



Canadians' Awareness of VAC's Benefits and Services and Satisfaction with VAC Communications Research Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Earnscliffe Strategy Group (Earnscliffe) is pleased to present this report to Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) summarizing the results of a quantitative research study to test Canadians’ awareness and perceptions of VAC, as well as satisfaction with VAC communications and services.

Earlier this year, the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) approved a communications outreach initiative to increase the Veteran community’s awareness and understanding of the suite of programs and services designed to support their well-being. This initiative was created in acknowledgement of the concerns raised by members of the Veteran community who find it difficult at times to navigate the programs and services offered by VAC. The overall goal of the initiative is to improve the way VAC connects with Veterans, members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), as well as their families, and Canadians more broadly. VAC required public opinion research to support this evidence based initiative by measuring Canadians’ level of understanding and awareness about Veterans’ benefits and services, and to determine ways of improving VAC’s communications with the public.

Quantitative research was required to inform VAC’s communications and outreach related to Veterans’ benefits and services. More specifically, the research results will be used to:

- Establish a baseline to determine Canadians’ awareness of VAC’s benefits and services, and satisfaction with VAC communications;
- Measure the public’s satisfaction with how VAC communicates to Canadians in support of those benefits and services; and,
- Gauge Canadians’ perceptions regarding VAC as delivering on the needs of Veterans and their families.

The specific objectives of the research were to measure:

- Public awareness of VAC benefits and services;
- Satisfaction with VAC communications in support of these benefits and services in order to plan for future communications and outreach with different audiences;
- Desirability traits of public institutions;
- Awareness (aided and unaided) of VAC programs and services; and,
- Satisfaction with how VAC communicates.

The total cost to conduct this research was \$102,512.87, including HST.

In order to achieve all of these objectives, Earnscliffe conducted a telephone survey of 2,015 Canadians aged 18 and older. Our chosen fieldwork subcontractor for this assignment was Léger due to their strength in quantitative (telephone) data collection. Founded in 1986, Léger is a Gold Seal Member of MRIA and is an accredited member of CASRO, ESOMAR, and CAN-SPAM. Interviews were conducted via telephone from Léger’s centralized call-centre using state of the art Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system.

Interviews were conducted between January 30 and February 21, 2018. The average length of interview was 16.5 minutes. The margin of error for a telephone sample of 2,015 Canadians is +/-2.18%, at the 95% confidence level.

An overlapping sampling approach was used for the telephone survey. In this approach, the cell phone sample is not screened for dual landline and cell users. A respondent is included in the sample as long as he/she uses a cell phone even though they may or may not have a landline. While the overlapping sampling method does not explicitly screen dual user households, it naturally reaches both cell phone only residents and those living in households with both cellphone and landline. Using this method, we estimated that the 2,000 interviews would be comprised of the natural distribution of landline only (LLO) households, cellphone only households (CPO) and households that have both a landline and a cellphone. The table below shows the Statistics Canada estimates for each of these segments, the expected number of interviews for each of these segments and the proportion of the survey sample that would constitute using the overlapping method.

Segment	Actual Proportion*	Expected n	Expected % of Sample
Landline only (LLO)	15.0%	300	15.0%
Cellphone only (CPO)	27.5%	550	27.5%
Households with both	57.5%	1,150	57.5%
TOTAL	100%	2,000	100%

*SOURCE: Statistics Canada, 2015 Survey of Household Spending

When using the overlapping method, the mix of dual and CPO does not always turn out to be exact. As a result, while we set a target of 550 interviews with CPO respondents, we guaranteed a minimum of 450. In the end, we conducted 1,082 of the 2,015 interviews via cell phone (including 557 specifically screened as CPO) and 931 via landline (including 283 screened LLO).

The sample was targeted to the region, gender and age quotas outlined in the Appendices of this report, and the final data were weighted to replicate actual population distribution by region, age and gender according to the most recent Census (2016) data available. The key findings from the research are presented below.

Overall Observations

- Familiarity with VAC and its programs is low, but Canadians’ view of the importance of the programs offered is strong.
- Veterans’ mental health is particularly important to Canadians.
- Atlantic Canadians appear to be the most familiar compared to other Canadians across the country with VAC and its programs.
- Younger Canadians (18-34) tend to have a more positive view of VAC’s performance, but also report knowing the least about VAC.
- French-speaking Canadians are less familiar with VAC and its programs, and less likely than English speakers to rate programs as very important. That said, their evaluation of VAC’s performance in terms of communications is higher.

Awareness and Impressions

- **Unaided awareness and familiarity with VAC remain low and unchanged compared to 2012.** In both 2012 and 2018, just under one third (30%) can name the department that is responsible for members of the CAF once they have retired.
- **Familiarity from 2012 to 2018 remains virtually unchanged, with 15% in both years reporting they are very or somewhat familiar with VAC.** The same proportion in both years (45%) claim to not be familiar at all with VAC.
- **When it comes to serving the needs of Veterans, there was an erosion in the view of overall performance.** In 2012, the question was asked about VAC's service for all Veterans, and 30% felt VAC served their needs poorly or somewhat poorly. Now, 36% feel VAC serves the needs of older Veterans poorly, and 37% say the same for Canada's modern-day Veterans.
- **There is also now a stronger sense that VAC should be doing more to meet Veterans' needs.** In particular, the percentage who would like to see VAC do "a lot more" rose from 32% in 2012 to 45% in 2018.
- **Canadians' ratings of VAC's performance on a range of criteria were mixed,** and those who are more familiar with VAC tend to provide a more positive rating. VAC's highest performance ratings were for treating Veterans with respect - almost half of Canadians (49%) feel VAC performs well in this area. Opinion was more divided on VAC's honesty with and fairness towards Veterans, working hard for Veterans, and communicating with Veterans. Opinion is more negative than positive when it comes to being efficient and communicating with Canadians.

Programs and Services

- **Familiarity is low and unchanged from 2012.** Top Box (10/10) importance of all programs has increased, and the hierarchy remains nearly identical.
- **Mental health support continues to be the leading program (70% say it is very important).** It is followed by rehabilitation services (63%, up from 53%) and disability benefits (62%, up from 54%). Even the least important (Remembrance Day programming and career transition services) are rated as very important by the plurality of Canadians.
- **The percentage of Canadians who have heard something in the news recently about VAC rose over the tracking period,** from 30% in 2012 to 41% in 2018. Among those who had heard something, the most cited topic was "the government is not doing enough" (27%).

Surrounding Attitudes

- **There is broad consensus on a number of key attitudes related to VAC and Veterans, particularly when it comes to mental health.** Almost all (81%) say Veterans need a lot of mental health support, and 74% agree that there are more mental health challenges aside from PTSD.

- **For most (70%), Veterans’ challenges seem to be increasingly complex.** They also feel finding the right government programs to address those needs can be challenging (60%).
- When it comes to support for Veterans’ families, opinion is more divided - 29% feel VAC provides adequate support, while 24% disagree and 32% are neutral.
- The majority (60%) expect career transitioning is difficult. However, opinion is mixed as to whether Veterans integrate well back into civilian life.

Political Neutrality Statement

I hereby certify as a Representative of Earncliffe Strategy Group that the final deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signed: 

Date: March 14, 2018

Doug Anderson
Principal, Earncliffe

INTRODUCTION

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Quantitative research was commissioned to inform VAC’s communications and outreach related to Veterans’ benefits and services. More specifically, the research results will be used to:

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The specific objectives of the research were to measure:

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Interviews were conducted between January 30 and February 21, 2018. The average length of interview was 16.5 minutes. The margin of error for a telephone sample of 2,015 Canadians is +/-2.18%, at the 95% confidence level.

