

VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA

Departmental Plan 2023-24

The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, PC, MP
Minister of Veterans Affairs and
Associate Minister of National Defence

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Table of contents

From the Minister	1
Plans at a glance	1
Core responsibilities: Planned results and resources	5
CR1: Benefits, Services and Support	5
CR2: Commemoration	17
CR3: Veterans Ombudsperson.....	21
Internal Services: Planned results	25
Our internal services.....	25
Planned spending and human resources.....	31
Planned spending	31
Planned human resources	34
Estimates by vote.....	34
Future-oriented condensed statement of operations	35
Corporate information	37
Organizational profile.....	37
Our raison d'être, mandate, and role: who we are and what we do.....	37
Veterans Ombud's mandate	37
Operating context and Risks	37
Reporting framework.....	37
Supporting information on the Program Inventory	39
Supplementary information tables.....	39
Federal tax expenditures	40
Organizational contact information	40
Appendix A: definitions	41
Appendix B: MLC codes	44
Endnotes	45

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From the Minister

I am pleased to present the 2023–24 Departmental Plan for Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC). The plan details the priorities for the year ahead and provides an outline of the important work that we will undertake.

At Veterans Affairs Canada, it is our duty and our honour to serve Canada's Veterans. Our 2023–24 Departmental Plan provides detailed information on how we support those who wore the uniform and what we can do to improve that support. This plan will guide our efforts to deliver the service excellence that Veterans and their families so rightfully deserve.

Our top priority continues to be reducing wait times for disability benefit decisions. While we have made real progress, we can and will continue to improve. Our commitment to modernization and digital solutions will help us streamline processes so we can deliver timely services that help Veterans and their families. We will be publishing an update to our strategic direction document early this year which explains this in depth.

As we look to the year ahead, we remain committed to working with Veterans and our partners to learn how best to support our most vulnerable Veterans.

We will continue to work together and invest in research, including the Veteran and Family Well-being Fund (VFWF), to help us better understand what services are needed to support the physical and mental well-being of Veterans. Whether it's finding meaningful employment opportunities for Veterans through our National Veterans Employment Strategy or



providing immediate funding through the Veterans' Emergency Fund when our Veterans find themselves in an unexpected situation, it is vital that we provide the supports needed.

To do this, we recognize that our employees' health and well-being is essential. We are committed to maintaining a healthy and diverse workplace so we can best serve Canada's Veterans and their families. We will continue to offer wellness initiatives and find opportunities to empower our employees. As we transition to a hybrid work model, we

will provide any supports necessary to help our employees be successful.

Finally, we will continue to honour the significant contributions of all our Veterans. We recognize the diversity of our Veterans and their experiences, and will continue to work together to deliver commemorative activities and events which reflect that. Notably, this year, we will commemorate the 75th anniversary of the first United Nations peacekeeping mission, the 70th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice, and the 25th Anniversary of Operation Resistance and the Swiss Air 111 Response. We will also continue targeted outreach to increase funding to local community organizations across the country through the Commemorative Partnership Program (CPP) and provide education on

Canada's contributions across the globe.

We look forward to delivering results to ensure Canada's Veterans and their families are both honoured and supported.

Sincerely,

**The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay,
PC, MP**

Minister of Veterans Affairs and
Associate Minister of National Defence

Plans at a glance

Our country owes a debt of gratitude to all Canadian Veterans. Our focus is on continuing to support their well-being and recognizing the sacrifices both they and their families have made. A Veteran experiencing well-being is a Veteran with purpose, financial security, safe housing, good physical and mental health, the ability to adapt to change, a sense of belonging to their community, pride and awareness of their legacy, and is also valued and celebrated.

Our main priorities for 2023–24 are:

Service Excellence

■ Reduce processing times.

Our top priority continues to be ensuring that Veterans receive their benefits in a timely manner, and we remain committed to reducing the processing times for disability benefits applications. We have made tangible progress, but have more to do. We will continue to work diligently so we can continue making decisions faster.

As outlined under Modernization, we will continue to modernize our tools, to improve the automated transfer and input of information, to learn from our partners and to leverage existing research to expedite processing.

■ Support our most vulnerable Veterans (e.g., those who are struggling with mental illness, unemployment, or homelessness; or who belong to other underrepresented or marginalized groups).

We do not take our commitment to equality lightly as we seek to integrate Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) into our work and to advance gender

equality, respect diversity, and promote inclusion for all Veterans. We do this by recognizing the differential impacts of policies, programs and services based on gender identity and expression, biological sex, and/or sexual orientation, as well as intersecting identity factors such as age, disability, indigeneity, race/ethnicity, religion, and language.

■ Commemorate Veterans and their families.

Veterans and their families have earned the respect and gratitude of all Canadians. We are committed to honouring the sacrifices and achievements of all those who served in Canada's military efforts. We will continue to make sure that memorials, cemeteries and gravemarkers are preserved and cared for, and engage Canadians in remembrance through various national and international events, learning resources and commemorative projects.

Modernization

■ Increase use of automation/digitization and update legacy systems.

We are committed to innovating and making the changes required to modernize the way we do business.

We will continue to explore automation and digitization opportunities which will increase efficiency and productivity in all areas of our work.

We are committed to investing in the modernization of our benefits processing system in support of timely decision making for Veterans. We are embarking on a multi-year effort to update legacy system components to ensure we have a consistent modernized approach to systems used by decision-makers within the Department.

- Improve business processes, including effective data management.

The volume of data that governments produce is growing exponentially. We will continue to review and adapt our business models, build new expertise and devise new ways of managing and using our data. We will continue to streamline our processes so that they are easier to follow.

- Support a hybrid work model.

During the pandemic, federal public servants proved their ability to adapt to new ways of working both on-site and remotely while delivering results for Canadians. We are learning from this experience and embracing a [hybrid workforce](#) as part of how and where we work in the future.

We recognize and look forward to exploring the interconnections among people, talent, diversity, management practices and organizational structures as we support this transition.

Care for our People

- Support employees' health and well-being.

Healthy employees have better quality of life. They benefit from a lower risk of illness and injury and have a greater likelihood of contributing to their communities.

We are committed to advancing the well-being of our staff through the promotion of year-round wellness initiatives aimed at physical and psychological health. As we move toward a hybrid work model, we will continue to be as flexible as possible and provide support related to accessibility and our [duty to accommodate](#).ⁱ

- Cultivate a highly skilled, diverse and inclusive workforce.

Building a diverse, equitable and inclusive public service requires continually looking for ways to identify and overcome the systemic barriers that have made it difficult for some to enter the public service and to progress within it.

We will renew our commitment to maintaining a diverse and inclusive workplace, one that empowers and develops employees with a goal of recruiting, developing, and retaining top talent. It is the collective impact of retaining staff with the right skills, along with our modernization efforts, that will help us reach our goals. Our departmental culture, which engages and inspires employees to their highest possible levels of performance, makes VAC a workplace of choice.

- Empower and equip employees for success.

Remote work has allowed us to continue operations and deliver services to Canadians during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we move toward a post-pandemic environment, this experience will shape the future of a flexible, agile and inclusive public service. We will design work environments to optimize performance, make learning a fundamental part of the job and explore technology and tools to be more

effective and to enable employee success.

We are committed to fostering a workplace that empowers employees with authority to make decisions and gives them the tools they need to provide excellent service.

For more information on our plans, priorities and planned results, see the [“Core responsibilities: planned results and resources”](#) section of this report.

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Core responsibilities:

Planned results and resources

This section contains detailed information on our planned results and resources for our three Core Responsibilities (CR) and internal services as presented in our [Departmental Results Framework](#). We categorized our plans under the Departmental Result to which they relate most closely, and provided visual tags to the Minister’s Mandate Letter Commitments (MLC) where applicable. Please refer to the MLC codes and descriptions in [Appendix B](#).

CR1: Benefits, Services and Support

Description: Support the care and well-being of Veterans and their dependents or survivors through a range of benefits, services, research, partnerships, and advocacy.

Planning highlights

Under this Core Responsibility, we continue to work on improving our benefits and services to Veterans and other clients through various initiatives.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT:

Veterans are physically and mentally well.

As part of our efforts to reduce processing times, we published a strategic direction document entitled [Timely disability benefits decisions: Strategic direction for improving wait times](#)ⁱⁱ (June 2020). This paper describes planned measures to improve services to Veterans and their families by changing the way we work to make faster disability benefits decisions. We expect to publish an update early in 2023 outlining our progress and our priorities through March 2024. We will continue to focus on public service capacity, integration, process innovation and digital solutions. [MLC1]

In addition, in February 2022 the Government [announced funding of \\$139.6 million over two years](#)ⁱⁱⁱ to extend temporary employees dedicated to disability benefits application processing until March 2024. These trained staff will continue to help us reduce processing times. We have also hired an additional 50 disability adjudicators who have started making decisions in January 2023. As these new employees gain proficiency, we expect to increase our decision-making capacity. [MLC1]

In October 2022, the Government invested \$115 million in the Fall Economic Statement which included [\\$43 million in funding over three years](#)^{iv} to maintain frontline staffing levels until March 2025, including the

Case Manager to Veteran ratio, and upgrade the tools Case Managers use – freeing up more time for them to work directly with Veterans.

With the aim of reducing processing times [MLC1], we will:

- aim to expand the Service Health Record Search Tool (SHRST) to include other conditions as it has proven to be an effective time-saving tool when searching thousands of pages of material;
- continue to work with technologies within the SHRST to detect more—not only typed text, but handwritten information and other objects which will further enhance the efficiency of the tool rather than having the decision-maker search manually through thousands of pages;
- continue the development of VAC Healthshare (a new safe and secure method which facilitates sharing of medical documents and evidence from health professionals to us); and
- work on the automation of decision letters.

