of inquiry is a panel of peers, made up of a group with the appropriate expertise or qualifications to do an accident investigation in two weeks.

Now, in addition to that, the Directorate of Safety has his own investigators that he sends on the scene. And they are assisting the board president in the field, doing his investigation. So I wrote an article years ago in the Flight Safety magazine. It said something like, Why Me? Why Me, Lord? Why did you put me in this investigation? Sent on the board of inquiry. We said, because you answered the phone. You know, we got you and now you're in the field. Now, our DFS guy stays with him and if he needs such additional resources. For example, let's just say he needs a crane to lift -- a ship with a crane on it -- to lift a F-18 out of the water. DFS guy on the ground can arrange for that. And so, investigations in the Air Force are done very well. And they've got a long tradition of aircraft accident investigations. I'm not saying that in a bad way, but there've been a lot. Being at the center of this, at the end, in Ottawa, pretty well the Director of Flight Safety, usually has the last to say on an investigation. He usually gets it -- that's signed off by the VCDS. In very special circumstances, it might even be signed by the CDS. That has happened.

So after four years there, I, that was pretty well -- except for my next year, which I was going to spend in Egypt, where I was the commander's air advisor. Again, I became the Force flight safety officer, because I was the only airman in the headquarters. So I

finished off one year in the Sinai as the air advisor to the Multinational Force and Observers, in El Gora, in the Sinai.

INTERVIEWER: What was your title again?

SEGUIN: Air advisor.

INTERVIEWER: Andy, you had quite a distinguished flying career. I wonder if you could just comment on what it was like to be an Army aviator and going through the integration of the Forces and really, the integration of the Air Forces, as well, and Army aviation?

SEGUIN: Well, I think it's quite difficult to argue. I remember the arguments about integration, particularly when we went in to putting Air Force squadrons together. In actual fact, we had, we had a lot of -- in Army Service Corps -- we had a lot of pilots who were disguised as Army officers but were, in fact, from the Air Force. And they came with the baggage of their philosophy and so on. Sort of, it was difficult because in the Air Force they tend to do the flying and then that'd be their day. Staff work was done by somebody else. There was always somebody to support you, there's always fuel. Whereas an Army fellow, you're always worried about your logistic tail and everything. The Air Force guys didn't seem to think that way.

That aside, I think the great advantage was to the Army's side because when you look at the way the Air Force operates, particularly the way the Air Forces trains, you really have to admire the way. And they've got a lot of experience from the Air Training Plans of World War II and Commonwealth Air Training Plan. Their training and their systems of training, how they select crews and so on, is magnificent. It's a great advantage. It made the Army a lot more professional. Now, there was, you know, we know that we had guys that trained at the Brandon Flying Club and so on. But, generally speaking, when you had a bunch of Air Force officers in your squadron, you had a lot of good hands, good pilots.

And that's what I found in 408. I had some officers who were good staff officers but I had others who were really superb pilots and I needed that. To fly search and rescue missions in Edmonton, out in the Rockies, you need some good training. So the Air Force training and this check ride system, it's unnerving. For example, here's a... I'm a CO of a unit, associated with 1 Brigade in Calgary, say. They're not in Calgary anymore, they're in Edmonton. Well, as the CO of 408, every month, every 30 days, a lieutenant or a captain checks me out on flying a Kiowa. Gives me -- pulls my engines on me and so on. I would say to my friends in the infantry, "Well, as a battalion commander, you should at least once a month, go fill a sandbag, dig a trench and so on." I spent a lot of time just to become a pilot and at same time to be CO of the unit. It was demanding. It was quite....

The Army -- sometimes, there was statements made that were really silly. For example, my squadron would always have to be living in the field with the infantry. Well, I found,

in fact at one point, 408 spent more time in the field than anybody in the 1 Brigade. Why? Because when we went with one particular battalion, we had to go live with them in the field, then the next battalion, go live with them in the field. Well, we had to duplicate all that. Also, there was always, it'll be bad for the morale for the troops if you guys eat a hot meal and we eat a compo rations. I never bought that. I was in a unit, when I was a young soldier, I was in the Field Ambulance. We'd spent more time in the field than anybody because we went with each unit. So, I thought.