The sample was targeted to the region and age quotas, and the final data were weighted to replicate actual population distribution by region, age and gender according to the most recent Census (2016) data available. Quotas were set as outlined in the table below. In addition to setting quotas, the data was weighted by each stratum (in this case, age, region and gender), to reflect the actual proportions found in the population. The final sample sizes within each stratum are presented below:

Spec	Sample size	Percentage	Total
Region			
Atlantic Canada	137	6.8%	2,000
Quebec	469	23.4%	
Ontario	767	38.3%	
Prairies (MB/SK)	131	6.5%	
Alberta	225	11.2%	
British Columbia	271	13.5%	
Age			
18 – 34	546	27.3%	2,000
35 – 54	682	34.1%	
55+	772	38.6%	
Gender			
Male	972	48.6%	2,000
Female	1,028	51.4%	
TOTAL			

An overlapping sampling approach was used for the telephone survey. In this approach, the cell phone sample is not screened for dual landline and cell users. A respondent is included in the sample as long as he/she uses a cell phone even though they may or may not have a landline. While the overlapping sampling method does not explicitly screen dual user households, it naturally reaches both cell phone only residents and those living in households with both cellphone and landline. Using this method, we estimated that the 2,000 interviews would be comprised of the natural distribution of landline only (LLO) households, cellphone only households (CPO) and households that have both a landline and a cellphone. The table below shows the Statistics Canada estimates for each of these segments, the expected number of interviews for each of these segments and the proportion of the survey sample that would constitute using the overlapping method.

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*SOURCE: Statistics Canada, 2015 Survey of Household Spending

When using the overlapping method, the mix of dual and CPO does not always turn out to be exact. As a result, while we set a target of 550 interviews with CPO respondents, we guaranteed a minimum of 450 interviews among

CPO respondents. In the end, we conducted 1,082 of the 2,015 interviews via cell phone (including 557 specifically screened as CPO) and 931 via landline (including 283 screened LLO).

The detailed findings from this research are presented in subsequent sections of this report. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. “Don’t know” and “Prefer not to say” are denoted by DK and NR respectively. Caution should be taken when interpreting the data associated with small sample sizes. Please note that the territories have been analyzed as part of British Columbia.

Appended to this report are additional details about the methodology, as well as the survey instruments and data tables (provided under a separate cover).

DETAILED FINDINGS

This quantitative report is divided into three sections:

- Awareness and Impressions;
- Programs and Services; and
- Surrounding Attitudes.

Awareness and Impressions

Unaided awareness and familiarity with VAC remain low and unchanged compared to 2012. In both 2012 and 2018, just under one third (30%) accurately name the department that is responsible for members of the CAF once they have retired. Twelve percent name DND, while 5% name the Canadian Forces. Among current and former members of the CAF, awareness is higher (49%) but not universal. Aside from the aforementioned group, unaided awareness is highest in Atlantic Canada (45% name VAC) and lowest in Quebec, where only 17% correctly identify VAC. Familiarity in 2018 remains virtually unchanged from 2012, with 15% in both years reporting they are very or somewhat familiar with VAC. The same proportion in both years (45%) claim being not at all familiar with VAC. Fewer Atlantic Canadians, 34%, report being not at all familiar with VAC. A large majority of those between ages 18 and 34 report not being at all familiar with VAC (61%), compared to 44% of those between 35 and 54, and 35% of those 55 and older. Finally, unaided awareness is significantly lower among French speaking Canadians – just 17% correctly identify VAC, compared to 36% of English speaking respondents.

Exhibit A1 – Q4. To the best of your knowledge, which government department is responsible for the care of members of the Canadian Armed Forces once they have retired from The Royal Canadian Air Force, The Royal Canadian Navy and The Canadian Army? [OPEN END]

Unaided Awareness of VAC		
	2018	2012
Veterans Affairs Canada	30%	30%
Department of National Defence	12%	14%
The Canadian Forces	5%	9%
Department of Foreign Affairs	0%	-
Other	3%	4%
DK/NR	42%	38%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A2 – Q5. How familiar are you with Veterans Affairs Canada? Please use a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means not at all familiar and 7 means very familiar

Familiarity with VAC		
	2018	2012
Very familiar (7)	4%	3%
Somewhat familiar (5-6)	11%	12%
Neither (4)	9%	10%
Not that familiar (2-3)	30%	30%
Not at all familiar (1)	45%	45%
DK/NR	1%	1%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Opinion remains divided over how well VAC serves the needs of Veterans, however, more Canadians offer low performance ratings than high performance rating and this year’s survey shows a slight erosion in the view of overall performance. In 2012, the question was asked for all Veterans, and 30% felt VAC served the needs of Veterans poorly or somewhat poorly. Now, 36% feel VAC serves the needs of older Veterans poorly, and 37% say the same for Canada’s modern-day Veterans. However, much of the change in impressions on performance occurred during the course of conducting interviews.

On February 14, 2018, while the survey was in field, media outlets reported on testimony by the Canadian Forces’ ombudsman critiquing the federal government’s performance on Veterans’ issues. As this is the kind of stimulus that may affect responses, we compared results before and after that day and found that there was an increase in the proportion of respondents offering negative performance ratings after that day. In the days preceding the story, roughly one-third of respondents (32%) were saying that VAC was performing poorly in serving the needs of modern-day Veterans and that proportion rose to 40% among those surveyed after February 14.

Those who are aware that VAC is the department responsible for Veterans’ services overall feel more strongly that the department serves the needs of modern-day Veterans poorly (47%) than those who did not identify VAC (34%). The gap between these two groups is smaller when it comes to older Veterans – 37% of those aware of VAC feel it serves the needs of those Veterans poorly, compared to 36% of those who are not aware. Predictably, those who think VAC should be doing a lot more for Veterans are more likely than the general population to say VAC serves the needs of Veterans very poorly – 22% for both older and modern-day Veterans, relative to 12% of the general population.

Exhibit A3 – Q6. How well does Veterans Affairs serve the needs of each of the following? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means they serve their needs very poorly and 7 means they serve their needs very well.

Serving the Needs of Veterans			
	Canada’s older Veterans (2018)	Canada’s modern-day Veterans (2018)	All Veterans (2012)
Serves their needs very well (7)	7%	5%	5%
Serves their needs somewhat well (5-6)	21%	19%	21%
Neither (4)	15%	17%	19%
Serves their needs somewhat poorly (2-3)	24%	25%	23%
Serves their needs very poorly (1)	12%	12%	7%
DK/NR	21%	23%	25%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

There is also an increasing consensus that VAC should be doing more to meet Veterans’ needs. In particular, the percentage who would like to see VAC do “a lot more” rose from 32% in 2012 to 45% in 2018. This sentiment was particularly strong among current and former CAF members (64%) and their families (56%), in Atlantic Canada (51%) and weaker in Quebec (30%). Canadians ages 18-34 are the least likely to believe VAC should be doing a lot more (27%), relative to those 34-55 (47%) and those 55+ (56%). Among those who think VAC should be doing more, mental health support was by far the most frequently mentioned area for improvement (34%). Health care

generally, financial support, pensions, and generally taking better care of Veterans make up the second tier of services and programs where Canadians feel VAC could do more.