We will explore avenues to modernize and improve health benefits, including mental health services and supports for Veterans. These include e-therapy approaches and increasing the awareness of existing support for Veterans with concurrent mental illness and substance use. We will also facilitate access to adequate mental health services and supports through expert reviews of the evidence on existing and emerging treatments. [MLC7]

We will improve our services by strategically using data and new technologies such as artificial

intelligence (AI) and automated process flows to minimize processing times so that Veterans can access benefits and services in a timely manner. [MLC1]

We will continue to invest in research that increases our understanding of Veterans across the seven domains of well-being. We will determine if they are financially secure, safely housed, in good health physically and mentally, resilient in the face of change, and well-integrated in their communities. We will also aim to determine whether they have a sense of purpose in life and a sense of pride in, and awareness of their legacy. We will continue to work with Statistics Canada to use the 2021 Canadian Census findings to identify subpopulations of Veterans with greater needs. In addition, we will examine data from the 2022 Canadian Veteran Health Survey to estimate the prevalence of specific physical and mental health conditions across the broader Veteran population. [MLC3, MLC7]

As part of our commitment to reducing barriers to accessing services for Indigenous Veterans, we are expanding outreach to Indigenous communities. [MLC4]

We will conduct a survey of informal caregivers in receipt of the Caregiver Recognition Benefit to determine whether they feel this benefit provides meaningful recognition of their caregiving. Informal caregiving can help to support the physical and mental health of a Veteran.

In addition, we will evaluate and award a new competitive contract for Federal Health Claims Processing Services (FHCPS) to ensure uninterrupted health care authorization and claims

reimbursement for Veterans and fully implement it before the current contract ends in July 2026.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT: Veterans and their families are financially secure.

In 2022, we conducted a financial literacy survey with Veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to learn more about their financial knowledge, skills, and behaviors. Like other Canadians, the majority (75%) of Veterans who responded the survey reported they felt “very to fairly knowledgeable” about managing their finances, however, while most (59%) Veterans reported that they had a household budget, some did not have one because they felt overwhelmed managing their money. This suggests some Veterans may benefit from assistance in this area. Over the next year, we will dig deeper into the results and share our findings to increase awareness of financial literacy and resilience among Veterans. We will also partner with other organizations to launch initiatives which help ensure Veterans and their families have access to the information and resources necessary to navigate financial choices successfully. This initiative will improve the financial security and well-being of Veterans and their families, resulting in a smoother transition.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT: Veterans have a sense of purpose.

Having a sense of purpose is an important component of a fulfilling life and integral to one’s well-being.

Accordingly, we will continue developing a National Veterans’

Employment Strategy which seeks to increase meaningful employment opportunities for Veterans, promote their well-being, and support their success as they make the transition to civilian life. The strategic objectives of this strategy will include private sector job development, increased opportunities for careers in the federal public service, measures to improve Veteran workforce retention and the development of a Veteran-friendly community of practice. [MLC5, MLC6]

We will support Veterans as they work to establish and maintain a sense of purpose by conducting evidence-based assessments which will identify their physical and psycho-social needs to support the implementation of appropriate services and supports. Furthermore, with the increasing age of Veterans, we can support Veterans to live safely and independently in the right place based on their unique situations.

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT
33% OF ALL CANADIAN
VETERANS WILL BE
OVER THE AGE OF 70 IN
THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT: Veterans are able to adapt, manage, and cope within post-service life.

This Departmental Result focuses on the skills, knowledge and abilities required for “managing life,” which includes coping with stress and adapting to change.

We will continue to work with the Department of National Defence (DND) to reduce complexity, improve service delivery and enhance services for transition from military to civilian life through the Closing the Seam project and the Canadian Armed Forces-VAC Seamless Transition Task Force. We will further align business processes and systems between our departments to support a “tell us once” approach. [MLC6]

Moreover, following the conclusion of the “Transition Trials” in December 2021, we developed a national three-phased plan to roll out the joint Military to Civilian Transition (MCT) process at each Transition Centre. To date, implementation is complete in Borden, Petawawa, Valcartier, Winnipeg, Gagetown, Ottawa, and Edmonton Transition Centres. We plan to implement the process in the remaining 20 centres by March 2024. [MLC6]

We will further operationalize the new national rehabilitation services contract that will meet Veterans’ medical, psycho-social and vocational rehabilitation needs through consistent, streamlined and quality services with clearly defined outcomes and performance standards. This will provide a single point of contact for Case Managers to ensure streamlined service delivery to participants and decrease administrative tasks, leaving more time to connect with clients, assess overall case management needs and monitor progress. It will allow us to coordinate and provide oversight to ensure services meet service standards and prescribed turnaround times. It will also ensure consistent training on the Rehabilitation Program, military

culture, cultural sensitivity, GBA Plus and accessibility for all contractor employees and third-party providers.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT:
Veterans are living in safe and adequate housing.

Everyone deserves a place to call home. We want to provide help for Veterans to reduce homelessness and assist in finding safe and affordable places to live.

To this end, we will continue to work with Infrastructure Canada and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to help advance our Mandate Letter Commitment to end chronic homelessness among Veterans, and to support the implementation of the Veteran Homelessness Program announced in Budgets 2021 and 2022. [MLC9]

We will put staff in place dedicated to addressing Veteran homelessness. These staff will provide direction to operational areas, coordinate with all levels of government, and liaise with community-based organizations to support Veterans who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. In addition, our teams in Area Offices across the country will continue to work with local community partners and homeless organizations to ensure that homeless and at-risk Veterans can access the full range of supports available to them in their community. [MLC9]

Moreover, through the VFWF,^v we will support Veteran housing initiatives that will help to create a pathway for Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to establish a safe and secure environment and develop long-term stability.

Meanwhile, work will continue to ensure Veterans' homes are safe and accessible by assessing the need for home adaptations to improve the quality of household living.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT:

Veterans are socially supported.

In 2023–24, we will continue to promote the [Operational Stress Injury Social Support \(OSISS\) Program](#)^{vi} both with our Veteran clients and with the broader community to ensure support for Veterans and their families. Additionally, via the VFWF we will support more organizations that are undertaking innovative projects and providing community-based services that support the well-being of Veterans and their families, including those impacted by COVID-19.

We will contribute to this Departmental Result by continuing to engage with the DND and the [Sexual Misconduct Support and Resource Centre \(SMSRC\)](#)^{vii} concerning Veterans impacted by sexual misconduct during their service, as well as by participating as a member of their External Advisory Council. [MLC2]

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT:

Veterans are satisfied with the services they receive.

Reducing the processing times for disability benefits remains VAC's top priority. As of December 2022, we have reduced the number of applications over the turnaround time indicated in the service standard (i.e., the "backlog") by 60%. While this reduction represents significant progress, we will continue to reduce the number of applications waiting past the service

standard by continuing to leverage existing research, learning from our partners, modernizing the tools used by decision-makers, and continuing to develop computer-assisted processes to improve the transfer and input of information. [MLC1]

Furthermore, in 2021 we launched a Veteran consultation on the disability benefits application process with the goal of better understanding the barriers to Veterans completing their applications. We posted the recommendations in a [report](#)^{viii} on Let's Talk Veterans. During 2023–24, we will work to implement the recommended changes and assess their impact on the usability and completeness of disability benefits applications. We will develop a series of videos detailing the application process that will focus on particular pain points, the aim being to make each step clearer to those applying and to reduce the number of incomplete applications received.

We will also continue the process of modernizing the [Table of Disabilities \(TOD\)](#), which will simplify and create further efficiencies in decisions, reduce hand-offs in the processing of applications, and support reduced processing times. [MLC1] This work will support equitable, transparent and consistent disability benefits decisions, and ensure Veteran-centricity and application of a GBA Plus mindset. We are modernizing the TOD and creating one new TOD chapter to align the Additional Pain and Suffering Compensation with the TOD.

In addition to the modernization, we are also exploring automation opportunities for the TOD. We continue to research ways to use technology to lessen administrative

work, alleviate repetitive tasks, improve information sharing and the client experience, and enhance collaboration in the disability benefit process.

Over several years, we modernized our [Entitlement Eligibility Guidelines \(EEGs\)](#)^{ix} to support adjudicators in making more equitable, consistent, transparent and rapid decisions on the entitlement aspect of disability benefits applications. In 2022, we fully implemented our first new EEG, Sexual Dysfunction, and in 2023–24 we plan to review our existing EEGs while developing several new ones for conditions that are complex or receive a high volume of applications.

An important tool available to Veterans is [My VAC Account](#).^x This year, we will roll out a new, modern look and feel for this application, making it easier for Veterans and others we serve to interact with us. Because we are committed to better serving Canadians in a digital age, the new look and feel will make it easier for users to access services they require and provide us the option to add more features to My VAC Account.

We will also improve the [Benefits and Health Services Online \(BHSOL\)](#)^{xi} user experience thanks to user testing completed with providers who work directly in support of Veterans and others we serve.

We will continue to work with Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) Canada, the federal government department leading the first ever [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan](#).^{xii} Our work in this area includes consulting with those impacted by the LGBT Purge about their unique service-related needs and any systemic challenges or barriers they face in accessing

programs and services. In addition, we will work with academic partners, Veterans' organizations and other stakeholders to study best practices in meeting their needs, as well as women, through direct engagement with staff. In doing so, we aim to foster a culture of openness, understanding, and trust when serving vulnerable Veterans. [MLC3]

Furthermore, we are committed to building on the Forum on Women and 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans held in February 2023 and continue to host the Forum annually to identify systemic barriers, inequities, and/or gaps in our existing policies, programs, and services. Holding this recurring forum will help to facilitate collaborative work with these Veteran communities, stakeholders, partners, and academia towards achieving equity for all Veterans. [MLC3]

Survey data analysis can help to increase the success of long-term business planning, so we will complete a secondary analysis of the 2022 VAC National Client Survey (VNCS) results. Doing so will give us insight into satisfaction levels, help improve service delivery, and support further research on the needs of Veterans. Meanwhile, work will begin on the development of the 2024 VNCS, including a review of current survey questions to ensure we are capturing the information we require while, at the same time, retaining consistency to allow for comparisons of satisfaction over time.

Gender-based analysis plus (GBA Plus)

With the support of our [Office of Women and LGBTQ2+ Veterans](#),^{xiii} we will continue the implementation of the VAC Gender-Based Analysis Plus

Strategy to fully integrate GBA Plus into our work at all stages of design, development, implementation, monitoring and decision-making. This strategy drives our development of a departmental GBA Plus policy and we will also develop tailored training and resource tools. The Office will support us with the application of a GBA Plus lens on all budget proposals, Memoranda to Cabinet, Treasury Board Submissions, regulatory packages, and evaluations.

Additionally, we will implement the Government of Canada's policy direction on the [Modernization of Sex and Gender Information Practices](#)^{xiv} through the Gender Inclusive Services Project, which outlines best practices for reporting on personal information related to sex and gender.