As far as the integration, I had no problems. I found that, generally speaking, 403 Squadron and the Air Force system produced some damn good pilots and officers. It was showed up when we did RV-81, the Olympics, all of that. I remember that. I was a safety officer for the Olympics. Not one incident. Not one, I'm not talking about accident, not even one occurrence, which could be an accident, or an incident or a significant event. None. And this was unbelievable. But, I have to tell you that I was the safety officer but you know what? NDHQ sent me Leo Noiles as an assistant. Air Command sent me two more pilots. I got a special car. I got special communications. I had everything I needed. And we had a lot of safety officers on the spot. And it was a serious business. And so it went well. It went well. And when -- I suppose when we, back now around '86, when we started to get new uniforms, a lot of guys put on that uniform who had originally worn the blue uniform, as well. And there's lots of them and lots in good positions, influential positions in the Air Force. Guys who I know were not deemed satisfactory to get a permanent commission in the Air Force, who did a wonderful -- had wonderful careers, in the Army.

INTERVIEWER: So the Army gave them an opportunity to really show themselves up as pilots?

SEGUIN: Yeah. And some of them were not pilots, they were navigators and trained to pilot. Mind you, you remember. You were in that business. You fire 500, we hire 500, whatever.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

SEGUIN: But that was the thing that was going on. So what I recall, I look at my list of Service Corps pilots here, and I'm delighted [indistinct] to see these guys. It's amazing that they managed to get back in to the Air Force. And we had, I don't know, you got me on the Service Corps. Do you want to mark them down? Do you have a special place for them? [muffled, inaudible]

It's like the MFR, YFR. It was a tool that I'm not familiar with, but then once you get used to it, there's no other way to plan. But, if you can't -- for example, for me, here's the nightmare. I would get, for example, called to go to the Brigade Headquarters and meet up with some of the, with the battalion commanders. And sit in the corner with them and then they would, with their training officer, they would work out, say, we're going to do some airmobile assault training, at the platoon level. And this -- 1st battalion would get that week, and you get this week, get that week. I'd write that in. I'd say, "OK,

I'll assign four aircraft or five aircraft," whatever. "And I'll send a LO, in due time, to your respective battalions and my LO will work out the details." And guess what? A search is on and the base commander takes all four airplanes. Now we've got guys on the ground in Wainwright, OK. You say, well you can go play something. OK. But play? Try and get a range vacancy in Wainwright at the last minute. You can't. It really was. I took a lot of flack for that and nobody else seemed to care very much. I took it personally, that they thought that I was old and bad. But I had no choice. I had to.

And I'll tell you, yes. I got an airplane that's down in Grande Prairie. He needs a widget. I send aircraft number two with the widget. Searchmaster sees this airplane number two. It's his right. He needs that other aircraft. Now, the two Hueys is on the search. Guess what? Crews have to rotate. One guy has to come home, has to go to the Staff School. Had to send another airplane, losing it, but you know, so. It was all very difficult. And, as I say, I wish I had a better time at Flight 408. I didn't. I guess I was to blame as well. It was pretty rough.

INTERVIEWER: Andy, you were involved in a lot of things in your flying career. You mentioned the Cobra trials. How about giving us some information about the Cobra trials?

SEGUIN: OK. The Cobra trials were a multinational venture, which consisted of several phases. But, it involved people and equipment from Britain, West Germany, United States and Canada. The Americans, basically, provided a troop, which they called a troop, an air troop of an armoured cav regiment. And that meant about 29 helicopters, 73 aircrew, so on and so forth. It included Cobra helicopters, five of those, and three SS11B helicopters. The rest were 10 LOH Scouts and an air rifle platoon, which is five aircraft with 40 soldiers in it, organizing into an infantry platoon, to do infantry problems.

Now, the trial, the Canadians that were involved in the trial. Bruce Mulaner was the Canadian OIC. And then, I think, with that, at one point, he had two Canadian pilots flying Cobra helicopters for the Americans. Those were Mike Anglesy -- he's a full colonel or general now -- and Leo Noiles. And they were both trained on the UH1G helicopter. The Germans provided a couple of Huey helicopters and a troop of tanks. And the Americans also provided Red Eye teams, Vulcan cannon teams and such other. So it was quite a group.

