

**9884 Dr. Robert Banks Acceptance of Induction into
Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame
September 17, 2026**

Thank you.

Thank you: Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame – officers, directors, staff, the nominator, reviewers, those providing letters.

Thank you.

I have just three points to make, and in doing so I reach out to senior government and RCAF officials with the following:

Firstly. The government and the RCAF should acquire a multi-gimballed human centrifuge for both research and training. The current Canadian centrifuge is obsolete and cannot provide the G-forces that are relevant to modern training aircraft or fifth generation fighters. While we identified the “push-pull effect” as an important cause of fatal crashes many years ago, we did not solve the problem, and fatal crashes continue to occur.

Canada was once the leader in this field. University of Toronto physician Dr. Wilbur Franks was honoured here in 1983 for inventing the first operational g-suit. Canadian leadership in this role was maintained during the Cold War as designs evolved in the presence of faster and more agile jet aircraft. But then progress stopped in the late 1990s because the centrifuge was not suited for advanced research.

Today, with changes in the world order, the stakes are higher and the time is right for sovereign leadership in this field. With a modern centrifuge configured for research and training of pilots, success will depend on quality research leaders - people with a complete understanding of flying and the operational environment – as in, qualified pilots. And -- expert staff who completely understand research methods, the underlying physiology, and the broader aspects of medicine – as in, medical doctors trained as flight surgeons.

Secondly. The RCAF should establish the position of pilot-flight surgeon. These are fully trained and qualified physicians who are also fully trained and qualified pilots. The idea is not new - in either military or civilian aviation. The RCAF has a long history of “informal” pilot-flight surgeons. They are best known for the air sickness rehabilitation program at Moose Jaw, but they have provided much more.

Employed in research and on select squadrons, pilot-flight surgeons provide specialized medical support to pilots who engage in stressful, aggressive high-G and high-altitude flying. Their employment in aircrew selection or aviation medical review boards would add clarity, perspective and quality to important decisions concerning policy and fitness to fly.

Other countries have such positions. The International Association of Military Flight-Surgeon Pilots brings pilot-flight surgeons together once a year to share information and issues.

And **thirdly**, I was surprised that my book “Warriors and Warships” was mentioned in the bio. It’s not about flying but does relate to the heritage and history of the Royal Military College of Canada, also called RMC.

RMC was never large - and is not well known to Canadians. It should be. Although it trains officers for all services, many graduates have gone on to military and civil aviation careers. Many have flown as Snowbirds and operationally. After this dinner, eleven former cadets will be inducted members of the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame.

But RMC has contributed much more to Canada. Graduates helped build the transcontinental railways, hydroelectric plants and dams, the Welland canal, the St. Lawrence Seaway, and the modern highway system. They served as NWMP during the gold rush and one was the first commissioner of the RCMP. RMC ex-cadets served in all Canadian wars at all ranks - private to general - and many died. Five of the fourteen Canadian astronauts are graduates of RMC, a school with less than 0.1 percent of Canada’s university student population.

Oh, and one just circled the moon.

Their stories could be told through a museum and a learning centre. But the learning centre does not exist, and the RMC Museum has been closed for a decade. Help me change that. I’m not sure what anyone else here is doing for the next five years or so, but perhaps you can support the telling of a great Canadian story.

Thank you.