As a department, we ensure that research for which we provide funding conforms to the principles of Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) – projects funded through the VFWF, for example. These principles inform how we design and conduct research and report findings to ensure equitable

representation and project impacts across sub-groups of the Veteran population.

Refining the collection, analysis, and reporting of GBA Plus information will enable a deeper understanding of who our Veterans are, help identify their unique needs related to the domains of well-being, and identify potential barriers – all of this with the outcome of improving (or increasing) equitable access to programs, benefits and services for all Veterans. For example, we will conduct GBA Plus of the population of Veterans experiencing homelessness to identify unmet needs and any gaps in supports. Via the Community Health Needs Assessments, we will look specifically at under-represented communities of Veterans – including those who are women, 2SLGBTQI+, Indigenous, or racialized – in order to understand the health and well-being of these individuals.

Further information on program-specific data collection plans can be found in our [GBA Plus Supplementary Information Table](#).^{xv}



UNITED NATIONS' (UN) 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

We are committed to supporting Canada's efforts to implement the UN's 2030 Agenda for SDGs. Of the [17 SDGs](#),^{xvi} this Core Responsibility contributes to these specific goals:

SDG 1: No Poverty

- Income Support; Transition Services; Health Care Services; Long Term Care; Caregiver Recognition Benefit directly contribute to this SDG.

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

- Through the continuum of service, we provide support to Veterans whose needs and complexity levels are highly varied. We continually assess Veterans' needs to determine the level of support they require:
 - ♦ Veterans who are self-sufficient with minimal needs are accessing services and benefits using My VAC Account or the National Client Contact Centre.
 - ♦ Veterans with moderate needs are accessing services and benefits through Guided Support from a Veteran Service Agent, who becomes their primary point of contact.
 - ♦ Veterans with complex and challenging needs are accessing Case Management Services, where a Case Manager provides a specialized service which is adapted to their challenges and needs, and leverages their strengths and capacities to achieve positive outcomes.
 - ♦ Veterans can move through the continuum of service to access the appropriate level of support based on their needs, risks and complexity at any given time.

SDG 4: Quality Education

- We have [several programs](#)^{xvii} that provide financial support for education, training and their related financial costs for Veterans and their families.

SDG 5: Gender Equality and SDG 10: Reduced inequalities

- We are working collaboratively with women and 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans and stakeholders to ensure that their voices are heard. We are engaging Veterans with diverse lived experiences to help inform research and the development of benefits, programs and services that impact them. This approach supports the empowerment of historically marginalized groups and equitable outcomes for all.
- We are committed to becoming an implementing partner on [Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security](#)^{xviii} (led by Global Affairs Canada), helping to ensure women and gender diverse Veterans are supported in their meaningful participation in global peace and security efforts at home and abroad.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

- We have [several programs](#)^{xix} to help CAF Veterans find jobs and provide other career-related services and information.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

- Our pan-governmental work towards ending homelessness among Veterans supports the UN goal of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

- Bureau of Pension Advocates specializes in administrative law, particularly various legislations that apply to the Veteran community. The Bureau's mandate is to represent Veterans, for free, before the Veterans Review and Appeal Board in support of Veterans receiving entitlement to disability benefits. This contributes to promoting the rule of law and providing access to justice for all.

Innovation

We will continue to experiment with cognitive services software, a form of AI, which allows for quicker processing of claims. For example, this type of software can automatically identify both typed text and handwritten information on submitted forms and convert the data to be machine readable, pick out which checkboxes a client selected or identify the classification of uploaded documents from health providers.

We are also piloting VAC Healthshare, a new secure method which facilitates sharing of medical documents and evidence from health professionals to us. Its development will support automation, allowing us to receive documents more quickly and reducing administrative tasks for health professionals, clients and our staff.

We have launched an on-the-job training (OJT) pilot project for new Case Managers (CM). This intensive 6-week training addresses the gaps from the existing training program and takes into consideration current case management proficiency, thereby allowing for a focus on VAC's specific case management environment. Participants can practice "real life" cases, as opposed to scenarios, with quality assurance and consultation throughout the training period.

This practical learning experience is engaging and interactive, allowing participants to work with current active files of low to moderate complexity. It can take up to 6

months to a year for CMs to be fully functional with a full caseload following the original training method. We anticipate cutting this timeframe in half by incorporating the practical OJT. Our training team will be able to evaluate the project as it unfolds and share our findings when the pilot is complete.

Another stream of innovation is in the Community Health Needs Assessment. Health professionals and researchers will collect, organize, and analyze new and existing data about and from Veterans. We will communicate results across VAC, to partners, and to Veterans in an accessible and usable way to highlight priorities, inform decision-making, and support the allocation of resources. By understanding the strengths and needs of under-represented communities, we will identify our blind spots and improve policies, programs & services for all Veterans rather than continuing to focus programming on current clients only.

The Bureau of Pensions Advocates (BPA) is launching a Digital Age Renewal Exercise. The review will look at the Bureau's current structure, governance, processes, resources, culture, communication, demand for services and processing capacities to identify pressure points internally and externally. The aim of the project is to devise simpler, faster and more flexible mechanisms to adjudicate Veterans' claims. For example, explorations will occur to see if additional technologies, like artificial intelligence, could increase efficiencies.

DATA SOURCE CHANGES

Providing better representation and increasing comparability.

The Life After Service Survey (LASS), last completed in 2019, was replaced with the Canadian Veteran Health Survey (CVHS) in order to provide better representation of certain Veteran groups, particularly older Veterans, and will align closely with the content covered in the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), allowing increased comparability with the broader Canadian population.

The CVHS, conducted by Statistics Canada on our behalf, draws its sample from a combination of two sources, the Military Veteran Status File (MVSF) and the Census. This will ensure CVHS covers all individuals who became Veterans up to 11 May 2021 (Census day), within the target population. The target population is Veterans who released before May 2021 and who are not re-enlisted at the time of the survey. It will be administered to Veterans living in the 10 provinces of Canada, 18 years of age or older, and not living in institutions.

Many of VAC's performance measurement indicators are derived from Veteran surveys. Indicators based on questions from the CVHS will be similar to those from LASS as many of the questions are identical. However, the Veteran population surveyed differs: the 2019 LASS covered Regular Force Veterans released from 1998 to 2018, while CVHS covers all Veterans who were released up to May 2021 (again, within the target population). As such, results for indicators based on

CVHS questions (from 2022 on) cannot be directly compared to those sourced from LASS.

The table on the following page shows, for Benefits, Services and Support, the planned results, result indicators, targets, and target dates for 2023–24, along with actual results for the three most recent fiscal years for which actual results are available.

DID YOU KNOW?

VAC uses a variety of means to better understand our Veterans.

The [2021 Census included a question on military service](#)^{xx} for the first time in 50 years and is a key milestone. It sheds important light on the sociodemographic, economic, family and household characteristics of Veterans on Census day.

Another useful survey is the [Indigenous Peoples Survey \(IPS\)](#).^{xxi} It is a national survey of First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit living in Canada. It can inform policy and programming activities that are aimed at improving the well-being of Indigenous peoples.

You can also find other sources we use in various research on [our website](#).^{xxii}

Planned results for CRI: Benefits, Services and Support

Departmental Results	Departmental Result Indicators	Targets	Date to achieve targets	2019–20 Actual results	2020–21 Actual results	2021–22 Actual results
Veterans are physically and mentally well.	% of Veterans who report that their health is very good or excellent. ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
	% of Veterans who report that their mental health is very good or excellent. ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
	% of Veterans receiving treatment in Operational Stress Injury Clinics reporting improved overall mental health. ²	50%	March 2024	47%	50%	48%
	% of Veterans who report they need help with an activity of daily living. ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
Veterans and their families are financially secure.	% of Veterans whose household income is below the Low Income Measure. ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
	% of Veterans who are satisfied with their financial situation ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
Veterans have a sense of purpose.	% of Veterans who are satisfied with their job or main activity. ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
	% of Veterans who are employed. ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
Veterans are able to adapt, manage, and cope within post-service life.	% of Veteran clients of Veterans Affairs Canada who report an easy adjustment to post-service life. ³	70%	March 2025	n/a ⁴	68% ⁵	
	% of Veterans who have completed a post-secondary education. ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
	% of Veterans who have high level of mastery of their life skills. ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
Veterans are living in safe and adequate housing.	% of Veterans who are in core housing need. ⁶	TBD	TBD	n/a		5.1%
	% of Veteran clients of Veterans Affairs Canada 65 years and older living in their own homes who report satisfaction with their housing.	97%	March 2025	n/a ⁷	90%	
Veterans are socially supported.	% of Veterans who have a strong sense of community belonging. ¹	TBD	TBD	n/a		
	% of Veterans Affairs Canada clients who are satisfied with their relationships with friends or family.	85%	March 2025	n/a ⁴	83% ⁵	
Veterans are satisfied with the services they receive.	% of Veterans Affairs Canada clients who are satisfied with the quality of service delivery they receive from Veterans Affairs Canada.	85%	March 2025	n/a ⁷	81% ⁵	
	% of Veterans Affairs Canada clients who are satisfied with the quality of Veterans Affairs Canada's programs and services offered.	85%	March 2025	n/a ⁷	80% ⁵	

¹New baseline measures to be determined in fall 2023 (based on 2022 survey cycle), as the new data source represents a much larger set of Veterans. As the data source has changed, no historical information is available for direct comparison with future results.

² Results are based on data for 15% (2019–20 fiscal year), 10% (2020–21 fiscal year) and 14% (2021–22 fiscal year) respectively of total number of clients served each year in the VAC-funded Network of OSI Clinics. Based on these samples, the yearly percentage of clients who reported clinically significant improvement in mental health is greater than the 30% of mental health treatment outcome monitoring improvement reported in the scientific literature. CROMIS 2.0 training began in fiscal year 2021–22 and continues in 2022–23 with the aim of increasing participation in the OSI Clinic Network-wide standardized treatment outcome monitoring program.

³ This indicator was previously reported on using the LASS; however, it is not currently an indicator as part of the new CVHS data source. It had been previously measured using the VNCS as well, therefore the historical information has been updated and will be used in the interim to provide results.

⁴ No historical information is available.

⁵ This indicator was measured using data from the VNCS, a survey normally conducted on a 2-year cycle, thus results are carried forward until the next survey results are available.