Exhibit A4 – Q7. Do you feel that Veterans Affairs should be doing a lot more, a little more, a little less or a lot less to serve the needs of Canada’s Veterans, or do you feel they are doing about the right amount?

Canadians would like VAC to do more/less		
	2018	2012
Should be doing a lot more	45%	32%
Should be doing a little more	28%	26%
Doing the right amount	15%	22%
Should be doing a little less	1%	1%
Should be doing a lot less	-	1%
DK/NR	11%	19%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A5 – Q8. [IF THINK VAC SHOULD DO MORE] In what way do you feel Veterans Affairs Canada should be doing more to serve the needs of Canada’s Veterans?

Ways VAC Could Do More for Veterans	
	2018
Mental health support	34%
Health care (unspecified)	13%
Financial support	11%
More/better pensions	11%
Take better care of them	11%
Housing support	7%
More resources/services	7%
Physical health support	6%
Giving them more money	5%
Help transition back into society	5%
More help to disabled	4%
More support to family	3%
DK/NR	9%

Base: TELEPHONE: Think VAC should do more (n=1514). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Canadians’ ratings of VAC’s performance on a range of criteria were mixed, and those who are more familiar with VAC tend to provide a more positive rating. Almost half of Canadians (49%) feel VAC performs well when it comes to treating Veterans with respect. However, opinion varies across age groups and region, in particular. Among those 18-34, 63% feel VAC treats Veterans with respect, relative to 49% of those 35-54 and 44% of those 55+. Canadians living in the Prairies were the least likely to agree, with 38% saying they feel VAC does not perform well when it comes to treating Veterans with respect, compared to Quebecers, who were more positive. Just 20% of Quebecers rated VAC’s performance poorly. Current and former CAF members are more likely to provide a negative rating, with 44% reporting that VAC performs poorly when it comes to treating Veterans with respect, compared to 34% of those who have or had family in the CAF, and 25% of those with no connection. It is worth noting that respondents who completed the survey before February 14 were less likely (21%) to rate VAC’s performance as poor, compared to 32% who answered after February 14.

Opinion was divided when it came to being honest with Veterans and their families, with 37% feeling VAC performs well, while 32% feel VAC performs poorly. Results were similarly mixed when respondents were asked to rate VAC’s performance working hard to help Veterans and treating Veterans fairly. Opinion is more negative when it comes to listening to feedback to make programs and services better (39% feel VAC is performing poorly) and being efficient (36% feel VAC is performing poorly). Communication with Veterans is rated higher than communication with the public. Over half (53%) feel VAC does a poor job of communicating with the public. English speakers are more likely to express dissatisfaction with VAC communication – 46% feel VAC performs poorly, while 39% of French speakers feel the same. In contrast, 31% of Canadians feel VAC does a good job communicating with Veterans, while 32% disagree. Similarly, 30% feel VAC performs well when it comes to providing Veterans with easily understood information, while 33% feel VAC performs poorly. Current service members and Veterans themselves are less satisfied with VAC’s communications with them – 50% believe VAC performs poorly, compared to 30% of those with no familial connection to the CAF or VAC.

The discrepancy in ratings between different age categories is consistent throughout almost all of the items tested. For each, young people (18-34) are less likely to provide a poor rating than those 35 and over. For example, when it comes to offering programs and services Veterans need, just 22% of those 18-34 give a poor rating, while 41% of those over 55 do. Similarly, when asked how VAC does in working hard to help Veterans, 23% of those 18-34 provide a poor rating, compared to 35% of those 35-54 and 44% of those 55+. One of the few exceptions is VAC’s performance communicating with Canadians. Just under half (46%) of those 18-34 rate VAC’s efforts poorly, compared to 54% of those 35-54 and 53% of those 55+.

Exhibit A6 – Q9. [IF ANY FAMILIARITY WITH VAC] Based on your impression, I would you like you to rate Veterans Affairs Canada in terms of how well it does each of the following in support of Veterans. Please use a scale of 1-7, where 1 means the department performs very poorly and 7 means it performs very well.

Impressions of VAC Performance					
	Very well (7)	Somewhat well (5-6)	Neither (4)	Somewhat poorly (2-3)	Very poorly (1)
Treating Veterans with respect	14%	35%	17%	19%	9%
Being honest in dealing with Veterans and their families	8%	29%	19%	23%	9%
Working hard to help Veterans	7%	29%	20%	27%	10%
Treating Veterans fairly	7%	28%	20%	27%	10%
Communicating with Veterans about programs and services available to them	6%	25%	19%	26%	6%
Listening to feedback to make programs and services better	6%	25%	19%	28%	11%
Offering programs and services that Veterans need	6%	27%	22%	30%	5%
Communicating with Canadians about programs and services	5%	19%	17%	38%	15%
Providing easy to understand information to Veterans	5%	25%	18%	26%	7%
Being efficient in its operations	5%	23%	22%	27%	9%

Base: TELEPHONE: Any familiarity with VAC (n=1146). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Programs and Services

Program familiarity, much like awareness, is low and unchanged from 2012. Familiarity varies across regions, age groups and language. While over half (55%) in Quebec report not being at all familiar with VAC programs, just 26% in Atlantic Canada say the same. Similarly, 54% of those 18-34 have no program familiarity, while 45% of those 35-54 say the same, as do 34% of those 55+. Over half of French speakers (54%) report being not at all familiar with VAC programs, relative to 39% of English speakers. Those who are in the CAF, are Veterans, work for the government or who have family in one of these roles have higher program familiarity, though it is still low – 13% say they are at least somewhat familiar, relative to 8% among those who do not have an employment connection to VAC. Among current and former CAF members on their own, almost one quarter (24%) report not being at all familiar with VAC’s programs and services.

Among those who report being at least a little familiar with VAC programs, mental health support, health benefits/group health insurance, and financial benefits are mentioned most frequently, though only by a small percentage of respondents. Familiarity with financial benefits and disability benefits have fallen by 10% and 8% respectively since 2012. The results are a little different among current and former CAF members – the programs they are most familiar with are rehabilitation (13%), health benefits/insurance (11%) and career transition services (11%). Media remains the most popular source of information, followed by word of mouth.

Exhibit A7 – Q10. Using the scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means not at all familiar and 7 means very familiar, how familiar would you say you are with the programs and services Veterans Affairs Canada provides to Canada’s Veterans?

Familiarity with VAC Programs and Services		
	2018	2012
Very familiar (7)	1%	1%
Somewhat familiar (5-6)	9%	9%
Neither (4)	11%	10%
Not that familiar (2-3)	34%	34%
Not at all familiar (1)	43%	46%
DK/NR	2%	-

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A8 – Q11. [IF ANY PROGRAM FAMILIARITY] Can you name any Veterans Affairs Canada programs you may have heard of?

Programs Familiar to Canadians		
	2018	2012
Mental health support	9%	8%
Health benefits/Group health insurance	9%	11%
Financial benefits	8%	18%
Rehabilitation programs	5%	5%
Disability benefits	5%	13%
Career transition services	4%	7%
Family support	4%	8%
Treatment benefits	3%	6%
Long term care	2%	3%
Funeral and burial services	2%	2%
Veterans Independence Program	2%	3%
Remembrance programming	2%	4%
Other	6%	10%
DK/NR	61%	57%

Base: TELEPHONE: Any program familiarity (n=1160). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A9 – Q12. [IF ANY PROGRAM FAMILIARITY] How did you hear about Veterans Affairs Canada programs and services?