They were grouped in a place called Ansbach, in the south, west-south-west from Nurnberg. About 50 kilometers from Nurnberg, to the west of Nurnberg. The training area was the entire part, the Franken part of Germany. All the way from Nurnberg, across to Hohenfels and Grafenwehr, in that region .

Now, the phases of it. What was it they're trying to prove. The first thing they tried to test was to do a phase, which lasted approximately a month, on camouflage and concealment. They spent, I would figure, as much as 14 million Deutschmarks in trees and stuff like that. Basically, spotting helicopters and camouflaging them in different scenarios -- alongside a wood, as part of an orchard, inside a built-up area and so on and

so forth. Whether or not -- toning down lizard style camouflage paint and so on -- whether that was effective or not. They produced a report, phase 1 of the trials. In actual fact, when I read the report, one thing is, you don't park helicopters along side trees, especially a tree line, because you look at the map of Germany and a tree line is hard to find. And then all of a sudden, you can't have thirty-year-old trees that would grow there overnight.

We actually, using aircraft from the Germans and from the Americans and from the Canadians. After every time we would camouflage the helicopters, the fighters came with cameras to take pictures. The most effective way of parking helicopters was found to be in orchards, conforming to the layout of the orchard itself, or along side a sort of a semi-populated area. A conglomeration of two, three hundred people with about, say, 50 to 70 houses. And then with the big rotor blades on the Cobra. We actually put Cobras with no covers at all and plant them in villages and the fighters were unable to find them. They were looking for them along side the woods. We also -- I think the report said that at something like about 800 meters, it doesn't matter whether your helicopter is pink or brown. It's going to look like a helicopter at 800 meters. Now, that, to me -- I watched that for years, I watched that happen, that we broke every one of those rules. And we spent all that money. Of course, it was American money, I suppose. It was really not quite required.

The other part of the Cobra trials involved all our aircraft being equipped with lasers, which now we're talking 1971. We had lasers on our aircraft. We took that very serious. We went to Nurnberg, everyone -- everybody in the camp -- hundreds of us, to get our eyes tested in the Nurnberg, at the Heidelberg Hospital. And we did a trial of about a month or so with Kiowa, Cobra helicopters against German tanks. Now the participants in that -- Bruce Mulaner, was still there. And we had two LOH pilots, yours truly and Peter Dudley, and later Peter couldn't do it so Jerry Buck was there. And we had observers and data collectors and so on.

And the trials went on. We did some, what we call a tactical trace, several of them. They were mixed, two scouts with two Cobras. One scout and three Cobras, that sort of thing. Varied the thing every day. What was interesting is that, again, there was a movie made of that called The Cobra Trials and The Ansbach Trials, they might call it. And really, came to the conclusion that the tank-- that the helicopters -- had a kill rate of one to thirty-four. And I spent eight years to disprove that. And it was disproven when 444 Squadron, in 1979, went to the ground where we did all this, in a place called Ahrensburg [?] Germany. And there was no way the Cobras could keep track of Canadian Leopards. They move at one grid square a minute.

The American philosophy was the one in three rule. One platoon firing, one platoon, one bound behind and one platoon in the FARP, or the forward area, forward arming and refueling point. Well, by the time you move -- and they were 10 kilometers -- you really have to give the enemy about 30 kilometers to do that. When we demonstrated this with real tanks, real Leopards and real aircraft, real everything. Jim Fox was there and he said, "It's unacceptable." Unacceptable. I cannot give 30, I can't give you 30 clicks in my

area. But that's it. We either put all five, or three platoons up forward and fire once and get out because we're not going to second jive [?]. And started arming [unclear] and refueling and go back and rejoin the battle. Where have you been, you know? These tanks move, you say -- well, for four days, I kept slowing them down. Slow down to 40, please, slow down to 30, please. They still -- the helicopters couldn't do it.