⁶ As this specific indicator had an updated methodology in the 2020–21 Departmental Results Framework and the Canadian Housing Survey was then delayed due to COVID-19, historical results are not reported. The target and date to achieve target should be set by the Fall 2023.

⁷ The results from the 2020 VNCS were not available at that time. We suspended fieldwork for this on 20 March 2020 because of public health measures.

Departmental Plan 2023–24

Planned budgetary spending for CRI: Benefits, Services and Support (dollars)

2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending	2025–26 planned spending
5,826,610,032	5,826,610,032	5,424,185,936	5,414,015,405

Planned human resources for CRI: Benefits, Services and Support

2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents	2025–26 planned full-time equivalents
2,701.9	2,136.4	2,044.4

Future spending and staffing levels are under ongoing review. A full analysis of the planned budgetary financial resources and full-time equivalents is available in the [“Planned spending and human resources”](#) section of this report.

Complete framework methodologies, as well as financial, human resources and performance information for the Program Inventory (PI), are available in [GC InfoBase](#).^{xxiii}

CR2: Commemoration

Description: Pay tribute to the sacrifices and achievements of those who served in Canada’s military efforts.

Planning highlights

We will continue to support the Government of Canada’s duty to pay tribute to the contribution and sacrifice of all who have served and continue to serve Canada in times of war, military conflict, and peace.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT:

Veterans and those who died in service are honoured.

To contribute to this Departmental Result in 2023–24, we will lead and support commemorative efforts in Canada and internationally [MLC8], such as:

- ▶ 100th anniversary of the unveiling of the [St. Julien Canadian Memorial](#)^{xxiv}
- ▶ 75th anniversary of the first UN peacekeeping mission
- ▶ 70th anniversary of the [Korean War](#)^{xxv} Armistice
- ▶ 35th anniversary of the Nobel Peace Prize for UN Peacekeeping Forces
- ▶ 25th Anniversary of Operation Resistance – Swiss Air Response
- ▶ 2023 [Invictus Games](#)^{xxvi} in Düsseldorf, Germany

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT:

Canadians remember and appreciate Veterans and those who died in service.

We will ensure sound stewardship of international memorial sites through increased funding to support the ongoing renewal and refurbishment of monuments, infrastructure and visitor experience at Canadian memorial sites including the [Canadian National Vimy Memorial](#)^{xxvii} and [Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial](#).^{xxviii}

Care of our First World War memorials remains an important commitment. Additional funding will ensure aging memorials are preserved and supporting site infrastructure is modernized with an eye toward sustainability and a reduced environmental footprint. We will also invest in modernization of visitor services and interpretive supports, including upgrading of the permanent exhibit at the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial. Our efforts to preserve these cultural resources will ensure that the important stories they tell are shared today and in the future.

We received approximately \$2.15M in 2021 via Natural Resources Canada to support the [Forest Conservation at Canada’s First World War Memorials](#)^{xxix} in Europe. This will support the implementation of our multi-year forest management plan which includes maintenance, replanting and long-term sustainability of wooded areas and forests at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial National Historic Sites. This plan involves partnerships with French authorities, Natural Resources Canada’s Growing Canada’s Forests Program, and Canada’s Embassy in France.

Gender-based analysis plus (GBA Plus)

We will continue to apply a GBA Plus lens to the planning and delivery of our commemorative programming. We will specifically look at underrepresented communities of Veterans including women, 2SLGBTQI+, Indigenous, and racialized Veterans to understand their unique service-related experiences as they relate to recognition and commemoration. The diversity of Veterans will always be considered in the planning and development of commemorative programs and events and this diversity will be represented in

our activities and our participants.

To increase the inclusion and participation of Canadians with disabilities or functional limitations, we will continue to evolve our learning products to ensure they are inclusive and accessible for all Canadians. In addition, we will develop training for on-site student guides, and continue the accessibility review for the [Chapel at God's Acre](#).^{xxx}

We will also complete preliminary accessibility assessments of overseas memorial sites to establish a baseline and identify issues and possible solutions that will support visitors and staff.



UNITED NATIONS' 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Commemoration will contribute to **SDG 3–Good Health and Well-being**, **SDG 13: Climate Action** and **SDG 15–Life on Land** by:

- Ensuring that visitor experience products (e.g., exhibits, interpretive signage, educational products, welcome screens) reflect the diversity of Canadian military forces across Canada's history.
- Introducing a wreath-placement schedule to educate visitors to our international memorials about Canada's military contributions on the world stage since the First World War by marking modern milestones and providing information in the visitor centre at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial. These wreath placements will mirror those that occur in Ottawa at the [National War Memorial](#).^{xxxi}
- Continuing targeted outreach to organizations undertaking projects that recognize and commemorate underrepresented Veterans via the [Commemorative Partnership Program](#).^{xxxii} **[MLC8]**
- Continuing to plan and deliver recognition activities for domestic operations – most notably in 2023–24, the 25th Anniversary of Operation Resistance – Swiss Air Response. **[MLC8]**
- Continuing to work with local and national Indigenous partners to ensure representation in all commemorative activities and events. **[MLC8]**
- Implementing our multi-year forest management plan at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial, which includes partnerships with French authorities, Natural Resources Canada's Growing Canada's Forests Program, and Canada's Embassy in France.
- Reducing our environmental footprint by installing electric charging stations at our memorial sites and ensuring buildings and equipment are energy efficient.

Planned results for CR2: Commemoration

Departmental Results	Departmental Result Indicators	Targets	Date to achieve targets	2019–20 Actual results	2020–21 Actual results	2021–22 Actual results
Veterans and those who died in service are honoured.	% of Veterans Affairs Canada clients who are satisfied with the way Veterans Affairs Canada's commemorative initiatives honour Veterans and those who died in service.	80%	March 2025	n/a ⁸	71% ⁹	
	# of page views of the Canadian Virtual War Memorial.	2,000,000	March 2024	2,659,840	2,261,122	2,303,935
	% of visitors to Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel overseas memorials who report they have a better understanding of the sacrifice and contribution of those who served.	95%	March 2026	97% ¹⁰		
Canadians remember and appreciate Veterans and those who died in service.	% of Canadians who indicate they make an effort to appreciate Veterans and those who died in service.	75%	March 2025	75%	71% ¹¹	
	# of Canadians who participated in community engagement activities financially supported by Veterans Affairs Canada.	200,000	March 2024	548,512	1,916,367 ¹²	1,118,131

Planned budgetary financial resources for CR2: Commemoration (dollars)

2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending	2025–26 planned spending
41,854,568	41,854,568	47,625,409	38,999,132

Planned human resources for CR2: Commemoration

2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents	2025–26 planned full-time equivalents
89.1	89.1	89.1

Future spending and staffing levels are under ongoing review. A full analysis of the planned budgetary financial resources and full-time equivalents is available in the “[Planned spending and human resources](#)” section of this report.

Complete framework methodologies, as well as financial, human resources and performance information for the PI, are available in [CC InfoBase](#).^{xxiii}

⁸ The results from the 2020 VNCS were not available at that time as the fieldwork had been suspended because of public health measures.

⁹ This result was carried over from the 2020 VNCS, a survey conducted on a 2-year cycle.

¹⁰ This result was carried over as the surveys are only conducted every three years.

¹¹ This result was carried over as the surveys are only conducted every two years.

¹² The result is much higher than prior years as the CPP funded a large amount of projects that went virtual when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, opening their reach to a much larger audience.

CR3: Veterans Ombudsperson¹³

Description: Provide an independent and impartial review of complaints and issues related to programs and services delivered by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio and uphold the *Veterans Bill of Rights*.

Planning highlights

Under this core responsibility, the [Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson \(OVO\)](#)^{xxxiii} will continue to look into issues and complaints related to programs and services to determine whether Veterans and their families are treated fairly.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT:

Veterans and their families have access to a timely review of complaints about the programs, services and support delivered by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio.

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson intends to address complaints in a timely manner by reviewing client files and intervening where appropriate with the Veterans Affairs Portfolio to obtain resolution. Service excellence provided by the staff of the OVO will be a top priority to ensure that Veterans and their families feel heard and acknowledged, regardless of the outcome of the review of individual complaints.

In 2023–24, the following activities will contribute to this departmental result:

- Implementation of call recording for quality assurance and training purposes to ensure that interactions with clients are periodically monitored and feedback provided to ensure exemplary services are provided to all clients who contact the OVO.
- Improvement of internal processes and fostering skills within OVO staff to facilitate resolution of unfairness at the lowest possible level. This will aid in faster resolution of complaints and reduce the burden and impact to clients.
- Refine the process for escalation of findings of unfairness to ensure that VAC and the OVO are working together effectively to meet the best interests of Veterans and their families and will result in timely decisions and corrective actions to address unfairness.
- Increase awareness of the services of the OVO within the Veteran community through the delivery of virtual Town Hall style meetings and in-person outreach events during the fiscal year. This will heighten awareness of services and strive to reach populations who may not be aware of how the OVO can assist them.
- Through social media we will continue to connect with Veterans and their families to ensure they understand VAC programs and benefits, and understand our role in advocating for fairness.

¹³ To ensure gender inclusivity, the title has been changed to Ombudsperson.

DEPARTMENTAL RESULT:

Issues about the programs, services and support provided to Veterans and their families by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio identified by the Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson are addressed.

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson addresses complaints of fairness from individual Veterans and their families. This includes assessing if such complaints are valid (based on treatment, process and/or outcome) and are within the mandate of the Office. Complaints with recommendations are then submitted to the Veterans Affairs Portfolio for resolution.

In addition to reviewing and addressing complaints from individual Veterans and their families, the office also identifies and conducts reviews into systemic issues. Reviews highlight gaps and fairness issues in VAC's programs and services and include recommendations to the Minister of Veterans Affairs.

Through the annual [Report Card](#)^{xxxiv} publication, the office assesses whether and to what extent recommendations have been addressed. The Report Card tracks all recommendations made in systemic reviews since 2009. In that time, many changes have been made to VAC legislation, policy, and programs. In addition, over time, the OVO has implemented new methods of conducting systemic reviews and assessing fairness. To ensure the office's efforts to achieve this result are focused on fairness issues with solid rationales within our mandate, the OVO will contract an independent

technical review of outstanding recommendations. An expert in the ombudsmanry field will advise on whether each recommendation continues to be valid, should be revised, or should no longer be tracked.