Sources of Information About VAC Programs and Services		
	2018	2012
Media (Newspaper, TV, Radio)	44%	40%
Word of mouth (From family, friends)	21%	26%
My spouse/my child/close family member is a Veteran	9%	26%
Social media	8%	-
My spouse/child/close family member works for/used to work for the army/navy/air force	5%	3%
I am a Veteran	2%	8%
Remembrance Day programs/November 11 programs	2%	2%
Other	5%	9%
DK/NR	10%	3%

Base: TELEPHONE: Any program familiarity (n=1160). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each of eleven (11) VAC programs and the responses show that all programs are considered important by the vast majority of Canadians and the differentiation tends to be found over the proportions giving each program as the highest possible importance rating (10 on the 10-point scale). As well, the level of importance assigned to any program tested in the past has also increased. Those who think VAC should be doing a lot more to serve Veterans’ needs are among the most likely to provide a 10/10 rating for any program.

Among Canadians, mental health support remains the number one priority, and the percentage who rate it as very important has risen from 59% to 70%. Of note, fewer men (65%) than women (75%) rate it as very important.

Mental health support is followed by rehabilitation services (63%, up from 53%) and disability benefits (62%, up from 54%). Financial benefits saw the largest increase in top-box importance, up 20% to 57%. Group benefits, funeral services and Remembrance programming saw the least change (up 2-5%).

Although the data shows a hierarchy of importance, even the least important are rated as very important by the plurality of Canadians. For example, 31% say Remembrance Day programming is very important, while an additional 26% say it is important. Well over a third (40%) rate career transition services as very important and almost half (45%) provide the same rating for funeral and burial services.

Of note, though in most cases the majority of French speaking Canadians feel VAC programs are very important (9 or 10 rating on a 10-point scale), they are less likely than English speakers to provide a top two box rating.

Exhibit A10 – Q13. Now I’m going to read you a list of services for Veterans and for each of the items I’d like to ask you: how important is it for Veterans to receive these services from Veteran Affairs Canada? Please use a 10-point scale this time, where 10 means it is very important and 1 means it is not important at all. How about...?

Importance of Services Provided by VAC						
	Very important (10)	Important (9-8)	Somewhat important (6-7)	Not very important (4-5)	Not important (1-3)	2012 Very important
Mental health support	70%	19%	7%	3%	2%	59%
Rehabilitation services	63%	24%	8%	3%	1%	53%
Disability benefits	62%	23%	9%	2%	1%	54%
Long term care	58%	26%	11%	4%	1%	48%
Financial benefits	57%	26%	11%	4%	1%	37%
Treatment benefits (hearing aids, medications, etc.)	56%	26%	12%	5%	-	43%
Group health insurance and other health benefits	50%	29%	13%	6%	2%	45%
Veterans Independence Program	49%	29%	15%	5%	2%	39%
Funeral and burial services	45%	24%	16%	10%	3%	42%
Career transition services	40%	32%	17%	7%	1%	29%
Remembrance programming	31%	26%	22%	13%	4%	29%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

The percentage of Canadians who have heard something in the news recently about VAC rose over the tracking period, from 30% in 2012 to 41% in 2018. Of note, the percentage of people who reported having heard something about VAC rose after February 14, 2018, when a news story relating to the Canadian Forces ombudsman’s critique of government’s handling of Veterans’ issues broke. Before February 14th, 36% reported having heard something about VAC. On and after February 14th, that number rose to 44%.

Quebecers and French speakers were less likely to report having heard something in the news about VAC (30% in both cases) compared to those in Atlantic Canada (57%) and the Prairies (50%). Younger people (18-34) unsurprisingly have heard less about VAC in the news (29%) relative to older cohorts.

Among those who had heard something, the most cited topic was “the government is not doing enough” (27%) followed by stories about VAC, Veterans and the Prime Minister (15%), and a lack of health support, both mental and physical (12%). The most common source of information by far is the media (78%).

Exhibit A11 – Q14. Have you heard anything in the news lately about Veterans Affairs Canada or about how the Canadian government treats Canada's Veterans

Heard News About VAC				
	2018	Pre-Feb 14, 2018	On and post Feb 14, 2018	2012
Yes	41%	36%	44%	30%
No	58%	63%	55%	69%
DK/NR	1%	1%	1%	1%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A12 – Q15. [IF HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT VAC] What have you heard?

Information Heard About VAC	
	2018
Government is not doing enough	27%
PM thinks government is doing everything they can/Trudeau answers a veteran	15%
Lack of support re health care (mental, physical)	12%
Pension reforms	7%
Government is not respecting its promises	5%
Government is cutting a lot of the programs	5%
Government would rather help immigrants	3%
Government is trying to improve	3%
Government is fighting Veterans in court	3%
DK/NR	12%

Base: TELEPHONE: Heard something about VAC (n=863). Fieldwork Jan 30 – Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A13 – Q16. [IF HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT VAC] And where did you hear this news?

News Sources	
	2018
Media (newspaper, TV, radio)	78%
Social media	23%
Word of mouth	6%
Internet/Website/Online	5%
Government of Canada/VAC communications (website, notice, etc.)	1%
Other	12%

Base: TELEPHONE: Heard something about VAC (n=863). Fieldwork Jan 30 – Feb 21, 2018.

Not many Canadians (18%) have heard of the Pension for Life (PFL), and among those who could recall having heard of it, just 17% say they are at least somewhat familiar with it. More men (21%) than women (14%) have heard of PFL, as have current and former CAF members (42%) compared to those with no connection (15%), and English speakers (20%) compared to French speakers (11%). Across the regions, awareness is highest in Atlantic Canada (25%). Despite the lower levels of overall awareness, when provided with a description, 39% said they have a very favourable impression of the program, while another 30% have a somewhat favourable impression.

Those who would like VAC to do a lot more to support Veterans are particularly enthusiastic – 46% say they have a very favourable impression of PFL. Finally, those who have heard of PFL are less enthusiastic about the program (26% say very favourable) than those who had not (42% say very favourable). This suggests that whatever people have heard about PFL to date, from whatever source it may have been, has evoked a less positive response than is evoked when described as it was in this study.

Exhibit A14 – Q17. Have you heard anything about an announcement by the Government of Canada to introduce a new financial package for Veterans called Pension for Life?

Heard About PFL	
	2018
Yes	18%
No	81%
DK/NR	1%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A15 – Q18. [IF HEARD ABOUT PFL] Using the scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means not at all familiar and 7 means very familiar, how familiar would you say you are with the Pension for Life package Veterans Affairs Canada provides to Canada’s Veterans?

Familiarity with PFL	
	2018
Very familiar (7)	3%
Somewhat familiar (5-6)	14%
Neither (4)	12%
Not that familiar (2-3)	36%
Not at all familiar (1)	34%
DK/NR	1%

Base: TELEPHONE: Heard of PFL (n=389). Fieldwork Jan 30- Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A16 – Q19. As you may have heard, the Government of Canada recently announced it is modernizing the financial package that Veterans receive in compensation for their military service-related pain and suffering. The new package will be called Pension for Life and combines financial recognition of pain and suffering, income replacement, and a host of wellness services and programs to help Veterans successfully transition to life after service. The Pension for Life is separate from the Canadian Armed Forces superannuation (pension) that CAF members receive for their service after they leave the Forces. Using the scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means very unfavourable, 7 means very favourable, and 4 means a neutral opinion, how favourable or unfavourable an impression would you say you have of this Pension for Life package?