The Americans, I think, knew all along that with the Black Hawk, they would put the whole company on the line, and then another company. That's the only way, I think. I know the Germans would certainly put their positions and then have them all in depth. And then, as they came in, would engage and then would have them in depth. Of course, the Germans would have every positions earmarked in their head because they're there.

But anyway, the Cobra trials, at the end of it, they produce a trial report. And it led to the formation of Cobra squadrons, lots of them. And they were quite confident that with the advance in missiles, with the Hell Fire.... They went up to the S model Huey and then they went to the Black Hawk. But it was quite interesting a trial.

INTERVIEWER: What was your specific involvement in the trials?

SEGUIN: I was very, very -- I had nothing important. I was just a LOH pilot. I had an observer with me. And I would report. And they would say, OK, you and two Cobras, are a team today. So me and my observer would go and talk with the Cobra pilots and we'd get the map out. And we'd find a corner somewhere. And then we would do like we would be the recce squadron, work out our coordination, agree on radios and code words. After a while, we were there long enough that we knew which way the other guy worked. You know, the Americans were quite, you know, quite interesting.

We woke up one day, right after the end of the trials and, I think, D Troop, second of the four, had just lost 50 of its 73 pilots, with reduction in force. You probably know that, too.

INTERVIEWER: Um huh.

SEGUIN: 1972.

INTERVIEWER: yeah.

SEGUIN: They lost budget. Peter and I, we would walk out to the field in the morning and there'd be crew chiefs standing along side the helicopters. Fly me, Sir, fly me. There's no pilots. They've got all these aircraft, 29 airplanes and. Anyway.

INTERVIEWER: And what unit did that happen to?

SEGUIN: It was, well, it was second of the four, D Troop, second of the four Cav. But, it happened to the whole Air Force, though. Don't make notes of that because, actually,

there's a little politics in there that you shouldn't put in there. I'll tell you what it is. Am I on?

INTERVIEWER: Andy, you've provided outstanding information here, notwithstanding I've done 11 other interviews. You've given me new material here and I really thank you for it. I'd like to ask you one final question. Think of somebody listening to this tape, maybe a hundred years from now. What would you like them to know about Army aviation at this turning point in Canadian Forces existence and what your involvement was in it?

SEGUIN: Well, to me, I would like to leave the reader or the anthropologist with the idea that was, what was known as organizational aviation in the Canadian Army. And it wasn't as unprofessional as they were made out to be. Yes, there were accidents and all that, but at one point we had the unit commander had his aviation assets right in his hand, right in his hip pocket. In fact, at times, we actually -- I know we did this with more than one unit -- used the helicopters as a fourth troop. Bring them in there, dismount the pilots, dismount the observers, and on our feet covering a gap and doing the thing. Giving the commander an awful lot of flexibility. Now, on the gunners' side, it was OK. But the gunners, you see, they never really were keen, not that I know of, having their NCOs controlling guns. There was always enough officers, off duty officers, to help out.

But, I think that the Canadian Army did well with what it had. Now, interestingly enough, there's been a major change in what aviation looks like. Now, much different than it looked only 10 years ago. And there's been a significant change. And that change is that there is no longer LOH and Hueys, there are only Huey helicopters. And that means that now of the Tac Hel Squadrons are much more, well, easier to maintain with one type of helicopter. But it means that there's no longer the capability that the commander had. Now it's quite put together.

My one regret that I have. I never thought that putting the Hueys in little blobs of six in the Tac Hel Squadron, was all that great an idea. I would have liked to see a, you know, like a squadron of Hueys, 18 to 24 of them, in a place, say like, Petawawa. And have it specialize in to an air assault group. Perhaps we'll never have the money or the resources to do that. It was, for me, that wonderful time I had. The best time of my career, was with the Recce Squadron in Soest. The best staff job I ever had was commander of -- being flight safety officer at -- Mobile Command under General Stan Waters. And my best NDHQ job was Director of Flight Safety.

INTERVIEWER: Well, thank you very much. As I said, you've given us excellent insights and opinions about Army aviation and some insight into your own career and your contribution to it. On behalf of the Canadian War Museum Oral History Project, I'd like to thank you for your contribution. Interview with Andy Seguin on ninth of February 2004. Interview ends.

TRANSCRIPT ENDS