The results of this review will ensure the office is focused on issues that are clearly unfair and that should be addressed.

We commit to continue to conduct systemic reviews and to make recommendations that focus on fairness issues related to VAC programs and services. The OVO will also commit to improving internal processes to support researching and validating emerging issues brought forward by individual complainants. This will support the prioritization of reviews of systemic issues that have the most significant impact on Veterans and their families.

Gender-based analysis plus (GBA Plus)

The OVO will include gender-based analysis plus in every comprehensive systemic review examining issues of fairness related to VAC programs and services. This will help to ensure fairness issues for all VAC clients are identified and recommendations to address those issues are made and addressed.

The OVO is also committed to improving the quality of the data that is available with respect to our clients. In 2023–24, the OVO will identify requirements for system improvements and data capture that will better enable analysis and reporting on our client base and trends related to GBA Plus factors. The OVO will work with IT to plan for development and implementation of these requirements.

Innovation

The OVO recognizes that Veterans have a lifelong relationship with Veterans Affairs and through our role as an advocate for fairness, the OVO has identified that many Veterans often need assistance not only with individual benefits or services, but in bridging communications gaps with VAC staff to ensure that their needs are met. In 2023–24, the OVO will begin researching and exploring methods to

help Veterans and VAC rebuild relationships and trust with a goal to testing this role, and facilitating conversations between the Veteran and VAC on a complex case during the fiscal year. If successful, the OVO may be able to assist more Veterans through facilitation and have a significant positive impact by playing a part in restoring relationships between Veterans and the Department

Planned results for CR3: Veterans Ombudsperson

Departmental Results	Departmental Result Indicators	Targets	Date to achieve targets	2019–20 Actual results	2020–21 Actual results	2021–22 Actual results
Veterans and their families have access to a timely review of complaints about the programs, services and support delivered by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio.	% of complaints reviewed within 60 working days.	85%	March 2024	89%	90%	92%
Issues about the programs, services and support provided to Veterans and their families by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio identified by the Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson are addressed.	% of individual complaints reviewed and escalated by the Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson to the Veterans Affairs Portfolio that are addressed.	80%	March 2024	n/a ¹⁴	80%	85%
	% of recommendations made by the Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson related to systemic issues addressed by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio.	75%	March 2024	n/a ¹⁵	72%	69%

¹⁴ As this specific indicator was not previously measured, no historical information is available.

¹⁵ The result was not available as it had been modified to a 3-year cycle. In addition, the definition has been modified from “seeks resolution” to “accepted” as per the Departmental Results Framework. As this specific indicator was not previously measured, no historical information is available.

Departmental Plan 2023–24

Planned budgetary financial resources for CR3: Veterans Ombudsperson (dollars)

2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending	2025–26 planned spending
4,465,311	4,465,311	4,528,110	4,541,629

Planned human resources for CR3: Veterans Ombudsperson¹⁶

2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents	2025–26 planned full-time equivalents
39.0	39.0	39.0

Future spending and staffing levels are under ongoing review. A full analysis of the planned budgetary financial resources and full-time equivalents is available in the “[Planned spending and human resources](#)” section of this report.

Complete framework methodologies, as well as financial, human resources and performance information for the PI, are available in [GC InfoBase](#).^{xxiii}

¹⁶ These figures include 10 VAC positions that provide support to the OVO.

Internal Services:

Planned results

Our internal services

Description: Internal services are the services that are provided within a department so that it can meet its corporate obligations and deliver its programs. There are 10 categories of internal services:

- Management and Oversight Services
- Communications Services
- Legal Services
- Human Resources Management Services
- Financial Management Services
- Information Management Services
- Information Technology Services
- Real Property Management Services
- Materiel Management Services
- Acquisition Management Services
- Travel and Other Administrative Services

Planning highlights

Our internal services provide core business functions that support the outcomes identified in the Departmental Results Framework. Planning objectives have been aligned to support program delivery and are evolving how we do business to ensure we can continue to provide the programs and services Veterans need and expect in the future.

Internal services contribute to all Departmental Results.

We will continue to optimize the delivery of core services and pursue continual improvement of our corporate services.

Modernization

We will modernize security operations and management to reflect the hybrid work model and to align with the evolving security dynamic in Canada. This will enable continued delivery of our core programs, increase efficiency, and enable improved services,

including digitization of security screening.

We will provide flexible, digitally enabled tools to support flexible work arrangements and modernization of core business processes, including how we manage electronic information.

Other efforts include the modernization and enhancement of our internal and external Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) services and business processes to realize efficiencies and update the tools we use to collect and process information to meet our ATIP obligations; digitization of form-based processes to

improve accessibility and usability and to enable improved access to and use of data; and leading change management initiatives in support of progressing our vision for the future of work at VAC.

Additionally, we will continue to improve our integrated approach to service delivery through close collaboration with internal and external partners, while also continuing our digital transformation by launching a renewed digital strategy. We have two audits underway (the Audit of Digital Transformation and Audit of IT Agility) intended to ensure the Department is on the right path to achieve the outcome of continuing to digitize services for Veterans.

We will be improving our Business Continuity Program by adopting a life-cycle approach to business continuity management in order to maintain resiliency and enhance our ability to prepare for significant events.

We will modernize materiel management services to reflect the new [Directive on the Management of Materiel](#),^{xxxv} to align with the hybrid work model, and to ensure we reach our operational outcomes and provide the best value consistent with the Government of Canada's socio-economic, security and environmental objectives.

Finally, supported by our ongoing modernization efforts, we will continue to provide efficient and timely services in support of our departmental priorities.

Communications

We continue to roll out our communications outreach and

engagement strategy, adjusting as we go based on evidence and research. We will focus on providing accessible, timely, accurate, clear, and objective communications services and products to Veterans, their families, and Canadians in both official languages. We will continue to support the Minister of Veterans Affairs in his role as primary spokesperson for the Department. We will also continue to use our website, social media platforms, advertising and other digital communications tools to share accessible information about our programs and services and to commemorate Veterans, including modern-day and under-represented populations.

We will undertake meaningful engagement with stakeholders through consultation platforms including [Let's Talk Veterans](#).^{xxxvi} Doing so will assist us in reaching a larger audience for inclusive, collaborative and transparent discussions on Veterans' issues. We will also continue our ongoing engagement with stakeholders through six Ministerial Advisory groups. We will focus on understanding communications analytics, the media environment and stakeholder analysis to inform decision-making on internal and external communications approaches.

Human Resources

We will sustain our commitment to maintaining a diverse and inclusive workplace that empowers and develops employees with a goal of recruiting, developing and retaining top talent. This year, we will continue to adapt to a hybrid workplace and equip our workforce to embrace this new model of work. We will begin to modernize our staffing programs and

practices including enhancing onboarding practices to develop or implement responsive learning solutions aligned to organizational priorities that ensure employee investment at the enterprise level. We will work to identify talent needs and implement strategies that focus on attracting, developing and retaining a diverse workforce with the experience and skills required to meet the changing work environment.

We will launch a renewed Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that will support us in building a more diverse workforce and promote a culture of inclusion. This plan will align with and support the implementation of our Accessibility Action Plan 2022-2025. We will implement a centralized Disability Management Program to improve the accommodations process and support our staff's healthy return to the workplace. We will continue to foster a work culture that increases awareness and uses best practices to promote mental health, safety, and well-being for all employees.

Stewardship

We will ensure effective stewardship of resources and continue to evolve how we deliver resource management services to support sound stewardship on behalf of Canadians. We will do this by continuing to optimize the use of SAP to improve financial management processes, leveraging technology and data resources to enable predictive and responsive analysis, strengthening reporting, and supporting decision making. Furthermore, we will centralize the specific material management responsibilities to ensure the alignment of our processes, systems and controls for the planning and management of investments with

governmental and departmental objectives.

We will transform how we manage our real property assets. We will do this by developing a departmental real property portfolio strategy and implementation plan. This work will allow us to assess the current state and describe the desired state of our assets. We will also be able to identify gaps in resources and finances, and present options to maintain a sustainable and affordable portfolio with an optimized footprint that can support present and future program requirements.

Gender-based analysis plus (GBA Plus)

Working with our Office of Women and LGBTQ2+ Veterans, we will implement communications plans related to GBA Plus, diversity and inclusion in order to raise employee awareness and understanding of these issues. Moreover, we will continue to ensure that women and 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans are considered as part of our Ministerial Advisory Groups and in communications products, increasing the presence of modern-day Veterans in commemorative content and focusing on the diversity of our clients.

We will continue to ensure women and gender and sexually diverse Veterans are invited to participate in consultations so that their unique experiences and service-related needs are captured. We will also explore the ability to incorporate the collection of gender information into VAC systems of record for client information. These initiatives will enable us to have a richer understanding of the programs and policies administered by VAC from a GBA Plus perspective, and help us to

identify research, benefits, programs, services and policy priorities.

Planning for Contracts Awarded to Indigenous Businesses

We have been setting targets for procurement with Indigenous businesses since 1996. With the implementation of the mandatory minimum federal target of 5% of total annual contracts for Indigenous suppliers, we developed a more strategic approach to achieve this and some activities are outlined here:

- Learning exercises and training for all procurement specialists will continue to be mandatory, including information and engagement sessions offered by various stakeholders such as Indigenous Services Canada.
- Awareness exercises within the Department, including presentations to the Contract Review Board and senior management to ensure support in achieving our target.
- Internal information sessions on procurement include a section highlighting our target commitment. This section

emphasizes the importance of internal clients' support in achieving the targets by planning procurements and consulting with procurement specialists early to assist in identifying opportunities for Indigenous procurements.

- Procurement specialists are constantly seeking opportunities and engaging with Indigenous suppliers whenever possible.
- Encouraging subcontracting to/ employment of Indigenous individuals and communities within procurements that aren't with Indigenous contractors.

Deputy Minister approval will be sought for any requests to grant an exception and exclude the value of a contract from the calculation of the mandatory minimum target.

VAC reports its annual targets as set out in the [Directive on the Management of Procurement](#).^{xxxvii} Individual contracts awarded to Indigenous suppliers are reported in our quarterly proactive disclosure report of contracts over \$10,000, and annual Procurement Activity Report of contracts valued at less than \$10,000.

Planned Results – Procurement from Indigenous Businesses

The following table outlines our planned target for 2023–24.