	Impression of PFL		
	2018	Heard About PFL	Have Not Heard About PFL
Very favourable (7)	39%	26%	42%
Somewhat favourable (5-6)	30%	29%	30%
Neither (4)	20%	24%	19%
Somewhat unfavourable (2-3)	5%	13%	3%
Very unfavourable (1)	2%	3%	2%
DK/NR	4%	5%	4%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

There is some interest in receiving additional information about VAC. Over half (53%) say they would be at least somewhat interested in hearing more. Those aged 18-34 are the least interested in learning more about VAC (57%) despite reporting that they know the least about the department. Atlantic Canadians are more eager for information than others across the country (27% say they are very interested), compared to Quebeckers, who are the least interested (54% say they are not interested, just 13% say they are very interested). Programs and services are the most popular areas of interest (33%), followed by information about Canada’s Veterans (17%) and pensions/benefits (11%). In terms of the best way to provide people with information, 44% say the media, including newspaper, TV and radio, followed by direct mail (27%) and social media (25%).

Exhibit A17 – Q20. Some people say they would like to receive more information about government programs and services. Others say they are not interested in receiving more information. Thinking of Veterans issues in particular, would you say you are very interested in receiving information about programs and services offered in support of Veterans, somewhat interested, not very interested or not at all interested?

Interest in Receiving More Information About VAC	
	2018
Very interested	17%
Somewhat interested	36%
Not very interested	24%
Not at all interested	23%
DK/NR	1%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A18 – Q21. [IF INTERESTED IN RECEIVING INFO] What specific subjects are you interested in?

Topics of Interest	
	2018
Programs and services available	33%
Information about Canada’s Veterans	17%
Pensions/benefits	11%
Mental health supports	8%
Care/how Veterans are treated	8%
Changes in policies	8%
Rehab/career transition/integration	7%
General view	7%
Health	7%
Statistics about Veterans	5%
Financial assistance	3%
Long term care	3%
Other	4%
DK/NR	13%

Base: TELEPHONE: Interested in receiving more information (n=1094). Fieldwork Jan 30 – Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A19 – Q22. What is the best way to provide you with additional information about government programs and services for Veterans?

Best Way to Provide Additional Information	
	2018
Media (newspaper, TV, radio)	44%
Direct mail	27%
Social media	25%
Government of Canada/VAC website	14%
Advertising	11%
Internet/Website	5%
Brochures/Pamphlets	4%
Veterans’ group or association	2%
Other	6%
DK/NR	6%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Surrounding Attitudes

There is broad consensus on a number of key attitudes related to VAC and Veterans, particularly when it comes to mental health. In fact, of all the attitudinal statements tested, the three that generate the greatest consensus all relate to mental health. Almost all (87%) say Veterans need a lot of mental health support, and 74% agree that there are more mental health challenges aside from PTSD. Just 29% agree that Veterans are getting the help they need with mental illness and injury, relative to the 37% who say the same of Veterans’ physical injuries. Of note, those who answered the survey after February 14 are more likely to disagree that Veterans are getting the help they need for their mental illnesses and injuries (44% versus 32%). English speakers are also more likely to disagree than their French-speaking counterparts (45% compared to 25%).

The importance of mental health support appears to be a consistently held view across all demographic categories, with the exception of gender. Men are significantly less likely than women to strongly agree that Canada’s Veterans need a lot of support to maintain good mental health (46% vs. 61%) and that PTSD seems to be affecting a lot of Veterans today (42% vs. 52%). That being said, the plurality of men at least somewhat agree with both the statements listed above. Current and former members of the CAF are also less likely to believe Veterans need a lot of support to maintain good mental health (44% strongly agree).

For most (70%), Veterans’ challenges seem to be increasingly complex. They also feel finding the right government programs to address those needs can be challenging (60%). When it comes to support for Veterans’ families, opinion is more divided - 29% feel VAC provides adequate support, while 27% disagree and 32% are neutral.

The majority (60%) expect career transitioning is difficult. This number is even higher, and a more strongly held view, among Atlantic Canadians (67% agree, but 25% strongly agree) and lower among those in Quebec (52% agree). However, opinion is mixed as to whether Veterans integrate well back into civilian life. Just under one quarter (24%) disagree, while 37% agree. That number is higher among current and former members of the CAF (45%).

When they think of Veterans, the plurality (38%) think of those who served long ago. Those who are aware of VAC, and are more familiar with it, are more likely to strongly disagree with this statement (38% and 34%, respectively). French speakers are more likely to agree (45%). That does not necessarily mean that people think Veterans are young. Just under a third (31%) disagree that most of Canada’s Veterans are under 40, while 30% agree with this statement. There is little variation regardless of whether one is very familiar, or not familiar at all, with VAC.

When asked which words come to mind when they think of Veterans, 18%, the largest portion, say brave/courage. After that, a second tier of words receiving a mention by between 10% and 11% include soldier, loyal/honourable, dedication/self-giving, and duty/patriotic.

Exhibit A20 – Q23. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Please use a scale of 1-7, where 1 means you strongly disagree with the statement, 7 means you strongly agree with the statement and 4 means you neither agree nor disagree.

Surrounding Attitudes						
	Strongly agree (7)	Agree (5-6)	Neither (4)	Disagree (2-3)	Strongly disagree (1)	DK/NR
Canada’s Veterans need a lot of support to maintain good mental health	54%	33%	8%	2%	1%	2%
PTSD seems to be affecting a lot of today’s Veterans	47%	34%	11%	3%	1%	3%
I think there are more mental health issues than just PTSD that are affecting a lot of today’s Veterans	42%	32%	14%	5%	3%	4%
The challenges facing Veterans are becoming increasing complex.	36%	34%	17%	5%	3%	5%
It’s difficult to transition from a career in the Forces to a career as a civilian	26%	34%	23%	9%	4%	4%
It can be difficult for those who need assistance to find the right government program	26%	34%	22%	7%	4%	6%
When I hear the term “Veterans”, I tend to think mostly of those who served long ago	19%	19%	11%	21%	28%	2%
Canadian Veterans who have injuries/illness related to their mental health are getting the help they need from the GoC	10%	19%	25%	27%	12%	7%
Canadian Veterans who have physical injury/ illness are getting the help they need from the GoC	10%	27%	26%	20%	8%	8%
I think most of Canada’s Veterans are under 40 years old	10%	20%	29%	20%	11%	10%

Veterans Affairs provides adequate support to the families of Veterans	8%	21%	32%	19%	8%	10%
Most Veterans manage to reintegrate into their community fairly well	7%	30%	32%	19%	5%	7%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

Exhibit A21 – Q24. What 2 or 3 words would you use to describe what the term Veteran means to you?

Best Words to Describe Veterans	
	2018
Brave/Courage	18%
Soldier/Worked in the Forces	11%
Loyal/Honourable	11%
Dedication/Self-giving	10%
Duty/Patriotic	10%
War/Army	7%
Thankful/We owe them	6%
Broken/In need	6%
Heroes/Admiration	6%
Not well treated/Deserving support	6%
Retirement/Life after service	5%
Proud	5%
Strong	5%
Sacrifice	5%
Respect	5%
Service	5%
Other	6%
DK/NR	8%

Base: TELEPHONE: Total sample (n=2015). Fieldwork Jan 30-Feb 21, 2018.

CONCLUSIONS

This wave of study demonstrates that Canadians continue to believe that VAC provides extremely important programs and services and delivers them to fellow Canadians who are held in high regard and deserving of increased support.