Reporting field description	2021–22 actual achieved (%)	2022–23 forecasted target (%)	2023–24 planned target (%)
Total percentage of contracts with Indigenous businesses	N/A ¹⁷	N/A ¹⁷	5% ¹⁸ (\$2.75M)

¹⁷ We are a Phase 2 participant; therefore, no data is reported for fiscal years 2021–22 and 2022–23.

¹⁸ Methodology: the 2023–24 target of 5% has been established to ensure minimum target is achieved during the initial year, with progress to be monitored through regular reporting. Value is based on projected procurement spending of \$55M. Once this target is met, we will continue to engage Indigenous businesses to surpass the target.



UNITED NATIONS' 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Our internal services are aligned to the United Nations' and Government of Canada's SDGs across a broad spectrum of activities, ranging from communications to infrastructure management to procurement. Our efforts will continue to be guided by the Federal and Departmental Sustainable Development Strategies and will deliver results that support numerous SDGs.

We work closely with our program areas to develop communications plans that directly or indirectly support the UN's Agenda and SDGs. We connect broadly with our stakeholder communities and provide information on our website and social media channels on the benefits and services that we offer. When appropriate, we also amplify content from other government and non-government agencies through our channels on topics that directly influence meeting various goals.

As for our operations, we will deliver results that support the following SDGs:

- **SDGs 5: Gender Equality and 10: Reducing Inequality** with the launch of a renewed Employment Equity and Diversity Action Plan.
- **SDG 9: Innovation and Infrastructure** with the development of a plan to address requirements to ensure sustainability of real property.
- **SDG 10: Reducing Inequality** with the implementation of VAC's Accessibility Action Plan.
- **SDG 13: Climate Action** by increasing awareness within the Department regarding impacts of climate change and how to mitigate these impacts in the workplace.

For additional details on our efforts, please refer to our [2020-2023 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy \(DSDS\)](#).^{xxxviii} We will develop the new DSDS for 2023-2026 to align with the new [Federal Sustainable Development Strategy \(FSDS\)](#)^{xxxix} goals and ensure we are contributing by managing our programs, services and operations in a way that is environmentally, economically and socially responsible.

Innovation

We will continue innovation efforts to digitize legacy processes and measure impacts on efficiency, usability, and access to and use of data. These efforts will contribute to improved internal services while increasing the level of digital knowledge and capacity in the organization which we expect will foster a culture of digital innovation and transformation.

In support of modernization of processes through maximization of electronic tools, we are experimenting with the use of eDiscovery in relation to requests made under the ATIP legislation. Rather than having individuals search for records VAC has been exploring how eDiscovery can do the searching instead, with the dual aim of searches that are more comprehensive and consistent and that minimize the administrative burden.

Planned budgetary spending for internal services (dollars)

2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending	2025–26 planned spending
111,486,760	111,486,760	99,953,942	99,043,151

Planned human resources for internal services

2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents	2025–26 planned full-time equivalents
853.1	769.1	757.1

Future spending and staffing levels are under ongoing review. A full analysis of the planned budgetary financial resources and full-time equivalents is available in the [“Planned spending and human resources”](#) section of this report.

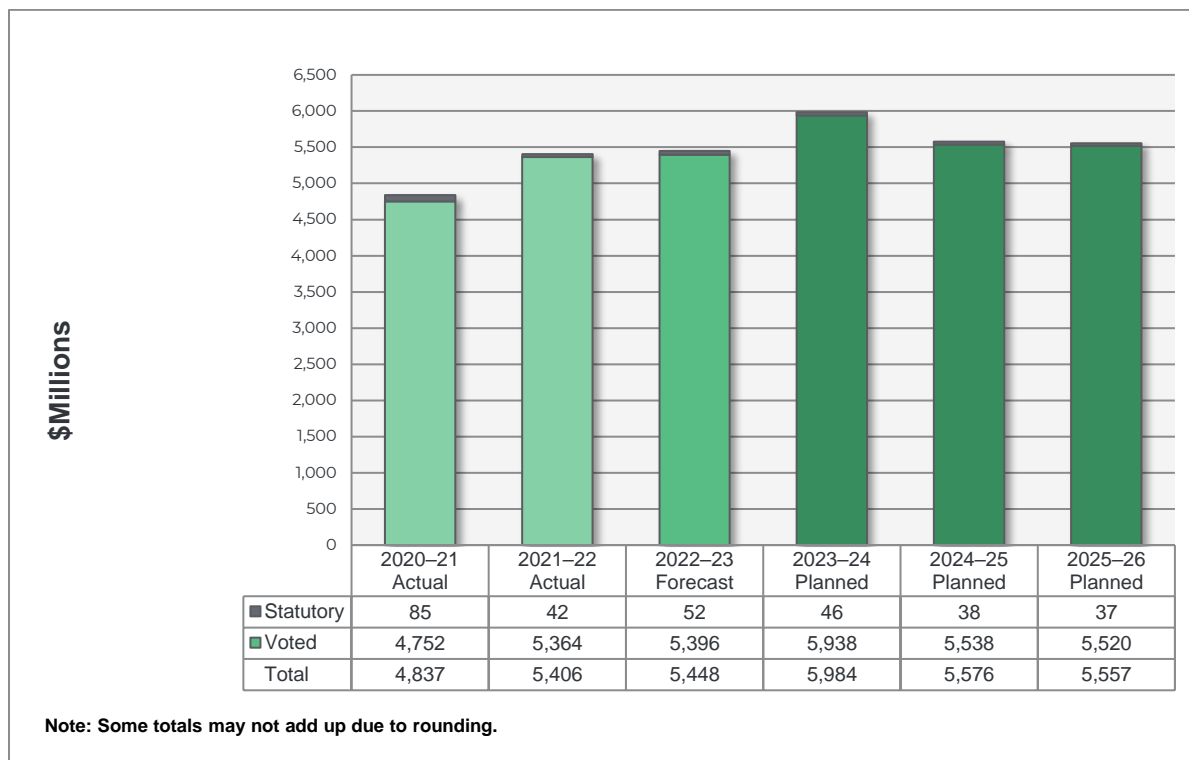
Planned spending and human resources

This section provides an overview of our planned spending and human resources for the next three fiscal years and compares planned spending for 2023–24 with actual spending for the current year and the previous year.

Planned spending

Departmental spending 2020–21 to 2025–26

The following graph presents planned spending (voted and statutory expenditures) over time.



Our budget changes each year because of the demand-driven nature of our programs and services, which are based on the supports and services for which Veterans come forward. Annually, we update our client and expenditure forecasts to ensure that all

Veterans who come forward receive the benefits and services to which they deserve.

In other words, no matter how many Veterans come forward, Veterans Affairs Canada will always provide the

Departmental Plan 2023–24

services and supports. Over 90% of our budget is allocated for expected payments to Veterans, their families and other program recipients.

Overall, planned spending is currently forecasted to increase in 2023–24 when compared to 2022–23. This increase is mostly attributed to temporary investments made to continue our mission to reduce wait times for disability benefits [MLC1], support the further development of the Mental Health Benefits Program [MLC7], extend resources to support case management services, maintain and modernize our commemorative memorials, and support the 2025 Invictus Games.

Planned spending is currently shown to decrease in the outer years as some of these temporary investments conclude. Temporary funding to address the backlog of disability applications concludes in 2024–25, while funding to support case management services and to support the Invictus Games concludes in 2025–26.

While planned spending is currently shown to decrease in the outer years, it is expected we will see increased demand for many of our programs and services. In the future, the budgets for Veteran benefits will be updated through the Estimates process to align with the latest forecast of client demand and expenditures.

Budgetary planning summary for core responsibilities and internal services (dollars)¹⁹

The following table shows information on spending for each of our core responsibilities and for its internal services for 2023–24 and other relevant fiscal years.

Core responsibilities and internal services	2020–21 expenditures	2021–22 expenditures	2022–23 forecast spending	2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending	2025–26 planned spending
Benefits, Services and Support	4,660,494,971	5,240,551,120	5,261,529,589	5,826,610,032	5,826,610,032	5,424,185,936	5,414,015,405
Commemoration	42,205,327	38,038,138	53,887,059	41,854,568	41,854,568	47,625,409	38,999,132
Veterans Ombudsperson	5,193,514	3,828,088	4,396,400	4,465,311	4,465,311	4,528,110	4,541,629
Subtotal	4,707,893,812	5,282,417,346	5,319,813,048	5,872,929,911	5,872,929,911	5,476,339,455	5,457,556,166
Internal services	128,739,691	123,974,450	127,918,342	111,486,760	111,486,760	99,953,942	99,043,151
Total	4,836,633,503	5,406,391,796	5,447,731,390	5,984,416,671	5,984,416,671	5,576,293,397	5,556,599,317

¹⁹ Future spending is under ongoing review.

With respect to each Core Responsibility, Benefits, Services and Support is a large piece of our budget. Planned spending will see an increase in 2023–24 due to temporary funding to address the backlog, to support the further development of the Mental Health Benefits Program [MLC7], and to extend resources to support case management services.

Planned spending is forecasted to decrease in 2024–25 due to the conclusion of temporary funding to address the backlog of disability applications as operational capacity returns to our base level. Temporary funding to support case management services also concludes in 2025–26. While planned spending is currently shown to decrease in the outer years, it is expected we will see increased demand for many of our programs and services. Additional funding for this demand will be sought through future Estimates process to align with the latest forecast of client demand and expenditures (as previously discussed).

Planned spending for Commemoration will decrease in 2023–24 as we see the end of temporary funding related to the Budget 2018 initiative to expedite repairs to graves we care for. Funding to support Juno Beach Centre also

concludes, as well as funding for the government advertising program. Planned spending will then increase in 2024–25 as we have temporary funding in place to support the 2025 Invictus Games. In addition, we have received funding to address maintenance and modernization needs for Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel memorials. Planned spending will decrease in 2025–26 with the conclusion of the temporary funding for the Invictus Games.

Planned spending for the Veterans Ombudsman remains stable and is not expected to change.

Finally, approximately 2% of our total planned spending is allocated to internal services, to support program delivery and the corporate obligations of the organization. The planned spending for internal services is forecasted to decrease due to the end of temporary funding to address the backlog of disability benefits applications and to support case management.

Programs continue to be monitored in advance of future investments to support the needs of Canada's Veterans.

Planned human resources

The following table shows information on human resources, in full-time equivalents (FTEs), for each of our Core Responsibilities and for internal services for 2022–23 and the other relevant years.

Human resources planning summary for core responsibilities and internal services²⁰

Core responsibilities and internal services	2020–21 actual FTEs	2021–22 actual FTEs	2022–23 forecast FTEs	2023–24 planned FTEs	2024–25 planned FTEs	2025–26 planned FTEs
Benefits, Services and Support	2,549.7	2,739.9	2,615.9	2,701.9	2,136.4	2,044.4
Commemoration	70.0	68.9	72.9	89.1	89.1	89.1
Veterans Ombudsperson	34.2	31.8	33.9	39.0	39.0	39.0
Subtotal	2,653.9	2,840.6	2,722.7	2,830.0	2,264.5	2,172.5
Internal services	801.3	822.5	808.5	853.1	769.1	757.1
Total	3,455.2	3,663.1	3,531.2	3,683.1	3,033.6	2,929.6

In 2023–24, we will continue our work to help reduce processing times for disability benefits applications and improve service to Veterans and their families. Funding was extended for approximately 560 resources (to the end of March 2024) for Service Excellence initiatives, which were originally part of the [Government’s Economic and Fiscal Snapshot](#)^{xi} in August 2020. In addition to extending this initiative for two years, we also extended funding for three years (to the end of 2024-25) to maintain frontline staffing levels, including the Case Manager to Veteran ratio, and upgrade the tools Case Managers use – freeing up more time for them to work directly with Veterans. This initiative includes roughly 100 FTEs, among them front line case workers such as Case Managers

and Veterans Service Agents. With recent improvements made to Mental Health benefits we hired approximately 40 resources including over 20 permanent positions to help deliver these improved benefits. While funding for human resources may return to previous levels in 2024–25, we will continue to reassess our long-term capacity as we move forward in improving service to Veterans and their families.

Estimates by vote

Information on our organizational appropriations is available in the [2023–24 Main Estimates](#).^{xii}

²⁰ Future staffing levels are under ongoing review.

Future-oriented condensed statement of operations

The future oriented condensed statement of operations provides an overview of our operations for 2022–23 to 2023–24.

The forecast and planned amounts in this statement of operations were prepared on an accrual basis. The

forecast and planned amounts presented in other sections of the Departmental Plan were prepared on an expenditure basis. Amounts may therefore differ.

A more detailed future-oriented statement of operations and associated notes, including a reconciliation of the net cost of operations with the requested authorities, are available on [our website](#).^{xlii}

Future oriented condensed statement of operations for the year ending 31 March 2024 (dollars)

Financial information	2022–23 forecast results	2023–24 planned results	Difference (2023–24 planned results minus 2022–23 forecast results)
Total expenses	5,451,679,715	5,991,649,591	539,969,876
Total revenues	–	–	–
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	5,451,679,715	5,991,649,591	539,969,876

The estimated net cost of operations for fiscal year 2023–24 is \$5.991 billion. Over 90% of the planned spending for fiscal year 2023–24 is paid directly to, or on behalf of, the people we serve, in the form of compensation, financial support, health care and commemoration. When comparing 2022–23 forecast results to 2023–24 planned results, the increase is due to

investments made to continue our mission to reduce wait times for disability benefits, support the development of a Mental Health Benefits Program, extend resources to support case management services, maintain and modernize our commemorative memorials, and support the 2025 Invictus Games.

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Corporate information

Organizational profile

Appropriate minister:	The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, PC, MP
Institutional head:	Paul Ledwell, Deputy Minister
Ministerial portfolio:	Veterans Affairs
Enabling instruments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Department of Veterans Affairs Act^{xliii} ▶ Veterans Well-being Act^{xliv} ▶ Pension Act^{xlv}
Year of incorporation / Commencement:	1923

Our raison d'être, mandate, and role: who we are and what we do

Information on our Raison d'être, mandate and role is available on [our website](#).^{xlvi}

For more information on our current organizational mandate letter commitments, see the "[Minister's mandate letter](#)".^{xlvii}

Veterans Ombud's mandate

The mandate for the OVO is available on the [Ombud's website](#).^{xlviii}

Operating context and Risks

Information on the operating context and key risks is available on [our website](#).^{xlix}

Reporting framework

Our approved Departmental Results Framework and Program Inventory of record for 2023–24 is displayed on the next page.

Departmental Plan 2023-24

#1 Core Responsibility: Benefits, Services and Support		
DEPARTMENTAL RESULTS	INDICATORS	PROGRAM INVENTORY
Veterans are physically and mentally well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Veterans who report that their health is very good or excellent • % of Veterans who report that their mental health is very good or excellent • % of Veterans receiving treatment in Operational Stress Injury Clinics reporting improved overall mental health • % of Veterans who report they need help with an activity of daily living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver Recognition Benefit • Disability Benefits • Health Care Benefits • Income Support • Long Term Care • Research and Innovation • Transition Services • Veterans Emergency Fund • Veterans Independence Program • War Veterans Allowance
Veterans and their families are financially secure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Veterans whose household income is below the Low Income Measure • % of Veterans who are satisfied with their financial situation 	
Veterans have a sense of purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Veterans who are satisfied with their job or main activity • % of Veterans who are employed 	
Veterans are able to adapt, manage, and cope within post-service life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Veteran clients of Veterans Affairs Canada who report an easy adjustment to post-service life • % of Veterans who have completed a post-secondary education • % of Veterans who have high level of mastery of their life skills 	
Veterans are living in safe and adequate housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Veterans who are in core housing need • % of Veteran clients of Veterans Affairs Canada 65 years and older living in their own homes who report satisfaction with their housing 	
Veterans are socially supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Veterans who have a strong sense of community belonging • % of Veterans Affairs Canada clients who are satisfied with their relationships with friends or family 	
Veterans are satisfied with the services they receive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Veterans Affairs Canada clients who are satisfied with the quality of service delivery they receive from Veterans Affairs Canada • % of Veterans Affairs Canada clients who are satisfied with the quality of Veterans Affairs Canada's programs and services offered 	
#2 Core Responsibility: Commemoration		
DEPARTMENTAL RESULTS	INDICATORS	PROGRAM INVENTORY
Veterans and those who died in service are honoured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Veterans Affairs Canada clients who are satisfied with the way Veterans Affairs Canada's commemorative initiatives honour Veterans and those who died in service • # of page views of Canadian Virtual War Memorial • % of visitors to Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel overseas memorials who report they have a better understanding of the sacrifice and contribution of those who served 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada Remembers Program • Funeral and Burial Program
Canadians remember and appreciate Veterans and those who died in service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Canadians who indicate they make an effort to appreciate Veterans and those who died in service • # of Canadians who participated in community engagement activities financially supported by Veterans Affairs Canada 	
#3 Core Responsibility: Veterans Ombudsperson		
DEPARTMENTAL RESULTS	INDICATORS	PROGRAM INVENTORY
Veterans and their families have access to a timely review of complaints about the programs, services and support delivered by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of complaints reviewed within 60 working days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans Ombudsperson
Issues about the programs, services and support provided to Veterans and their families by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio identified by the Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson are addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of individual complaints reviewed and escalated by the Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson to the Veterans Affairs Portfolio that are addressed • % of recommendations made by the Office of the Veterans Ombudsperson related to systemic issues addressed by the Veterans Affairs Portfolio 	
INTERNAL SERVICES		

Changes to the approved reporting framework since 2022–23

Structure	2023–24	2022–23	Change	Reason for change
Core responsibility	Benefits, Services and Support	Benefits, Services and Support	No change	—
Program	Caregiver Recognition Benefit	Caregiver Recognition Benefit	No change	—
Program	Disability Benefits	Disability Benefits	No change	—
Program	Health Care Benefits	Health Care Benefits	No change	—
Program	Income Support	Income Support	No change	—
Program	Long Term Care	Long Term Care	No change	—
Program	Research and Innovation	Research and Innovation	No change	—
Program	Transition Services	Transition Services	No change	—
Program	Veterans Emergency Fund	Veterans Emergency Fund	No change	—
Program	Veterans Independence Program	Veterans Independence Program	No change	—
Program	War Veterans Allowance	War Veterans Allowance	No change	—
Core Responsibility	Commemoration	Commemoration	No change	—
Program	Canada Remembers Program	Canada Remembers Program	No change	—
Program	Funeral and Burial Program	Funeral and Burial Program	No change	—
Core Responsibility	Veterans Ombudsperson	Veterans Ombudsperson	No change	—
Program	Veterans Ombudsperson	Veterans Ombudsperson	No change	—

Supporting information on the Program Inventory

Supporting information on planned expenditures, human resources, and results related to our Program Inventory is available in the [GC InfoBase](#).^{xxiii}

Supplementary information tables

The following supplementary information tables are available on [our website](#).^l

- ▶ Details on transfer payment programs
- ▶ Gender-based analysis plus

Federal tax expenditures

Our Departmental Plan does not include information on tax expenditures.

Tax expenditures are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for government-wide tax expenditures each year in the [Report on Federal Tax Expenditures](#).ⁱⁱ This report provides detailed information on tax expenditures, including objectives, historical background and references to related federal spending programs, as well as evaluations, research papers and gender-based analysis plus.

Organizational contact information

Veterans Affairs Canada

P.O. Box 7700
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 8M9

Toll free: **1-866-522-2122**
TDD/TTY: **1-833-921-0071**
www.veterans.gc.ca

Veterans Ombud

P.O. Box 66
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 7K2

Toll free: **1-877-330-4343**
TDD/TTY: **1-833-978-1639**
www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca

Appendix A: definitions

Appropriation (crédit)

Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Budgetary expenditures (dépenses budgétaires)

Operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

Core Responsibility (responsabilité essentielle)

An enduring function or role performed by a department. The intentions of the department with respect to a core responsibility are reflected in one or more related departmental results that the department seeks to contribute to or influence.

Departmental Plan (plan ministériel)

A document that sets out a department's priorities, programs, expected results and associated resource requirements, covering a three-year period beginning with the year indicated in the title of the report. Departmental Plans are tabled in Parliament each spring.

Departmental Result (résultat ministériel)

A change that a department seeks to influence. A departmental result is often outside departments' immediate control, but it should be influenced by program-level outcomes.

Departmental Result Indicator (indicateur de résultat ministériel)

A factor or variable that provides a valid and reliable means to measure or describe progress on a departmental result.