As was found in the 2012 study, awareness and knowledge of the Department is relatively low and awareness with specific programs and services is even lower. As well, there is a continued, and indeed growing sense, that more needs to be done for Canada’s Veterans.

While most Canadians still cannot accurately identify the department responsible for serving the needs of the country’s Veterans and there is relatively low awareness of VAC’s programs and services, they are clearly concerned with the level of support provided to Veterans, and in particular to modern-day Veterans. If there is one aspect that stands out as deserving of attention it is in the area of mental health programs and services. This area was ranked as the highest priority among the various programs and services tested in 2012 and has only seen an increase in its rated importance to Canadians.

As in 2012, there is evidence to suggest that increasing awareness and knowledge about programs and services may help improve the public’s perception of the performance of the Department. This wave of study shows Canadians respond positively to VAC’s description of the newly launched Pension for Life (PFL) package, but few Canadians had heard of it before the survey interview. One troubling finding was that those who were aware of it tended to have slightly less positive impressions of PFL than those who were only introduced to the program in the course of the survey. This finding suggests that there is a benefit to be realized by having VAC introduce more Canadians to PFL the way it was described in this survey, and it was certainly the case than more than half of the respondents indicate having an appetite for learning more.

Overall, while Canadians’ awareness of Veterans Affairs Canada is low, the more that Canadians know about the programs and services provided by VAC, the more positive their opinions are likely to be. Further, the work of the Department is clearly of great importance to most Canadians.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY METHODOLOGY REPORT

Survey Methodology

Earnscliffe Strategy Group's overall approach for this study was to conduct a telephone survey using an overlapping sampling approach. A detailed discussion of the approach used to complete this research is presented below.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaires for this study were designed by Earnscliffe, in collaboration with VAC, drawing on a previous similar study conducted in 2012 and provided for fielding to Leger. The survey was offered to respondents in both English and French and completed based on their preferences.

Sample Design and Selection

The sampling plan for the study was designed by Earnscliffe and the sample was drawn by Leger based on Earnscliffe's instructions.

An overlapping sampling approach was used for the telephone survey. In this approach, the cell phone sample is not screened for dual landline and cell users. A respondent is included in the sample as long as he/she uses a cell phone even though they may or may not have a landline. While the overlapping sampling method does not explicitly screen dual user households, it naturally reaches both cell phone only residents and those living in households with both cellphone and landline. Using this method, we estimated that the 2,000 interviews would be comprised of the natural distribution of landline only (LLO) households, cellphone only households (CPO) and households that have both a landline and a cellphone. The table below shows the Statistics Canada estimates for each of these segments, the expected number of interviews for each of these segments and the proportion of the survey sample that would constitute using the overlapping method.

Segment	Actual Proportion*	Expected n	Expected % of Sample
Landline only (LLO)	15.0%	300	15.0%
Cellphone only (CPO)	27.5%	550	27.5%
Households with both	57.5%	1,150	57.5%
TOTAL	100%	2,000	100%

*SOURCE: Statistics Canada, *2015 Survey of Household Spending*

When using the overlapping method, the mix of dual and CPO does not always turn out to be exact. As a result, while we set a target of 550 interviews with CPO respondents, we guaranteed a minimum of 450 interviews among CPO respondents. In the end, we conducted 1,082 of the 2,015 interviews via cell phone (including 557 specifically screened as CPO) and 931 via landline (including 283 screened LLO).

The sample was targeted to the region, gender and age quotas outlined below, and the final data were weighted to replicate actual population distribution by region, age and gender according to the most recent Census (2016) data available.

Data Collection

The telephone survey was conducted in English and French from January 30, 2018 to February 21, 2018. The survey was undertaken by Leger’s telephone data collection operation headquartered in Montréal, Québec.

Targets/Weighting

Quotas were used on both samples to help ensure that, prior to any additional weighting, minimum numbers of completed surveys by gender, age group and region were achieved. This quota distribution was designed to allow for subsets of the data to be analyzed. Quotas were established on region, age and gender as follows:

SAMPLE QUOTA STRUCTURE

Spec	Targets	Total
Region		
Atlantic Canada	137	2,000
Quebec	469	
Ontario	767	
Prairies (MB/SK)	131	
Alberta	225	
British Columbia	271	
Age		
18 – 34	546	2,000
35 – 54	682	
55+	772	
Gender		
Male	972	2,000
Female	1,028	
TOTAL	2,000	

The final data were weighted based on 2016 Census information. Weighting was applied based on region, age and gender statistics to help ensure that the final dataset was in proportion to the Canadian population aged 18 and older.

Quality Controls

During the survey period, three data checks were completed by Leger. The first was completed just after the launch on the first day. The second was completed after the first full day in field. And the final data check was completed once all surveys had been completed. During each data check it was confirmed that all skip patterns were working, that no data outliers had been recorded, and that all respondents were completing the survey in an appropriate amount of time.

Results

FINAL DISPOSITIONS

The telephone survey achieved a response rate of 2.33% for the landline portion and 1.70% for the cell phone portion.

TELEPHONE SURVEY DISPOSITIONS

	Landline	Cell Phone
Total Numbers Attempted	58899	97680
Invalid	11	15
NIS, fax/modem, business/non-res.	12402	62001
Unresolved (U)		
Busy	785	2224
No answer, answering machine	34488	24342
In-scope - Non-responding (IS)		
Household refusal	1952	392
Respondent refusal	6758	6309
Language problem	462	305
Illness, incapable	224	93
Selected respondent not available	130	307
Qualified respondent break-off	601	443
In-scope - Responding units (R)		
Language disqualify		
No one 18+	152	165
Other disqualify		
Completed interviews	931	1082
Response Rate = R/(U+IS+R)	2.33%	1.70%

NON-RESPONSE BIAS ANALYSIS

Any survey that is conducted is potentially subject to bias or error. The possibility of non-response bias exists within the current sample. In particular, this survey would not include members of the population who do not have access to a telephone or who are not capable of responding to a survey in either English or French. In addition, some groups within the population are systemically less likely to answer surveys.

As is typically the case for general population telephone surveys, older individuals are easier to reach, so the survey overrepresented those age 55+ and underrepresented those aged 18-34 (this was corrected with age weighting). Correspondingly, it also underrepresented students who are attending school full-time.

The table below outlines the characteristics of the sample, comparing the unweighted and weighted sample within each subgroup. In this research, the weighted sample is well aligned with the population in terms of region and gender, but significant weighting was applied to bring the youth sample in line with the public. This is a common feature of telephone surveys, which younger respondents are generally less likely to complete.

SAMPLE PROFILE: UNWEIGHTED VERSUS WEIGHTED DISTRIBUTIONS

Region	Telephone	
	Unweighted Sample	Weighted Sample
Atlantic	188	137
Quebec	438	471
Ontario	725	771
Manitoba/Saskatchewan	128	131
Alberta	228	225
British Columbia	283	273
British Columbia (including Territories)	308	279

Age	Telephone	
	Unweighted Sample	Weighted Sample
18-34	393	551
35-54	614	687
55+	1008	777

Gender	Telephone	
	Unweighted Sample	Weighted Sample
Male	1004	979
Female	1011	1036

Education	Telephone	
	Unweighted Sample	Weighted Sample
Some high school/High school diploma	573	564
Apprenticeship	116	109
College	469	469
University	835	852
Prefer not to answer	22	21

Employment Status	Telephone	
	Unweighted Sample	Weighted Sample
Working full-time, that is, 35 or more hours per week	788	851
Working part-time, that is, less than 35 hours per week	176	186
Self-employed	144	140
Unemployed, but looking for work	86	95
A student attending school full-time	86	128
Retired	630	497
Not in the workforce (full-time homemaker, unemployed, not looking for work)	83	95
Prefer not to answer	22	23

Household Income	Telephone	
	Unweighted Sample	Weighted Sample
Under \$40,000	464	469
\$40,000 to just under \$80,000	539	525
\$80,000 and above	678	701
Prefer not to answer	334	320

Language Spoken Most Often	Telephone	
	Unweighted Sample	Weighted Sample
English	1446	1399
French	431	465
Other	126	140
Prefer not to answer	12	12

MARGIN OF ERROR

The margin of error for the representative national sample is +/-2.18% at the 95% confidence level.