Departmental Results Framework (cadre ministériel des résultats)

A framework that consists of the department's core responsibilities, departmental results and departmental result indicators.

Departmental Results Report (rapport sur les résultats ministériels)

A report on a department's actual performance in a fiscal year against its plans, priorities and expected results set out in its Departmental Plan for that year. Departmental Results Reports are usually tabled in Parliament each fall.

Full-time equivalent (équivalent temps plein)

A measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. Full-time equivalents are calculated as a ratio of assigned hours of work to scheduled hours of work. Scheduled hours of work are set out in collective agreements.

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) (analyse comparative entre les sexes plus [ACS Plus])

An analytical tool used to support the development of responsive and inclusive policies, programs and other initiatives. GBA Plus is a process for understanding who is impacted by the issue or opportunity being addressed by the initiative; identifying how the initiative could be tailored to meet diverse needs of the people most impacted; and anticipating and mitigating any barriers to accessing or benefitting from the initiative. GBA Plus is an intersectional analysis that goes beyond biological (sex) and socio-cultural (gender) differences to consider other factors, such as age, disability, education,

ethnicity, economic status, geography, language, race, religion, and sexual orientation.

Government-wide priorities (priorités pangouvernementales)

For the purpose of the 2023–24 Departmental Plan, government-wide priorities are the high-level themes outlining the Government's agenda in the 2021 Speech from the Throne: building a healthier today and tomorrow; growing a more resilient economy; bolder climate action; fighter harder for safer communities; standing up for diversity and inclusion; moving faster on the path to reconciliation and fighting for a secure, just, and equitable world.

High impact innovation (innovation à impact élevé)

High impact innovation varies per organizational context. In some cases, it could mean trying something significantly new or different from the status quo. In other cases, it might mean making incremental improvements that relate to a high-spending area or addressing problems faced by a significant number of Canadians or public servants.

Horizontal initiative (initiative horizontale)

An initiative in which two or more federal organizations are given funding to pursue a shared outcome, often linked to a government priority.

Hybrid workforce (effectif hybride)

A hybrid workforce is one in which, on any given day, there will be a mixture of our employees teleworking and working on-site.

Non-budgetary expenditures (dépenses non budgétaires)

Net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

Performance (rendement)

What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve, and how well lessons learned have been identified.

Plan (plan)

The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally, a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead up to the expected result.

Planned spending (dépenses prévues)

For Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports, planned spending refers to those amounts presented in the Main Estimates. A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

Program (programme)

Individual or groups of services, activities or combinations thereof that are managed together within a department and that focus on a specific set of outputs, outcomes or service levels.

Program Inventory (répertoire des programmes)

An inventory of a department's programs that describes how resources are organized to carry out the department's core responsibilities and achieve its planned results.

Result (résultat)

An external consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the

control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead, they are within the area of the organization's influence.

Statutory expenditures (dépenses législatives)

Expenditures that Parliament has approved through legislation other than appropriation acts. The legislation sets out the purpose of the expenditures and the terms and conditions under which they may be made.

Table of Disabilities (table des invalidités)

The Table of Disabilities is a legislated/statutory instrument used to assess the extent of a disability for the purposes of determining disability benefits. The Table considers the relative

importance of a certain body part/system to assess the level of impairment and the impact that impairment has on the individual's quality of life.

Target (cible)

A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

Voted expenditures (dépenses votées)

Expenditures that Parliament approves annually through an Appropriation Act. The vote wording becomes the governing conditions under which these expenditures may be made.

Appendix B: MLC codes

Code	Title and description of Mandate Letter Commitment (MLC) referenced in the report
MLC1	<p>Reduce Wait Times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce wait times and ensure Veterans and their families receive decisions on applications in a timely manner, including by investing resources to hire case workers and adjudicators, enhance disability benefit processing and advance innovative digital solutions.
MLC2	<p>Military Sexual Misconduct (led by the Department of National Defence)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the services and resources available to survivors of sexual misconduct through the Sexual Misconduct Support and Resource Centre. Ensure Centre access for Defence Team, including Department of National Defence employees, Veterans and members of military families. Co-design with survivors and fully fund a permanent peer-to-peer support program for those who have experienced military sexual trauma that is available to all members of the Defence Team and their families.
MLC3	<p>Underrepresented Veterans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the benefit system and services are responsive to and meet the needs of underrepresented Veterans, including women, 2SLGBTQI+, racialized and Indigenous Veterans. This will include the use of disaggregated research and data to provide tailored programs and services.
MLC4	<p>Indigenous Veterans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to reduce barriers to accessing services for Indigenous Veterans, including improving outreach to Indigenous communities and expanding the offering of culturally appropriate services.
MLC5	<p>Veteran Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch a National Veterans Employment Strategy, with a goal of ensuring all Veterans find meaningful work on release from the Canadian Armed Forces, leveraging skills and qualifications acquired while in service. This includes working to improve qualification recognition.
MLC6	<p>Transition Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with the Minister of National Defence to simplify processes, improve service delivery and strengthen transition services by enhancing shared online tools, increasing data sharing and improving transition support.
MLC7	<p>Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the support of Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, ensure Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans have access to adequate mental health resources, services and training programs tailored to their specific needs.
MLC8	<p>Recognition & Commemoration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that modern Veterans, as well as women, Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans from all conflicts are recognized and commemorated and that we recognize the valuable contributions of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans who have served our country in domestic operations such as wildfires, ice storms and floods.
MLC9	<p>Veteran Homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerate work to end chronic homelessness among Veterans through a new rent supplement program and wrap around supports (led by Infrastructure Canada). Accelerate work to end chronic homelessness among Veterans through the Rapid Housing Initiative and a dedicated stream of funding for Veterans within the National Housing Co-Investment Fund (led by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation).

Endnotes

- i. Duty to accommodate, <https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32634>
- ii. Timely disability benefits decisions: Strategic direction for improving wait times, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/addressing-wait-times/wait-time-strategic-direction>
- iii. Funding announced to address wait times for Veterans, <https://www.canada.ca/en/veterans-affairs-canada/news/2022/02/funding-announced-to-address-wait-times-for-veterans.html>
- iv. Funding announced for Veterans' case management services, <https://www.canada.ca/en/veterans-affairs-canada/news/2022/10/funding-announced-for-veterans-case-management-services.html>
- v. Veteran and Family Well-being Fund, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/research/well-being-fund>
- vi. Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS) Program, [https://cfmws.ca/support-services/health-wellness/mental-health/operational-stress-injury-social-support-\(osiss\)](https://cfmws.ca/support-services/health-wellness/mental-health/operational-stress-injury-social-support-(osiss))
- vii. Sexual Misconduct Support and Resource Centre (SMSRC), <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/health-support/sexual-misconduct-response.html>
- viii. Disability Benefits Application Process Consultation, <https://letstalkveterans.ca/disability-benefits-application-process-consultation>
- ix. Entitlement Eligibility Guidelines, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/health-support/physical-health-and-wellness/compensation-illness-injury/disability-benefits/benefits-determined/entitlement-eligibility-guidelines>
- x. My VAC Account, https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/e_services
- xi. Benefits and Health Services Online, <https://bhsol-pssd.vac-acc.gc.ca/bhsol-pssd/public/login.jsp>
- xii. Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan, <https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/free-to-be-me/federal-2slgbtqi-plus-action-plan.html>
- xiii. Office of Women and LGBTQ2 Veterans, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/what-we-do/women-LGBTQ2/office>
- xiv. Modernization of Sex and Gender Information Practices, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/corporate/reports/summary-modernizing-info-sex-gender.html>
- xv. GBA Plus Supplementary Information Table, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/publications-reports/reports/departmental-plan/2023-2024/supplementary-tables/gender-based-analysis-plus>
- xvi. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- xvii. Support for education, training and their related financial costs, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/education-and-jobs/back-to-school>
- xviii. Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_developpement-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/cnap_wps-pnac_fps.aspx?lang=eng
- xix. Career-related services and information, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/education-and-jobs/finding-a-job>

- xx. Veterans data in the 2021 Census of Population, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/ref/98-20-0002/982000022021001-eng.cfm>
- xxi. Indigenous Peoples Survey, <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/survey/household/3250>
- xxii. VAC Reports and Papers, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/research/research-directorate/publications/reports>
- xxiii. GC Infobase, <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html>
- xxiv. St. Julien Canadian Memorial, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/st-julien>
- xxv. Korean War, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/wars-and-conflicts/korean-war>
- xxvi. Invictus Games, <https://invictusgamesfoundation.org/>
- xxvii. Canadian National Vimy Memorial, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/overseas/first-world-war/france/vimy>
- xxviii. Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/overseas/first-world-war/france/beaumont-hamel>
- xxix. Forest Conservation at Canada's First World War Memorials, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/visit-canadian-memorials-in-europe/forest-conservation-at-canadas-first-world-war-memorials>
- xxx. The Chapel at God's Acre, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canada/gods-acre#chapel>
- xxxi. National War Memorial, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/national-inventory-canadian-memorials/details/9429>
- xxxii. Commemorative Partnership Program, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/commemorative-events/commemorative-partnership>
- xxxiii. Office of the Veterans Ombudsman, <https://ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/en>
- xxxiv. 2022 Report Card, <https://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/en/publications/reports-reviews/2022-report-card>
- xxxv. Directive on the Management of Materiel, <https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32690>
- xxxvi. Let's Talk Veterans, <https://letstalkveterans.ca/>
- xxxvii. Directive on the Management of Procurement, <https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32692>
- xxxviii. 2020-2023 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/publications-reports/reports/2020-2023-sustainable-development-strategy>
- xxxix. Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS), <https://www.fsds-sfdd.ca/en>
- xl. Government's Economic and Fiscal Snapshot, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/services/publications/economic-fiscal-snapshot.html>
- xli. 2023–24 Main Estimates, <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/hgw-cgf/finances/pgs-pdg/gepme-pdgbpd/index-eng.asp>
- xlii. Future-Oriented Financial Statements, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/publications-reports/reports/future-oriented-financial-statements>
- xliii. *Department of Veterans Affairs Act*, <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/V-1/index.html>
- xliv. *Veterans Well-being Act*, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-16.8/>
- xlv. *Pension Act*, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/p-6/index.html>

- xlvi. Raison d'être, mandate and role, <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/mandate>
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