SURVEY DURATION

The mean survey duration was 16.5 minutes.

APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Telephone Questionnaire

Telephone Research Approach

We conducted an online survey of 2,000 adult Canadians. The survey was completed in English and French, in line with the first official language distribution across the country. To help ensure sufficient representation by region and age levels, we will set quotas as outlined in the table below.

Spec	Sample size	Percentage	Total
Region			
Atlantic Canada	137	6.8%	2,000
Quebec	469	23.4%	
Ontario	767	38.3%	
Prairies (MB/SK)	131	6.5%	
Alberta	225	11.2%	
British Columbia	271	13.5%	
Age			
18 – 34	546	27.3%	2,000
35 – 54	682	34.1%	
55+	772	38.6%	
Gender			
Male	972	48.6%	2,000
Female	1,028	51.4%	
TOTAL			

Survey Introduction

Hello/Bonjour. My name is _____ and I am calling from Earncliffe Strategy Group on behalf of the Government of Canada. We are conducting a survey with Canadians about government programs and services. Results from this research will help the Government of Canada be better informed to respond to Canadians' needs.

Would you prefer that I continue in English or French? Préférez-vous continuer en français ou anglais?

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Please be assured that your responses are confidential and will not be reported individually nor attributed to you personally. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. May I continue?

[IF NEEDED: This survey is registered with the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association, the project number is XXXX.]

Yes
No

And, just to confirm, have I reached you on a landline phone or a cell phone?

- Landline
- Cell phone
- Don’t know/Refused

For your safety, are you currently driving?

- Yes – SCHEDULE CALLBACK
- No
- Don’t know/Refused

[INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF ASKED WHICH GOVERNMENT OF CANADA DEPARTMENT THE SURVEY IS FOR, PLEASE SAY THAT YOU CAN REVEAL THAT TO THEM AT A LATER POINT IN THE SURVEY]

Section 1: Screening

1. (DO NOT ASK – RECORD GENDER)

- Male 1
- Female 2

2. In what year were you born?

[INSERT YEAR. IF YOUNGER THAN 18 YEARS OR PREFER NOT TO SAY, TERMINATE]

3. Which province or territory do you live in?

- Newfoundland and Labrador 1
- Nova Scotia 2
- Prince Edward Island 3
- New Brunswick 4
- Quebec 5
- Ontario 6
- Manitoba 7
- Saskatchewan 8
- Alberta 9
- British Columbia 10
- Yukon 11
- Nunavut 12
- Northwest Territories 13
- Prefer not to say [DO NOT READ. TERMINATE] 99

Thank you, let’s begin the survey.

Section 2: Awareness & Impressions

4. To the best of your knowledge, which government department is responsible for the care of members of the Canadian Armed Forces once they have retired from The Royal Canadian Air Force, The Royal Canadian Navy and The Canadian Army? [OPEN END, DO NOT READ LIST] [TRACKING]

Veterans Affairs Canada (Veterans Affairs, VAC, Department of Veterans Affairs, etc.)	1
Department of National Defence (DND, Defence, Ministry of Defence)	2
The Canadian Forces (The Forces, The Army, the Navy, the Air Force)	3
Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAIT, Foreign Affairs)	4
Other [SPECIFY]	7
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

In fact, Veterans Affairs Canada is the government department responsible for these services.

5. How familiar are you with Veterans Affairs Canada? Please use a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means not at all familiar and 7 means very familiar. [TRACKING]

Not at all familiar	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
Very familiar	7
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

6. How well does Veterans Affairs serve the needs of each of the following? Please use a 7-point scale where 1 means they serve their needs very poorly and 7 means they serve their needs very well. [ADJUSTED]

- a. Canada’s older Veterans
- b. Canada’s modern-day Veterans

Serves their needs very poorly	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
Serves their needs very well	7
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

7.	Do you feel that Veterans Affairs should be doing a lot more, a little more, a little less or a lot less to serve the needs of Canada’s Veterans, or do you feel they are doing about the right amount? [TRACKING]	
	Should be doing a lot more	5
	Should be doing a little more	4
	Doing the right amount	3
	Should be doing a little less	2
	Should be doing a lot less	1
	[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9
8.	[IF GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE DOING MORE, Q7=4-5] In what way do you feel Veterans Affairs Canada should be doing more to serve the needs of Canada’s Veterans? [OPEN END] [TRACKING]	
	[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	99
9.	[IF ANY FAMILIARITY WITH VAC, Q5=2-7] Based on your impression, I would you like you to rate Veterans Affairs Canada in terms of how well it does each of the following in support of Veterans. Please use a scale of 1-7, where 1 means the department performs very poorly and 7 means it performs very well. [RANDOMIZE]	
	c. Treating Veterans with respect	
	d. Being honest in dealing with Veterans and their families	
	e. Treating Veterans fairly	
	f. Being efficient in its operations	
	g. Working hard to help Veterans	
	h. Providing easy to understand information to Veterans	
	i. Offering programs and services that Veterans need	
	j. Listening to feedback to make programs and services better	
	k. Communicating with Canadians about the programs and services available	
	l. Communicating with Veterans about the programs and services available	
	Performs very poorly	1
		2
		3
		4
		5
		6
	Performs very well	7
	[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	99

Section 2: Programs & Services

10. Using the scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means not at all familiar and 7 means very familiar, how familiar would you say you are with the programs and services Veterans Affairs Canada provides to Canada’s Veterans?
[TRACKING]

Not at all familiar	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
Very familiar	7
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

11. [IF ANY PROGRAM FAMILIARITY, Q10=2-7] Can you name any Veterans Affairs Canada programs you may have heard of? [OPEN END, DO NOT READ LIST] [TRACKING]

Career Transition Services	1
Financial Benefits (Earnings Loss Benefits; Permanent Impairment Allowance; Permanent Impairment Allowance Supplement; Supplementary Retirement Benefit; Canadian Forces Income Support)	2
Health Benefits/Group Health Insurance	3
Disability Benefits	4
Mental Health Support	5
Rehabilitation Program	6
Family Support	7
Veterans Independence Program	8
Treatment Benefits	9
Long Term Care	10
Funeral and Burial Services	11
Remembrance Programming	12
Other [SPECIFY]	77
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	99

12. [IF ANY PROGRAM FAMILIARITY, Q10=2-7] How did you hear about Veterans Affairs Canada’s programs and services? [OPEN END. DO NOT READ LIST.] [TRACKING]

Word of mouth (From family, friends)	1
I am a Veteran	2
My spouse/child/close family member is a Veteran	3
I work for/used to work for the army/navy/air force	4
My spouse/child/close family member works for/used to work for the army/navy/air force	5
Media (Newspaper, TV, radio)	6
Remembrance Day programs/November 11 programming	7
Social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc)	8
Other [SPECIFY]	77
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	99

13. Now I’m going to read you a list of services for Veterans and for each of the items I’d like to ask you: how important is it for Veterans to receive these services from Veteran Affairs Canada? Please use a 10-point scale this time, where 10 means it is very important and 1 means it is not important at all. How about....? [RANDOMIZE. READ LIST.] [ADJUSTED]

- a. Career Transition Services
- b. Financial Benefits such as providing benefits to replace loss of earnings, allowances for severe physical and/or mental impairments and additional retirement benefits
- c. Group Health Insurance and other health benefits
- d. Disability Benefits
- e. Mental Health Support
- f. Rehabilitation services, including medical, psychosocial and vocational family support
- g. Veterans Independence Program which is a national home care program that helps Veterans remain healthy and independent in their own homes or communities
- h. Treatment Benefits like hearing aids, medications, etc.
- i. Long Term Care
- j. Funeral and Burial Services
- k. Remembrance Programming

Not important at all	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
	7
	8
	9
Very important	10
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	99

14. Have you heard anything in the news lately about Veterans Affairs Canada or about how the Canadian government treats Canada's Veterans? [TRACKING]

Yes	1
No	2
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

15. [IF YES TO Q14] What have you heard? [OPEN-END] [TRACKING]

[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	99
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16. [IF YES TO Q14] And where did you hear this news? [OPEN-END]	
Word of mouth (From family, friends)	1
Media (Newspaper, TV, radio)	2
Government of Canada/Veterans Affairs Canada communications (website, notice, etc)	3
Veterans’ group or association	4
Social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc)	5
Other [SPECIFY]	77
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	99
17. [UNLESS MENTIONED IN Q15] Have you heard anything about an announcement by the Government of Canada to introduce a new financial package for Veterans called Pension for Life?	
Yes	1
No	2
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9
18. [IF Q17=1] Using the scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means not at all familiar and 7 means very familiar, how familiar would you say you are with the Pension for Life package Veterans Affairs Canada provides to Canada’s Veterans?	
Not at all familiar	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
Very familiar	7
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

19. As you may have heard, the Government of Canada recently announced it is modernizing the financial package that Veterans receive in compensation for their military service-related pain and suffering. The new package will be called Pension for Life and combines financial recognition of pain and suffering, income replacement, and a host of wellness services and programs to help Veterans successfully transition to life after service. The Pension for Life is separate from the Canadian Armed Forces superannuation (pension) that CAF members receive for their service after they leave the Forces. Using the scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means very unfavourable, 7 means very favourable, and 4 means a neutral opinion, how favourable or unfavourable an impression would you say you have of this Pension for Life package?

Very unfavourable	1
	2
	3
	4
	5
	6
Very favourable	7
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

20. Some people say they would like to receive more information about government programs and services. Others say they are not interested in receiving more information. Thinking of Veterans issues in particular, would you say you are very interested in receiving information about programs and services offered in support of Veterans, somewhat interested, not very interested or not at all interested?

Not at all interested	1
Not very interested	2
Somewhat interested	3
Very interested	4
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

21. [IF INTERESTED, Q20=3-4] What specific subjects are you interested in? [OPEN END. DO NOT READ LIST.]

Changes in policies	1
Programs and services available	2
Statistics about Veterans	3
Information about Canada’s Veterans	4
Other [SPECIFY]	77
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	99

22. [IF INTERESTED, Q20=3-4] What is the best way to provide you with additional information about government programs and services for Veterans? [OPEN END. DO NOT READ LIST.]

Advertising	1
Media (Newspaper, TV, radio)	2
Government of Canada/Veterans Affairs Canada website	3
Direct mail (email or letter)	4
Veterans’ group or association	5
Social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc)	6
Other [SPECIFY]	77
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	99

Section 3: Surrounding Attitudes

23. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Please use a scale of 1-7, where 1 means you strongly disagree with the statement, 7 means you strongly disagree with the statement and 4 means you neither agree nor disagree. [RANDOMIZE.]

- a. Most Veterans manage to reintegrate into their community fairly well.
- b. It can be difficult for those who need assistance to find the right government program.
- c. The challenges facing Veterans are becoming increasing complex.
- d. When I hear the term “Veterans”, I tend to think mostly of those who served long ago
- e. It’s difficult to transition from a career in the Forces to a career as a civilian
- f. I think most of Canada’s Veterans are under 40 years old
- g. Canada’s Veterans need a lot of support to maintain good mental health
- h. Canadian Veterans who have physical injury or illness are getting the kind of help they need from the Government of Canada for their physical injury or illness
- i. Canadian Veterans who have injuries or illness related to their mental health are getting the kind of help they need from the Government of Canada to address their mental health needs
- j. Veterans Affairs provides adequate support to the families of Veterans
- k. Post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD seems to be affecting a lot of today’s Veterans
- l. I think there are more mental health issues than just Post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD that are affecting a lot of today’s Veterans

Strongly disagree	1
	2
	3
Neither disagree nor agree	4
	5
	6
Strongly agree	7
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

24. What 2 or 3 words would you use to describe what the term Veteran means to you? (OPEN-END)

Section 4: Demographics

The last few questions are strictly for statistical purposes. All of your answers are completely confidential.

25. For each of the following, would you say you are currently a member or employee, are a former member or employee or have never been a member or employee?

- a. The Canadian Forces – that is the Canadian Army, the Royal Canadian Navy or the Royal Canadian Air Force
- b. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police or RCMP
- c. Veterans Affairs Canada
- d. The Government of Canada, other than Veterans Affairs Canada

Currently	1
Formerly	2
Never	3
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

26. Is there someone in your immediate family who is either a current or former member or employee of each of the following?

- a. The Canadian Forces – that is the Canadian Army, the Royal Canadian Navy or the Royal Canadian Air Force
- b. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police or RCMP
- c. Veterans Affairs Canada
- d. The Government of Canada, other than Veterans Affairs Canada

Yes	1
No	2
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

27. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

Working full-time, that is, 35 or more hours per week	1
Working part-time, that is, less than 35 hours per week	2
Self-employed	3
Unemployed, but looking for work	4
A student attending school full-time	5
Retired	6
Not in the workforce (full-time homemaker, unemployed, not looking for work)	7
[DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer	9

28. What is the highest level of schooling that you have completed?

- Grade 8 or less 1
- Some high school 2
- High school diploma or equivalent 3
- Registered apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma 4
- College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma 5
- University certificate or diploma below bachelor’s level 6
- Bachelor’s degree 7
- Post graduate degree above bachelor’s level 8
- [DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer 9

29. Which of the following categories best describes your total household income for 2017? That is, the total income of all persons in your household combined, before taxes?

- Under \$20,000 1
- \$20,000 to just under \$40,000 2
- \$40,000 to just under \$60,000 3
- \$60,000 to just under \$80,000 4
- \$80,000 to just under \$100,000 5
- \$100,000 to just under \$150,000 6
- \$150,000 and above 7
- [DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer 9

30. What is the language you speak most often at home?

- English 1
- French 2
- Other, please specify 3
- [DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer 9

31. What are the first three digits of your postal code?

- [INSERT FIRST THREE DIGITS OF POSTAL CODE. FORMAT A1A]
- [DO NOT READ] Don’t know/Prefer not to say / No answer 9

This concludes the survey. On behalf of Veterans Affairs Canada I thank you very much for taking part in this study.